

A black and white photograph of a person in silhouette, seen from behind, reaching their right arm up towards a large, brightly lit Christmas tree. The tree is covered in numerous small lights and has large, glowing white outlines of reindeer and other festive shapes. The text "albany road" is written in a white, cursive font across the middle of the image, overlapping the person's back and the tree's lights.

albany road

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Cover photo by Nicanor Williams

ALBANY ROAD

DEERFIELD ACADEMY'S LITERARY & ARTS MAGAZINE
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

Nestled in one Pioneer Valley, eating forkfuls of jambalaya at the same sit-down tables, and cheering green on the same fields and gymnasiums on Choate Day, we sometimes forget that Deerfield is a community of many places and many homes. Yet, our travels on fall move-in day exhibit the multifaceted experiences we each come here with: one of us commuted 25 minutes, one drove 6 hours, and one of us flew for 15 hours to arrive at Deerfield.

English Teacher Ms. Liske once floated a question about this diversity of perspectives: How well do we really know the people in our Deerfield bubble? In moments where we share more, it is powerful to recognize the experiences and backgrounds others bring to each moment.

In her poem “Diving into the Wreck,” Adrienne Rich declares: “I came to explore the wreck. / The words are purposes. / The words are maps. / I came to see the damage that was done and the treasures that prevail.”

So, in Rich’s fashion, how can we dive into and “explore the wreck” of the Deerfield experience? How do we shovel out the myriad of ideas, homes, and “treasures that prevail” buried here?

With every new word, brushstroke, and lens shutter in this Fall/Winter issue, we hope you will sift through un-gleaned treasure. Grasp what Adrienne Rich may have meant by “the words are maps.” Inside, you’ll see the glimmer of the many places, many people, and many homes that make up Deerfield. Adventure into wildlife photography or paintings on heritage or meditations on diasporic immigrant identity. In each, we hope you will find an articulation of the world others see, a map to another’s home - in a town, a sketch of Deerfield space, a father, or a friend.

Finally, we extend our deepest gratitude to the *Albany Road* board and community. And to you, readers, here’s our invitation to come on in and explore!

With love and hospitality,
Melody Zhao, Ryan Bai, Thijs Wittink
Editors-In-Chief 2025-2026

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THE POWER OF TOUCH

Shelby Acquavella

CONTRACTED SCULPTOR

Alice Chen

her posture has always been too rounded;
the mother carries around a sharp baton and chips it
against the hump of her back,
molding it polished.

she solidifies her work with a proverb
天助自助者
Heaven helps those who help themselves

by design:
every crinkle and crow's feet of her eyes
married to a segregated antithesis,
captivating just long enough to seduce
a trap of quicksand.

pinpoint words are the only ones
worthy of gracing the lips
of her masterpiece.

independent contracting and
independent mothering become
a merged business.

and so she becomes her own sculptor,
using the nail guards of her barbaric ancestry,
she whittles her waist into acute edges
so that no man may touch it.

but after proving her "uncourtability" donning pants at teatime,
and showing her "insanity" patenting her mind from corporate smiles,
and flaunting her "lowliness" with the bare, unpainted, chiseled face of her mother
and fighting the Devil with bags dancing under her eyes
she still looks up at the sky
and wonders where is her Heavenly reward?



REGONG ART (TANGKA)

Jennifer Jing



UNNAMED

Leo Feng



FAMILY TIES

Leo Feng

TWENTY FIRST CENTURY NATIONALIST

Marco Feng

This is a story I've never told. A story five thousand years in the birthing, two hundred fifty years in the writing, sixteen years in the meeting, of not a Chinese American, but a Chinese in America. When I was seven, mine and many families crossed the same skies that steamers chasing gold and escaping a century of humiliation once belched into, dreaming of that 美利坚, that America: chief among the Westerners that the Emperor once derided, but then, with a roaring fire in the Imperial Gardens, illuminated us to liberty and opium, laissez-faire and tariffs. Now, in this Chinese century, Deng Xiaoping set our generation to the West, even if us kids might grow American—but, yet, America made me more Chinese.

At first, that was just because China felt so much freaking cooler than America. 2nd grade Marco, perched on the introduction stool, explained to my new classroom of Bakers, Diázes, and Kims how the trip from China took 18 hours and how the Great Wall runs a million miles. To my elementary mind, America's puny little experiment could not compare with five thousand years of imperial majesty, countless statesmen and generals: servants of the people, of all beneath the sky. So of course I am Chinese... of course I am Chinese, of course Motherland is still Home- if not, I am but a stranger stranded in a foreign land. Yet, ShenZhen's skyline morphs increasingly unrecognizable on every return, and my Chinese writing deteriorates behind my English prose. It felt like I was losing myself. Great God! was I becoming American!?

Middle school U.S. history allayed these doubts, preaching that America looves difference. Its citizens move incessantly, all proud to belong to some elusive - elsewhere. Our orchestra director always praises his distant Seattle and Seahawks in front of us Cali kids. Yet, Americans do not feel themselves stranded, but free: enterprising, destiny manifesting, defiantly Cath'lic, redneck, or black. So proud of being different, they even boast of borning poor, and lo! the rags to riches fable, lo! all the rappers tryna see Compton. America told me, "you're different, you're Chinese, and you should be proud." But America also hates difference; every other mile commemorates a George Floyd or Turner's Falls. All the 5th graders that played tag drifted part in middle school, divided into hmongs, whites, and latinos: always friendly... rarely intimate. This land made me stay Chinese and not American whether I liked it or not.

In Deerfield, America showed me how one ought to be Chinese. Hearing Mr. Thomas-Adams extol the lyric nuance of English, which "have power to make our noisy years seem moments in the being / of the eternal Silence,"

terrified me and bared to me what sublime depths in Chinese I've yet to unfurl in all its wondrous qíng kōng yī hē pái yún shàng, biàn yǐn shī qíng dào bì xiāo.¹ 1 Hearing Mr. Lyons embrace America's liberating yet enslaving heritage, I gradually accepted the gory, gory imperfection of my Confucian empire. Reading Paine, Hamilton, and Franklin's Liberalism illuminated me – yes, illuminated me – with their belief in the foreign and faith in the opposition, the different, in trying whatever improves the nation, because that's what truly matters. Thus I - a Chinese in America - realized why the Imperial Gardens burned down in all their dogmatic haughtiness. To be Chinese is not to merely clasp tradition, but to strengthen the nation. Who says I cannot believe in being the “master of my fate, the captain of my soul” at once with xiān tiān xià zhī yǒu ér yǒul, hòu tiān xià zhī lè ér lè.² Even if flying time and dreams unmet will bring a sober colouring to my eye, at Home I'll find the child xiào wèn kè cóng hé chǔ lái.³

1 'In clear skies a soaring crane parts the clouds, bringing along poesy to the azure heavens.' from “Ode to Fall” by Liu Yuxi, Tang, Yongzhen Year One (AD 805).

2 'Worry before the world worries, rejoice after the world rejoices.' From “Vignette on the Yueyang Tower” by Fan Zhongyan, Northern Song, Qingli Year Six (AD 1046).

3 'Smile asking where the guest [I] came from.' from “Occasional Poem Upon Homecoming” by He Zhizhang, Tang, Tianbao Year Three (774 AD).

SURVIVAL SONG

Katie Kim

for Grandfather

Kwangju, 1980

three hours, twenty-seven bus stops.

twenty-seven breaths caught in a haze
of diesel, each brake squealing a change

in key. three hours, by train: warbling
past rice paddies, smokestacks bending
in the wind. how could you have known

where you were heading, a city better
known as a police state. your friends were
silenced into myth for doodling Chun's face

onto posters. you told your parents it was
just a school field trip: no talk of streets
rinsed in sirens, no mention of cruisers

beating the pavement until it was quiet
& the unknowing sway of your shoulders
brushed into the bus aisle. you were

only 23, fresh from the service, trekking
from the center of korea to its outskirts.
three hours & the sound of explosives

hardening from drumbeat into the will
to fight. so you fastened
your neon orange bandana around

your forehead & fought—you fought
until it glistened with sweat, bright
as the tangerines Grandma carried home

from the grocery store. now, years after
your right leg broke
mid-sprint, your limp has become the way
we know you. we hear you
coming—a beloved off-rhythm, a syncopation
against the state's. against the voices

of your friends—six hundred more—
stolen by tyranny, but your bandana held
its color like a chord to the government's ear.

you paved the path to democracy, stone
by stone, note by note, until the city
awakened its survivors with its song.



THE JOURNEY

Nicanor Williams



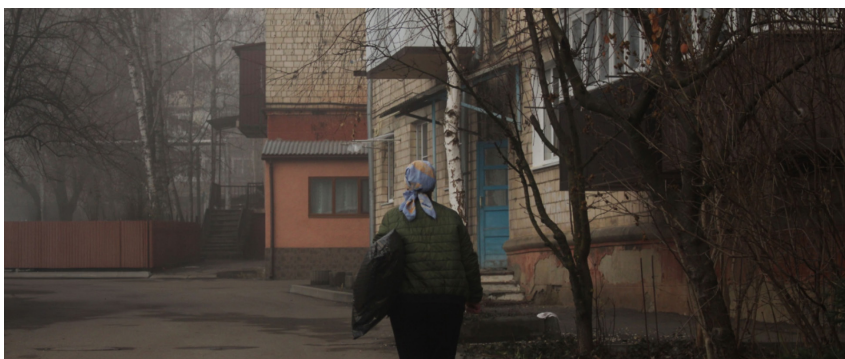
ACTOR IN HUANGNAN TIBETAN OPERA

Jennifer Jing



TIBETAN BUDDHISM

Jennifer Jing



FOG OF WAR
Julia Horobets

THERE IS MY FATHER

Layla Abdi

Do not mistake his soul as angered,
For his strong will is measured
He hopes that over time they will soon learn
There is value in the work they cannot see

Even now his goals are censored,
And on a pedestal his dear family is pictured
He shows them his back and returns to the burn,
There is value in the work they cannot see

I can see his heart is punctured,
But I cannot break the life he has structured
I bare my support and hope his back will turn,
There is value in the work I cannot see

His hands bleed and his eyes have not flickered,
But I remain close behind him so he is not slandered
The loyalty that ties us is something others do not discern,
There is value in the work they cannot see

Now I do not mistake his soul as angered,
For I understand his strong will is measured
I hope that over time they too will soon learn,
There is value in the work they cannot see.

MY COUSIN'S NEW HAIRCUT

Iris Zhu

One blazing summer after the school year ended in America, I returned to my mother's hometown in Changsha, China. Along the Xiang River and capital of the Hunan Province, Changsha comes from a Mandarin word meaning "long sandy place" and it is average-sized, which in China means around 10

million inhabitants. The city is known for its local spicy cuisine and small meandering alleyways filled with bustling stores and restaurants.

I had not returned to China for over two years, and eager to be reunited with my extended family, I bounded from our taxi up the stairs of the dilapidated restaurant. I took no notice of the crooked banister and timeworn menus, secure in the local folklore that the smaller and dingier a restaurant might appear,

the more delicious the food it would serve. However, in the fog of steaming bamboo baskets of dim sum and the chatter of waiters, I nearly didn't recognize my cousin. Her long glossy black hair that used to fall down her back had now been chopped off so short it lay rigidly above her chin.

"What happened to your hair?" I exclaimed even before I had a chance to say hello.

My cousin muttered something about school regulations, explaining that this hairstyle was enforced on all its female students. It was a way to prevent distraction from their studies. "They all have their hair this way." My aunt said, amused at my bewildered expression.

"Do you still dance?" My 12-year-old cousin had been a talented hip-hop dancer, and I remember the videos I'd seen of her practicing in the studio.

"No time." She shook her head. "I have 12 hours of school every day. I actually should be studying now. Before you know it, I will have to take the Gaokao."

The Nationwide Unified Examination for Admissions to General Universities and Colleges is colloquially abbreviated to Gaokao, and it's an exam required for all high school seniors who want to attend an institution of higher education. As Alec Ash writes in *The Guardian* the "score is the most important number of any Chinese child's life, the culmination of years of schooling, memorization, and constant stress." A single score higher than your peers gives you a whole new range of opportunities, while a low score could ruin your life. It was six years away for my cousin and she was worrying now?

We caught up over a meal of steamed buns, pepper beef, chili-smoked pork, and cold rice noodles. After the meal, my aunt invited us over to her concrete apartment complex. I was struck by how quiet she seemed. We used to stay up playing video games and making slime, now she seemed to have the weight of the future clamping her mouth shut.

When I told my mom about my concerns, she informed me that even when the kids here got into the top universities in China, like Tsinghua, they still faced a strong likelihood of ending up jobless and delivering takeout throughout the city. “How would you feel if the guy delivering your McDonalds had graduated top of his class in Engineering Physics?”

Even little children in China are not shielded from the stress and academic pressure heaped onto them from a young age. With the large amounts of schoolwork and extracurricular activity that they endure daily, most young children turn to electronic distractions during their free time. Not surprisingly, over the last two decades childhood and adolescent obesity has increased nearly 400%. It’s a startling turn for a country that fell victim to a terrible famine in the 1960s that killed nearly 20 million people.

Today, an entire generation of Chinese youths have coined the phrase *tangping* (躺平), or “lying flat,” to protest against the social pressure to overwork and to find fulfillment through consumption. The movement kicked off during the pandemic in 2021 when a post on Baidu written by a blogger who had been unemployed for two years went viral. He believed that contemporary life caused too much unnecessary stress passed on by the older generation and that he could find liberation through quiet quitting and opting out. “I can be like Diogenes,” he wrote, “who sleeps in his own barrel taking in the sun.”

Some Chinese Gen Z-ers and millennials have taken this inertia even further by describing their mindset as *bailan* (摆烂, or “letting it rot” in English). Because they are dissatisfied with a shrinking labor market and almost 20% unemployment, they are openly advocating for self-indulgence and open defiance by doing the bare minimum while at work, ignoring goals that don’t seem attainable. The idea, nearly nihilistic in its outlook, has its roots in sports, where a losing team might intentionally hasten their defeat to end the game. I was starting to understand my cousin’s anxiety better and to fear the environment in which she was growing up.

Even though, I didn’t choose to immigrate to California, I suppose I embody another online neologism: “runology” (润学), which comes from the English verb “to run” and means how to flee overseas in response to worsening conditions in the economy added to greater political and personal repression. More and more young Chinese want to escape the pressures my cousin faces because even if they can find a job, they face the prospect of a “996” workday, which goes from 9 AM to 9 PM shifts six days a week at many IT companies. That’s no way to live.

After hearing about the hair policy at my cousin’s school, I thought back to my school life in the US. Just that spring, the student council had advocated for a change in the school dress code to prompt an environment in which students could prioritize self-expression and inclusion. The new dress code read that the Albany Road|20

school sought to “create an environment that balances an emphasis on inclusion with developmentally appropriate opportunities for self-expression.” In other words, the student body allowed for someone to wear a hoodie or a hijab or hibiscus pink hair in school. I wonder how my classmates would have reacted to hearing that on the other side of the world, there are students who had no say on the length or style of their hair.

The next morning, my family embarked upon a traditional ritual: visiting my grandparents’ grave at the Shang Shan Yuan cemetery in the center of the city to pay our respects. From the hillside where they are buried, you can see Orange Island Park. Towering over the groves of pomelo trees and bamboo, a gigantic windswept granite head of the young Mao Zedong surveys the landscape like a hero from the cover of a romance novel. I wonder how he would have felt about lying flat and letting it rot.

Being with my family in such a sacred place filled me with ambiguous emotions: on the one hand, I was grateful that my parents had sent me to an international school from such an early age so that I was able to study abroad (an experience I wish my cousin could share in; however, because of her family, finances, and language barriers, leaving the country was not an option for her). On the other hand, as we burned spirit money—joss paper offerings for the afterlife—and laid cups of tea by my grandparent’s gravesite, I missed the deep connection to my extended family and these ancient rituals that honored my ancestors in ways they never would be honored in America.

Our week in Changsha ended too quickly, and I soon found myself climbing back into the taxi taking us to the airport. I waved goodbye to my cousin’s family with a heavy heart—who knew when my next trip to China would be? Living in different countries and separated by distant time zones, there were so many blanks in my cousin’s life that I might never get to fill in. In another two years, she would be my age and I found myself wondering who we might have become the next time our families intertwined. I wished I could share some profound gift or advice with her, but nothing I gave or expressed to her could help her. Our lives had diverged too far.

My cousin’s chopped, conformist haircut was the ultimate symbol of restrained self expression and social-thought in China, which from the time of Confucius has been rooted in hierarchical organization. Her way of living contrasted to the system in the US, where we are encouraged to challenge authority and practice freedom of expression and speech. My Chinese family lives under ever more restrictive social norms that are growing more and more difficult to escape. My mother has often offered to bring my cousin to America over holiday breaks, but with incessant cram schools and endless studying, she has no time to take a break. Our families have barely enough time to visit each other. The only times I get to see my cousin are when I visit her.

Nonetheless, in Chinese culture, families are said to be bound by blood. There's an ancient proverb which states that "an invisible red string connects those who are destined to meet, regardless of time, place, or circumstance. The thread may stretch or tangle but will never break." No matter the distance or time apart, my life in the US and my extended family's life in China will always be connected by this invisible red thread of fate. With that reassurance in mind, I took one glance backwards, then boarded the plane to fly back home.



LONGWU MONASTERY

Jennifer Jing



SWEET DREAMS

Nicanor Williams

SOME THOUGHTS ON PASTA

Iris Zhu

The best plate of pasta I've ever had was in a small restaurant on the east side of Italy. We had been driving from city to city many days, and in the evenings would often seek refuge in the countryside, where rolling hills and cypress trees turned into steep, busy towns filled with unexpected night life. It was a playfully classic sight: there sits the trombone player on the cobblestone sidewalks, enriching the summer night with a quick succession of sixteenth notes, his grey tabby weaving loyally between his navy pantaloons as if attached by thread. It was exceedingly romantic, the dimly lit roads picturesque of an hazy European dream—the unintelligible foreign chatter of the townspeople an adornment to the air. Through all of this we famished, searching for somewhere to sit and eat.

The pasta came in a simple ceramic bowl, the portion admittedly a shameful pittance, but the stubby noodles were coated so generously with veal that we, blinded by hunger, took no notice of its size. The chef was only standing a few feet away in the tiny restaurant, rapidly conversing in cheerful Italian. Perhaps in another life I would have flipped over the stove to offer my compliments in the form of a kiss, but instead I sat very still and savored the pasta quietly in my seat. The dish was utterly sublime, and in a whirl of twirling forks and yearning glances, the bowl was quickly picked empty. With ambrosia still sticking to our lips, we ordered another, greedy to fill our stomachs with it again.

Here came the ceramic bowl once more; the oil of the veal glistened like treasure. Yet, this time, it was good, but only good.

Maybe it was hunger that initially gilded our tastebuds, but something fundamental had changed between that first and second plate of pasta. Our firsts always seem to be most charming and memorable in this way. Manguso agrees. “The first beautiful songs you hear,” she says, “tend to stay beautiful because better than beauty, which is everywhere, is the memory of first discovering beauty.” Whether it is in the first notes of beautiful music, or in one's indelible first experience of love, or simply in the inaugural slurp of authentic pasta—there exists something so entrancing, so worthwhile, that it constrains us. We become worshippers, stagnant in our faith to capture that same feeling again, despite the bowls of disappointment that are bound to follow. So we hit replay, love again, and order that second plate.

It is like an addict pooling his veins with heroin. But it is a high that doesn't exist.

Perhaps that's the mercy of it. Let our novelties remain untouched and

unspoiled by repetition. Let them distill in our minds, turning strange with time, sweeter forgotten.

And let us, creatures of endless appetite, starve—chasing endlessly for our first taste of wonder.



STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

Vivian Monopoli

GUM

Claire Xia

I once chewed a stick of gum until it dissolved. Maybe dissolved is too strong of a word, maybe melted would be more appropriate. One moment solid, the next, lingering particles of nothingness. Every jaw clench, my teeth trying to squeeze an ounce more of flavor, an ounce more of minty freshness. Here is what I have learned from chewing gum: you will never get that original burst of a fresh stick until you put a new one in. No matter how hard you try, your jaw will tighten. Or, in an extreme case like mine, your gum will melt.

Recently, I FaceTimed a friend from home. I don't recall exactly what we talked about, but I remember that there were a few pauses in our conversation, ones where the pixels on either side of our screen were still. There was a mutual understanding from both parties, a hushed comment like, "I miss you," or "it's been so long." Another moment of silence, before her filling me in on the latest news back home. There's a disconnect now, though, and I'm not sure what to say next: our classes, though the same level, are different. She doesn't know the reputation of the teachers I complain about, and the names she goes to dinner with after practice are unfamiliar. It's a polite goodbye when we hang up, and there is a short and sweet end to the call. One like, "I'll call you again soon," or a guilty "I'm sorry I haven't called as much recently." A blink, then she is gone. It feels different.

I've realized that these kinds of phrases are ones of yearning. Empty words that wish for something that will never return. I call someone who I consider to be my best friend once every three months, and we use these words to forgive ourselves for something we know we've done wrong. Here's something else I have learned from chewing gum: when you chew a stick of gum, even if it claims to be long-lasting flavor, the bubbly watermelon fades over time.

When I left for school, I was homesick. My brother, 4 years old, didn't reciprocate my hug when I got dropped off at the airport. Instead, a smile before going back to crashing his monster trucks in his fists. My mother, on the other hand, enveloped me, her cheeks wet with tears. Although I rested my head in the crook of her neck, there had never been this big of a distance between us. When I started calling her more frequently, though, we grew closer again. Conversations about how my dad picked up a snake with tongs, and how someone stole my scooter for the third time that week.

When I went home, my days were filled with building legos with my brother. I began to notice more. The way his hair looked after cannon-balling into the pool and his mischievous smirk when wrapping my mom's cardigan around his waist to dress up as his favorite ninja, I realized he was no longer the

little kid he was when I left. When I saw my mom for the first time after coming home, I noticed the darkness under her eyes, and she noticed mine. A mutual understanding. The same: mother and daughter, sister and brother, but different now.

When chewing gum, the flavor will inevitably change and become dull. After a while, the bubbles will pop before they can even begin to form. If you continue to chew this stick of gum, it will dissolve. When this happens, it's okay to want to stick with that flavor, or crave the repetitive motion of your jaw clenching and unclenching. Here is what I have learned about gum: no matter the flavor, pack, or stick, you're still chewing gum. It's just a little different.



LIFE FROM ABOVE

Thijs Wittink

ODE TO THE MOTH

Layla Abdiv

The Moth is an adversary to The Lifeforms,
Whose beady eyes eerily peer through
The shadows of their carefully curated society.
The Humans will stare, poke, and prod at Her furry
body; Then jolt away quickly in repugnance
Of the swift notice of Her undeniable polarity from the definition
of “Beautiful.”

She, the Moth, is slightly unique to Her counterpart, The Butterfly, And it is for
this, that Her minor uniqueness,
That She, the Moth, is placed at the very bottom of a twisted
hierarchy. It is one meant to be demolished decades ago
– although it still remains standing in a new form –
Along with the chains that previously held Her captive.

The Moth begins Her life harboring grotesque hatred at Her own
being through imaginary rules imposed upon Her
By the brutalists that are The Lifeforms.
It is only much later that She comes to realize
That only She is in control of the ultimate perception of Her being.
Though by then, it is far too late to alter the Moth’s inevitable fate.



EARTHRISE

Nikita Weiss



SYMMETRY IN THE WILD

Thijs Wittink



EYES OF THE KINGDOM

Thijs Wittink



FROST

Albert Yuk

THE NORTH TRAIN

Lucia Kinder

My father lets me ride north after the funeral.

Sheets of snow blow down in flocks from the eaves of window panes, white wings outstretched. The metal holding bars are cold and the whoosh of opening doors flings in freezing air from the platform. I see my reflection, briefly, and I think I will look older, then, but I can't recognize myself and I am younger than I feel.

I have the sound of an organ in my throat.

I recite my stop, again. I am not sure when, exactly, I am supposed to pull the passcom, so I watch—watch the short man with round, thickly-framed glasses and red leather grab the handle, his other hand turning the page of a newspaper, eyes running along the leftmost column, foot tapping silently, quickly. The man next to him stares but pretends not to, and I try to read his mind but draw blank, and boxed.

Whoosh. A woman steps in, her eyes down at a small Blackberry. A snowflake is caught at the end of her hair. I notice her fingers, long, as they reach out to hold the bar next to mine—she brings her head up to scan and the space stretches, breathes, snaps and draws cold, again. She looked tired, her eyes dipped in shades of stained glass.

I counted magenta clouds as the priest spoke, catching shards as they blew past to the organ. It murmured a gentle hum, vibration skidding down maple rows.

I look out the window. White becomes green, deepens, grows, then fills to white again and I wish I could remember his words but all I can see, now, is light—sun-dried and golden, licking the tracks. The last time, we went south and my father held my hand and pointed out the dropping street numbers until the signs were no longer visible, and the greys bled into pastures so deep and long I couldn't imagine there had been anything else before them. Spotted horses ran along the countryside and they reminded me of fighter jets, rocketing forward in shapeless blurs.

Now it is cold, and pale.

The second Sunday I had prayed for rain, so I wouldn't have to go and we could ride the subway again—so I could march through the station in rubber boots and he could show me the signs, east-west this time, and we could count until we were squinting at numbers and rain blurred the windows.

Whoosh. A mother, now, with her child, blanketed and rocking gently against her ribs. She does not scan. She watches her child. Her nose is red, her

eyes glass. The train lurches, then, and her left hand shoots out to hold on and she brings her eyes up for a second—a second she is not watching, and then she is back.

I remember the baby, crying in the front pew, as though each word broke him, and his mother's arms were around him but she was broken, too, and she couldn't will herself to hold on any tighter for fear she would stretch too thin and fall, hard, and cold.

I can see the faint outline of a chimney in the distance, clouds lifting through the brick neck. I recite my stop three times because my father always told me that if you say something three times you will never forget, and I hear his voice in my head as I remember.

His brother rode horses, and bulls too, outside the city. My father never wanted to ride with him, so they would sit on the steps in the evening and wish they were sitting on a porch like the one they had grown up on, and wish they could see stars.

The chimney grows as we get closer and I can see that it belongs to a barn. I catch fragments as we glide, and the thick-rimmed man is gone, now, but I cannot remember when he left. An older woman is in his place. She is knitting, which is strangely comforting. She does not seem cold, or edged.

I am the next stop—I think—and it will be time for me to get off and turn around. I do not like the turn arounds—I am forced to remember that I am from the city, not here, and I do not belong with the frozen streams and weeping birch but with pavement and glass, hollow and in shards along the street.

The sun bursts like the skin of a tomato, seeping through the sky and tracing pinks and yellows like food dye in shaving cream.

Whoosh. I feel the organ again, sharp and deep as wind billows in, snaps as the doors close. I get off. I watch the train blow on without me, and I sit down without turning my back to the tracks, as I was told.

I wait, then, to turn around, and I wish I could be going north still, but I must go back and ride home and watch my father fall like the Blackberry woman, and the red-nosed mother, and the thick-rimmed man and grieve in stained-glass magentas and deep-pasture greens because he is cold, and forgetting.



POLES

Albert Yuk



LINES THROUGH TIME

Thomas Schwarting



SPLITTING APART

Joanna Chang



(○▽○;)

Yong Ding

INCUBATION ODE

Katie Kim

You balanced me between your lifelines like a promise—held
in a nest of metal and hospital light, a fear you couldn't

name bubbling like a blister across your lips. You dreamt me
some God you never believed would reward you

with my slick and howling body: all splitting lips, static
hair, fingertips smudging the clear walls

between us. You mouthed words I'd later learn, your fingers printing
small clouds across the incubator's sky, colors dusting

like the bruises across your legs. Days later, tracing me
in the rearview, you drove us home. From outside, the years

chirped away, an infinite song spilling into the night markets
baptizing Seoul. I wanted to swim, so each morning

I swam. Life jacket suffocating in your arms, I slapped
the chlorine—butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke. I didn't know

you were afraid of water, only that you believed I could solve
third-grade multiplication tables before first, your voice

certain as a tack. But forgiveness always tasted sweet as the peaches
sliced into moons on my desk each afternoon, juice staining

the sleeves of my school uniform with joy. I wanted to solve
every problem I saw: how science curdled into mud & Dad chose

leaving over listening. I never forgot the day you sold
your engagement ring, gold speckled with ten years

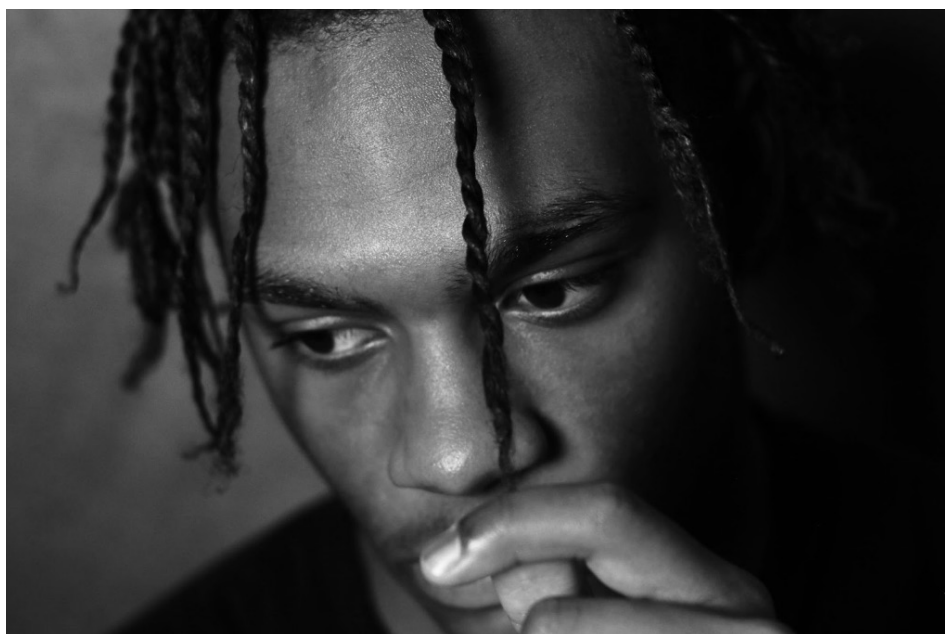
of silent dust. Slick and howling, words I'd later learn
clouded the sky. With metal in the August heat, hospital light.

left itself in handprints across our skin. In the sacrifice
I didn't even notice until I held each year up to the light.



VALUE STUDY

Adriana Enriquez



TWISTED

Jessica Luiru



SELF PORTRAIT

Alana McDonough



GUARDIANS

Nicanor Williams



AN ANIMALS FACE

Tyler Long

1

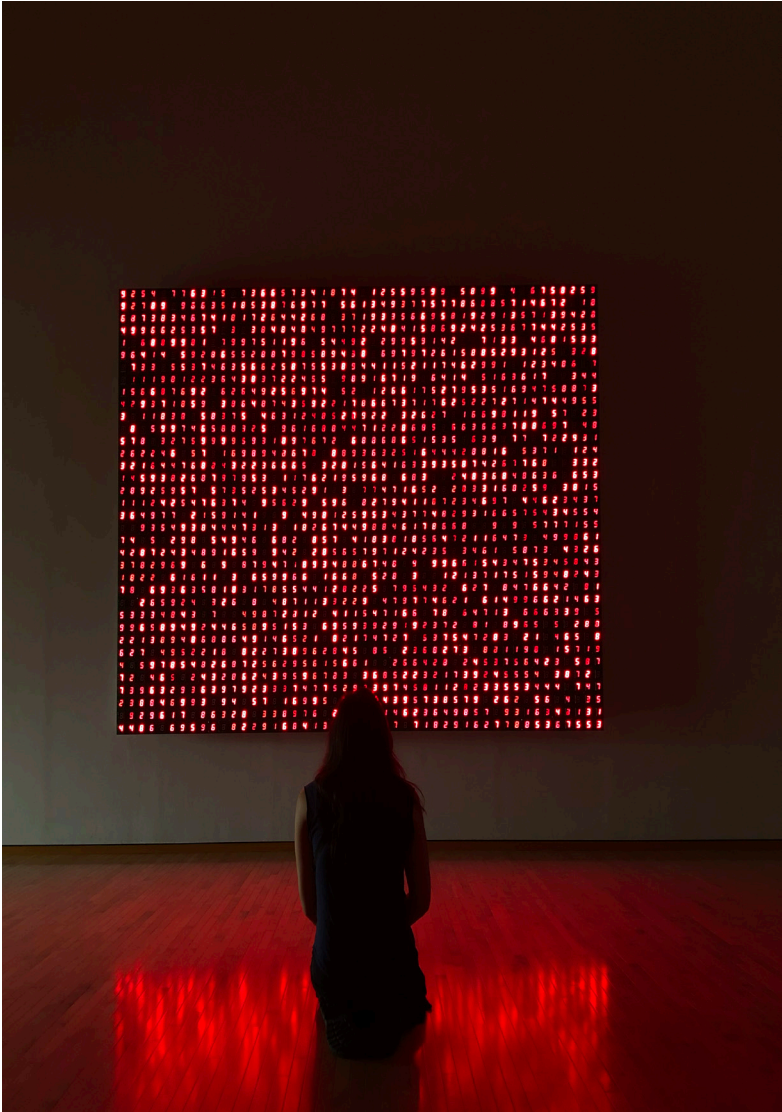
Amelia Dickson

Those Careful eyes provide no peace -
They watch my every move -
And sometimes - they will Sing to me -
The Tears falling like Drums -

A Heartbeat born from lack of Light -
Like Heaven - like a Curse -
The stretch of Sky we call upon -
When Searching for our words -

The Stars around glisten with Loss
They Cry at night - with me -
For those who wander - in the Dark
Above us - Restlessly

The Moon is fading in the Day -
And I would like to join -
The song is growing Louder now -
They Watched me - now I'm Gone -



OBSERVING THE EPHEMERAL

Nikita Weiss

THE THINGS TIME DOESN'T WAIT FOR

Davin Park

I know time never slows down, no matter how much I want it to.
I've tried to stretch it: walking slower through hallways, lingering on goodbyes, even pretending the alarm never went off. But it did. Time keeps going: ruthless and steady, like a bus that never stops to see who missed it.

I know silence doesn't always mean peace.
Sometimes it's the weight between two people who don't know what to say anymore. Sometimes it's just noise that has forgotten how to sound like comfort.

I know you can't force someone to care.
You can show up for them, every time, even when they wouldn't do the same for you.
You can give them everything... and still be left standing there, waiting like a fool.

I know people leave without slamming doors.
Sometimes they go quietly, like air leaving a balloon. And sometimes you don't notice until everything feels lighter, and you wish it didn't.

I know the past doesn't disappear: it just gets quieter.
It hums and flickers beneath new conversations.
You don't move on from the past; you just make room for it to sit beneath the present without asking too many questions.

I know that growing up isn't about getting stronger.
It's about learning how to live with what still hurts.
It's about realizing that some answers don't exist, and that's okay.

I know the world wouldn't wait for me to be ready, as it never has.
But maybe I don't need it to. Maybe the point isn't to slow things or fix silence, or hold onto every fading thing. Maybe the point is to keep moving, even when it hurts, even when you don't know what comes next.

And still, I know time never slows down.
But sometimes, I wish it did.



TWILIGHT COMMUTES

Harry Holtz

CONFESSIONS

Olivia Minn

If I could bottle up the quintessence of life, I would have a plastic cup of matcha. They say in Japan, the people who drink it die at one-hundred nineteen. But it's more than an elixir of life. I'd swear I wasn't an addict, but my eyes are bloodshot, saturated with emerald green, not red. Matcha runs in my veins. It tastes like the vegetables I despised eating as a child. It reminds me of the grass I tore from the earth with my tiny toddler hands. Matcha resembles the moss that climbs up the pebbles and pine tree roots in the forest. It's a drug, but I'm less captivated by its taste. I'm utterly intoxicated by the side-effects.

In June, in the midst of bustling crowds, canary yellow taxis, and the towering skyscrapers of New York City, a small café sits tucked into the corner of 1158 Broadway Street. Cha Cha Matcha is painted on the glass windows, in big, green letters. Square tiles and pink menus decorate the walls like art. My friend, Nia, and I sit at a circular, marble table, cradling matching matcha iced chais. Between sips, she tells me her parents had an arranged marriage, then divorced eleven years later. She admits to wishing she could stay with her brother in his apartment in San Francisco. She says her dad hits her.

In August, my friend Izzy and I sit in Ceremony, a cozy café on Thayer Street, a seven-minute walk from Brown University. Rays of sunlight spill from the windows behind me, illuminating her golden hair. While drinking an iced matcha latte, she tells me that on the fourth of July, she climbed a tree with Lazlo to watch the fireworks, colorful gunshots that tore holes into the night's black canvas. She laughs, says he was kind but strange, obsessed with flashlights. The song *Come a Little Closer* by Cage the Elephant played on his JBL speaker. She whispers that he hid weed in his flashlights.

Later in my Tesla, the seat heaters cranked all the way up, my dad watches the highway as we drive back to Boston for a three-day weekend in September. I grip my Starbucks Grande Iced Matcha Latte with less ice in my hand. The sticker reads, "Olivia." The windows are rolled down, and the wind ruffles my hair. My dad tells me he's proud of me. I somehow hear him over the noise of ice clinking in my cup and the hum of tires on the highway.

I think maybe matcha isn't just a drink, after all. Every sip is a confession. It's a story poured into a plastic cup. Its green has stained my tongue and my memories. Somewhere between the ice cubes, I have always found human connection.



CUPS

Lila Keir

HORSE

Aaron Han

I don't remember why I carry the photograph. Sentimentality, maybe. It's old, sepia-toned, creased at the edges—my grandmother laughing beside an oak tree, back when trees weren't synthetic, plastic.

In the front row, beside me, a philosopher rubs his temple, murmuring about the “fabric of human nature.” Collectors tap their paddles against their knees. I just sit there, waiting, fingers brushing the worn edges of that photograph.

The auctioneer's voice slithers through the crowd. “A relic from the past. Something ancient. Something alive.”

The curtain drops.

Gasps. Applause.

It is pathetic. Spindly legs trembling under the weight of its own existence. Its dull eyes, glassy and unfocused, dart between the silhouettes in the crowd. A carpet-like coat hangs in patchy strips over a body strapped with metallic braces. The auctioneer grins. “Behold, ladies and gentlemen—Equus caballus! A proud member of the long-extinct kingdom...Animalia!”

Bids erupt like fireworks. Hands shoot up, voices clash. “It represents our lost bond with nature!” the philosopher beside me declares. “No—it's a testament to human advancement!” another retorts.

I watch it wobble and sway, gnawed by the way it teeters between movement and collapse. I wonder if anyone's going to help it, but instead, a bid shoots up to seven, no, eight figures.

The gavel strikes.

The winning bidder beams as technicians rush onto the stage, securing the horse onto a rig. “Lift it up,” he declares, “The world needs to see this!”

Cameras flash. Excitement ripples through the crowd. The rig whirs to life, cables pulling taut. The horse rises, hanging like a marionette with severed strings. The crowd roars, “Long livethe horse!” Then its body jerks. Its mouth opens, but no sound comes—only the mechanical hum of the rig. Its legs flail, desperate, then slow. The lights in its eyes dim to nothing.

The crowd cheers.

A voice beside me whispers, “It's so poetic.”

Something inside me cracks. I turn, searching for a face that mirrors my horror, but all I see are cameras capturing the “historic moment.” I scrunch my fist, crumpling the photograph in my pocket. I feel sick. I feel—

Then, they announce the next auction.

The auctioneer lifts a small object. “Polypropylene,” he declares.
“Otherwise known as—a spoon.”

The room erupts.

I want to laugh, to scream. But then a holo-screen flashes: LIMITED
EDITION. EXCLUSIVE OFFER.

I pause.

The screen flickers: FIRST-TIME BIDDERS GET 30% DISCOUNT.

My fingers twitch. A breath, a beat—I raise my hand. A bid. My heartbeat
pounds in my ears. The auctioneer’s grin widens.

In my pocket, my fingers brush against the old photograph.

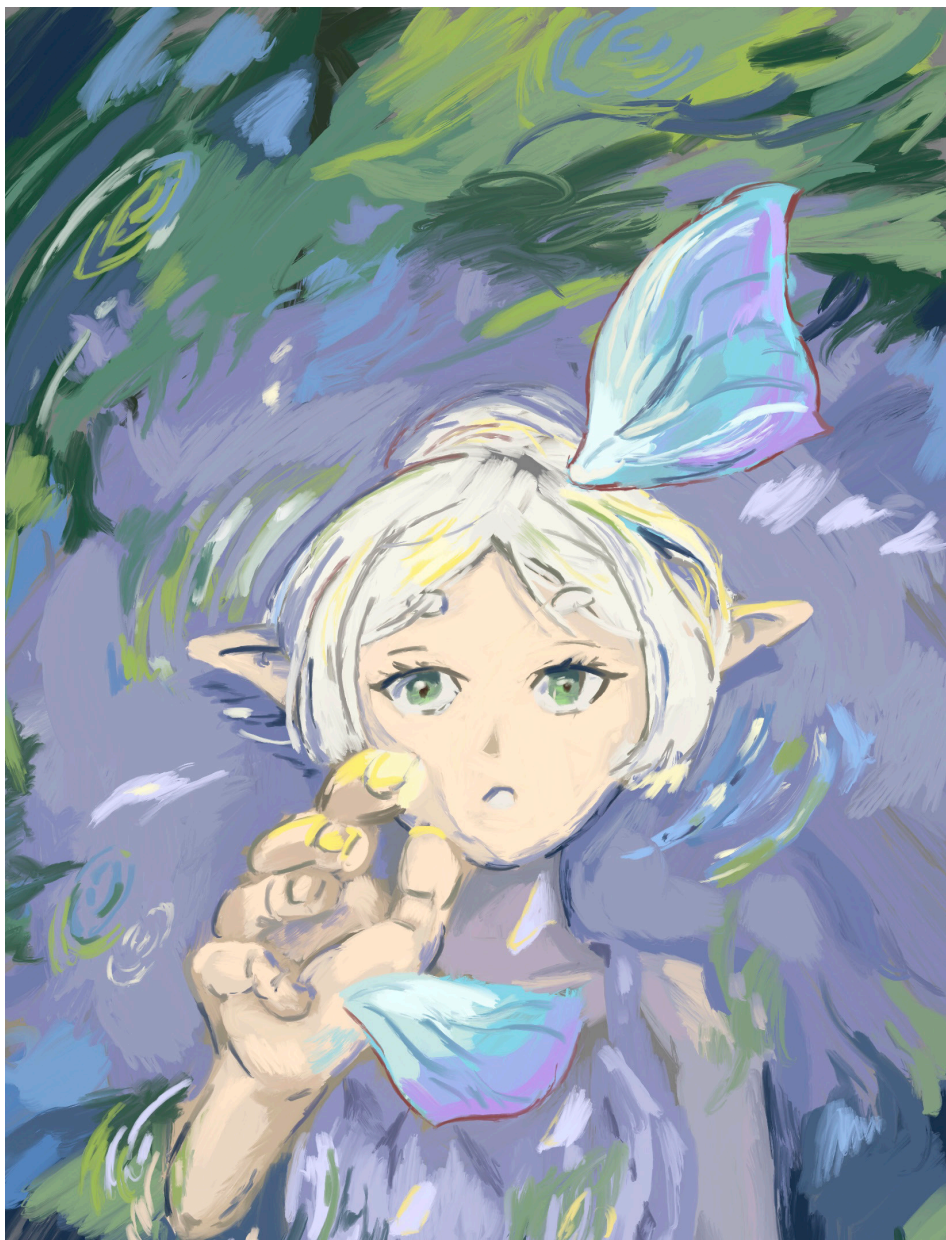
I hesitate. Just for a moment.

And then I let it go.



GOLDFISH

Aaron Han



葬送のフリーレン

Jonathan Xu



SUMMER

Patrick Zhang

BELLRINGER

Leelab Vijapur

front door, walk through, say hello to the principal, your friend's baby sister, was that a weird smile? oh, that bell was loud, class, which class, math, the test, I didn't study, I got a ninety-four, she got a one hundred, I promise I understand, $a^2+b^2=c^2$, opposite angles, are those congruent?, shove, bell, shove, history, Mirabeau B Lamar, second president of Texas, terrible man, sectionalism, civil, terrible war, shove, bell, shove, lunch, you talk about the binary and communism, I'm sorry, I don't know what that means, I'm sorry, you talk about 'Whipped Cream Frappe Strawberry Iced Lattes' and curling your hair, I don't know what that means, I'm sorry, you talk about love and acceptance and queerness and I don't know what that means, I'm sorry, shove, bell, shove, homeroom, I pledge allegiance to the flag, honor the Texas flag, a moment of silence, a state under god, I don't believe in god, I just don't get it.

Shove, bell, shove, science, ugh, sex ed, ugh, yes, I have ovaries, yes, I know what they are, no, I don't really want to discuss them with you, I swear, I know what they are, shove, bell, shove, my friends find me in the hallway, are they my friends, I tune them out with "are they my friends?", walk, faster, faster, don't run in the hallways, and I'm out the door, shove, walk, it's only a mile home, only one man right behind me, only one man right behind me, only one person I know across the street, only one homeless man, only one crosswalk, I am home, I am imprisoned, only another night, another day, another century, I am trapped, I am free, I just don't get it.



SUNDAY VACANCY

Charlie Rolland



SHADOWS

Gigi Selvig



AFTER PRACTICE

Ilsa Borgen



MORNING IN THE CASEWELL

Sabine Stevens



LIFE FROM BELOW

Thijs Wittink



PONDSIDE PEACE

Leo Feng

I REMEMBER

Isabel Sands

I remember the warmth of the
golden sun
that held me in its gentle arms
flowing like a veil,
surrounding me.

I remember the ivory sand
our curious hands sifted through,
looking for glass to add to our collections.

Captivated by your stories of
blue lightning-catching bottles,
we carried on with our search,
Mason jars held close to our eyes— they turned to spy glasses.

I remember the graveyard
where I'd stood with wettened cheeks, as I'd never met
who laid there.

I remember the magnificent tree, whose other-wordly gaze
made us feel small,
and we called it ours.

I remember the pond,
where Remi played with soiled paws
that searched for a yellow tennis ball.
You would shout for him to get out so he wouldn't get muddy.

But I remember most,
when with a ghostly crash
and red clay newly
gold under the sunlight,
our sugary sweet memories
became

just
memories.

A highway ran through
my magnificent tree,
now parted from its home in soil,
and me, its closest friend.

Severed from that graveyard,
where I'd never really got to know
those people I had never met.

Dirt my sweet Remi fertilized piled
Somewhere...

I don't remember.

I remember your saddened eyes,
the waver in your saddened voice
as we strode,
my hand safe in yours,
and bid our last goodbye.

Goodbye to paths we used to roam

Goodbye to treasured shards of glass,
now never to be found.

Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye
our home flipped upside down.

Verdant grasses turned ashy concrete
remind us
that nothing lasts forever,
except our memories.

For Nana



DOUBLE VISION: MIRROR IMAGES

Blake Coleman



BLOCKED PATHS

Nicanor Williams

THE WISH

Aaron Han

Spring runs ahead
Like a little boy
Bare knees flashing
Soft winds blowing
Catching a pinwheel spinning in his fist As he runs forward
The blue and red of his clothes
Blending into
the horizon—

Spring runs ahead—

He laughs
Crisp like the morning air
And I almost follow
But the knees don't work like they used to.

“Make a wish,”
Mama once said,
As she held a
Dandelion to my lips
“But don't say it out loud.”
And I didn't.
Just closed my eyes
Blew
Soft
Sent the puffs into the air
Like little parachutes
And maybe
Maybe
They will find their way
Back home
Before supper

I think—
Just maybe—
Before supper.
The field is quiet now.
The dandelions are all bare-headed Nodding slowly
Slowly,
Quietly
In the wind
Like the bald heads
Of old men
Nodding in the wind
And I wonder
Where the puffs had all gone
Tens of thousands of them
All scattered—
Where did they go?
Where did they go?

But I don't remember anymore.

And the boy in the distance
I see him turn around
And he says
“Grandpa, let's go.”
He runs ahead again
But stops, waits for me.
And the soft wind blows
Catching the pinwheel spinning in his fist—
Catching the pinwheel spinning in his fist—
Catching the pinwheel spinning—

And for a moment
I almost remember
What I meant to wish for.



THIJS

Yong Ding



MORNING THOUGHTS

Thijs Wittink



MORNING ACTIONS

Thijs Wittink



CAUGHT IN MOTION

Thijs Wittink



WHITECUBE

Jessica Luiru



DARK THOUGHTS

Nicanor Williams

ITHACA

Naomi Kim

All lands to him were Ithaca, love tossed,
for these, the masses of grey before him, were not his home.
Medallions and symbols of his victory lined his ship,
giving it a magnificent cloak—to hide the void within.
All alone amidst blue waves of yearning,
roses of pain bloomed in his chest, threatening
to swallow him. But he stood tall and firm, ready
to face his home not home, his friend turned enemy.
And no one lingered as his spears towards Ithaca pointed,
as it was all but a longing soon to be destroyed...



MORNINGS IN THE TETONS

Thomas Schwarting



WHITE DESERT

Thijs Wittink



THE VIRGIN OF THE ROCKS CLOSE-UP

Jonathan Xu

HANGUL ABECEDARIAN FOR HALMONI¹

Katie Kim

after Franny Choi

Gone: the smoothness between the syllables of my name. Her fingers unbraided knots from the century she still lives in—a century of hanbok² and yeot³.

Dying legs folded beneath her, she's stubborn as the baskets filled with laundry from Dad's marathon. She sits beside me, close enough to smell my lice shampoo.

Most days she asks me, What you eat today? Every day, another photo of banchans⁴ on my plate. She worries the vegetables she sends home won't fill me up.

Licorice stains the inside of her suitcase black, leftover from her trip. I don't leave Korea until Sunday, but she's already mailed letters I'll open when I return.

Germ! Halmoni says each time she scrubs my hands with hers, thumbs pressing circles of soap into my palms. In her eyes, I'm still five and struggling to reach the faucet.

Can I be alone right now? I asked once. The words didn't sound like mine, so I typed, I'm sorry, even though she still doesn't know how to check Messages.

Pausing before I enter the kitchen, I rehearse: mi-yan-hae-yo⁵. I see Halmoni smile, placing chopsticks beside noodles she cooked for me. They're still warm.

1 *Grandmother* in Korean

2 Traditional Korean clothing

3 Korean malt candy

4 Various small side dishes served with a Korean meal

5 *I'm sorry* in Korean



EARLY MORNINGS

Alana McDonough

SHAKESPEARE SOLILOQUY

Alana McDonough

V.2 Enter Hippolyta

[Theseus's voice is heard offstage]

THESEUS Come now, Hippolyta we've not much time
O Marry, night hath never looked so clear,
Make haste, for wane, which I do love to see,
Is cursed, by wax, Tis my true enemy!

[Hippolyta hesitates toward the door]

HIPPOLYTA Remember, love, that lust be most untame,
Temptation doth live yea in noble men.
As well, a maiden first must primp and preen,
For paradise, you swear, that I will see.

[Hippolyta takes a short pause, opening her mouth to say something,
but stays silent for a while longer]

[In almost a whisper]

For if thy days passed as they do for me,
Thy wait wilt cease in haste as ones next breath

[Hippolyta walks away from the door and to the windowsill in her chambers]

[Returns to regular volume]

The man whom I'm betrothed to speaks the truth,
Alas! Sweet moon, the sky lives now unlit
And what wast once shone in your glow so bright,
Lies now obscured in Hades evil gloom.

By virtue be without your watchful eye,
Over the love between that beast and I,
O, It'd be treason for one pure and true
To think of all the things that duke could do!
O Phoebe! How I call upon thine name!
To guide my thought back to what he recalls,
As Hellish! Horrid! Fit for no true man!
The Amazons! Where those who loved me rest,
My sisters! Whom still beat upon my drum,
They keep my sorry heart yet pumping blood.
Perceived as just mere loot for his fine vie,
A crown, adorned with what may twist and bend,
The likes of all his company and men.

[Mockingly]

“Hark! There is no man across this wondrous Earth,
Who match his strength and utter forcefulness!”

[Returns to normal cadence]

[Hippolyta leans out the windowsill]

O, Warm and fruitful moon I dote on thee!
Your light opens my eyes to what could be,
But he hath cast his shadow over thee,
And waited till you must become anew,
To say “It’s now! That I must marry you!”
I front this union and I do perpend
The action that wilst bring my life to end!

[Hippolyta takes a long pause and the sounds of wild animals and wind fill the
room]

[Hippolyta gasps]

You quicken that which I have failed to mark,
Alack, in all my coils and dismay,
That you do live not only with the stars,
But here! On Earth! In every beast and hunt.
That zany Duke thought only of the moon,
So now the ground is where I must turn to,
Where Pheobe doth wait with her hands that ought
To heal the wounds which labeled me your fawn.

I see it plain he wants my chastity,
Though soon my stalling warrants one to stir,
And sends so forth his men, they’re told to force.
But when they find this room, to their suprise
They shall not sight that young and eager bride,
No more she roams with man, those thieves of hope
But back, returned, to nature and the Earth.
Instead, they meet a silent light-less room
With wind that tells its tales of near-to doom,
Of those who found Diana and her grace
‘Fore any sin of man hath taken place.

[The stage goes dark and Hippolyta disappears from the windowsill]



SPECTRUM OF SELF

Shelby Acquavella

THE YATES TO MY YAN

Julie Yan

The Yates To My Yan

—for JY

When I was fifteen,
I met a girl with a name like mine, whose personality was so opposite mine—
Who loved me, whom I loved, & she taught me
How to not care. We skipped to breakfast
Holding hands in the early morning, & danced in the torrential downpours of
early fall.
In the winter, we blasted our “just keep swimming” playlist on the way to practice,
skated to the
 Frozen soundtrack, & built a snowman impulsively—
I remember looking off at the evergreen hedges that sheltered us,
The clear blue sky, & crisp white snow.
We learned “How to Save a Life” using bright red tubes & a backboard. There,
They called us Yan & Yates (because our first names were too similar). Then,
We escaped the bitter New England cold & watched Grey’s Anatomy in bed, eating
trail mix (her by the handful & me picking out the raisins,
chocolate chips, & m&m’s from among salted tree nuts).
In the spring, she found a janky RipStik & I bought a penny board—
We learned how to ride them, holding onto each other.
We did our homework down by the river, interrupted by short swims & a journey
in a pink
 floatie towards the Connecticut.
I had no free time, but she made me find it—
For her.
What joy I could’ve felt!—
If I had been a little more like her, if I had cared a little less about what anyone
thought of me
And if, instead, I had lived as best I knew,
If I had skipped down empty streets, danced in the rain, built the snowmen,
Then there might be more scars on my shins & perhaps a broken bone
And maybe I would’ve felt complete before
Fifteen—
When I met the Yates to my Yan.



BROTHERS

Nicanor Williams

DEERFIELD'S DYING EMBERS

Kyle Yang

Dear Theodore,

20 September 1941

I hope you are doing well. I extend my heartfelt congratulations from Hawaii on being part of the senior class and becoming the Editor in Chief of The Scroll. I hope your Deerfield days bring you joy, but do not separate you from the current monumental global affairs. The captain is calling the crew in for a debrief. I will write again soon.

Your Loving Brother,
Charles

The Deerfield Scroll, Volume XVI, Number 2, 18 October 1941

Football Team To Play Choate Eleven

—

Captain Moakler To Head Green And White In Annual Game; Changes In Line-Up

—

Student Body To Attend

“Theo! Are you coming to the football game?” A loud bellow resonated down the hallway.

“Yeah! Let me put my turtleneck on.” Theo yelled back.

As they stepped out of the dormitory, a gentle breeze grazed their cheeks, dyeing them a hearty and rosy red. The red and golden leaves floated through the azure expanse above a field of the verdant green blades. As they began strolling towards the football field, a loud shout and intermittent pants interrupted them: “Theo! Andrew! Wait for me!”

Andrew and Theo, exchanging a glance and a smile, began to sprint away towards the football field. “Hey! Don’t run away! Wait!”

As they reached the field, gasping for air, the enemy’s yellow and blue came into sight. Surely, Deerfield would avenge their embarrassing 28-0 defeat the previous year.

Dear Theodore,

15 November 1941

I hope you are doing well. I have heard that you will be on Thanksgiving break soon. Please extend my regards to our mother and father; I have sincerely missed them. Regarding The Scroll, I am glad that you are maintaining its high quality. I hope your Deerfield days continue to be glorious.

The past two weeks have been incredibly tumultuous with the inclement weather and increased Japanese aggression in the Pacific. It seems they are attempting to occupy Indochina fully. We are on careful watch. The conflict is much closer to home than we had thought. I advise you to continue exercising prudence.

Your Loving Brother,
Charles

The field outside Theo's dorm was now covered entirely by a blanket of white. Looking out the window, he could barely squint out the outline of the Main School Building, its variegated bricks shrouded by the descending snow.

"Theo, get your racket; we have practice in ten minutes!"

"Okay!"

On their way to the squash courts, the white fluff began to cover their hair and vision. "One second, let me get something."

Out of nowhere, Theo felt an icy explosion on his back. "Got you!" Andrew began to run away in the snow, laughing, only to slip and fall face-first into the frosty winter pillow. "No, I got you!" Theo laughed back, burying his own snowball into Andrew's thick coat.

Dear Theodore,

25 December 1941

This may be one of my last letters for the time being. Please extend my Christmas regards to our mother and father. To write truthfully, I should not be alive. The Japanese attacked on December 7th. I was aboard the ship when the enemy planes began sending loud explosions throughout our fleet. Then, as black smoke emerged from the deck, those of us still there dove into the ocean. Several

of my fellow crewmen drowned with the capsized ship. I heard their screams echoing from the sinking hull, but I knew that any heroism would be futile.

I'm probably going to war.

Your Loving Brother,
Charles

“Did you see the news? That we’re at war?”

“Really Theo? I thought President Roosevelt promised to keep us out of it.”

“Yeah, but we really are at war now.”

“Also, are you going to the basketball game? I heard it’s going to be a big one.”

“Yeah, of course.”

The Deerfield Scroll, Volume XVI, Number 6, 24 January 1942

Varsity [Basketball] Shades Williston In Last Minute, 26-24

—

Jerry Page Breaks Deadlock On Pass From Dibble; Game Is Close And Exciting

—

Dibble Scores 14 Points

Dear Theodore Foster Tillinghast Crolius,

14 February 1942

We congratulate you on your acceptance to Princeton’s class of 1946...

Dear Theodore,

20 May 1942

The Japanese are fighting much more fiercely than we had previously thought. The tainted sounds of torpedo explosions and enemy fire now often

rouse me from my sleep. We have had success recently, but I still can't forget the emanating screams and banging metal. I don't think I can ever forget.

By the time you receive this letter, you will probably have already graduated from Deerfield and chosen a college to continue your education. Congratulations, you have a great future ahead of you. I sincerely hope it will be peaceful.

Your Loving Brother,
Charles

Under warm spring rays of sunlight and an azure sky, Theo and 154 other students gathered in the Brick Church.

"...Let the circling night be softened, by the embers' last faint glow..." The evensong's soft melody reverberated through the church's clammy and suffocating air.

"Congratulations to the class of 1942 for graduating with extraordinary athletic and academic achievements."

The Deerfield Scroll, Volume XVI, Number 12, 3 June 1942

Varsity To Face Williston Here This Afternoon... James W. Wickenden Chosen Headmaster of Tabor Academy...155 To Receive Diplomas Today In Brick Church... Five Are Successful In Scroll Editorial Contest...

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Crolius,

19 June 1942

I deeply regret to inform you that your son First Lieutenant Charles Crolius was killed in action on 5 June 1942 at the Midway Islands in the performance of his duty and service to his country. Remains not recovered...

The New York Times, Volume XCI, Number 30815, 7 June 1942

2, Perhaps 3, Japanese Carriers Sunk With All Their Planes, Nimitz Reports; 3 Battleships, 8 Other Warships Damaged...

The Letter had only arrived once Theodore returned from commencement. In his mind, from the moment Charles had left for Hawaii, he had been an invincible hero. He would certainly survive, and his miraculous escape on December 7th only seemed to corroborate that belief. For that reason, he had only dwelt in the back of Theodore's mind.

But now? Hadn't we won at Midway? Hadn't we sunk several carriers? If so, how could The Letter be true?

Theodore's Deerfield days had ended just three weeks ago, but it was already a past life. Those glorious, glorious days. His consciousness, now trapped under that church's cold roof, incessantly echoed: "The embers' last faint glow." Over and over. Over and over and over again. Breaking out of the church, he saw no trees, no Old Main Street, no Albany Road, no Andrew, no Mr. Boyden.

He was no longer at Deerfield.



ПОШУК
Julia Horobets

WHERE DO YOU MAKE HOME?

Emmanuel Atiegha

People love to say home is where you make it, but what does that mean for an immigrant? My parents left their home in Nigeria with my two sisters, ages 7 and 4. They aimed on moving to America, to become the epitome of success. They quickly realized how under-prepared they were, moving into a dingy, two story house, where they only had access to the second floor, with the first being for the landlord. It was never home to them, that house on Frazer Street, as all they could think about was their real home in Nigeria, as if they were forced to go on a long vacation, surrounded by unfamiliar faces in an unfamiliar land. They hated my home on Frazer Street. I loved my home on Frazer Street.

I had nothing else to compare it to, nothing to miss in Nigeria. I was a natural born American, and proud to be one. I loved pizza and burgers and hated any food with a hint of African spice. Meanwhile my sisters enjoyed their pizza and loved their egusi soup, and loved that tangy, African spice so much that when they spoke, I'd pinch my nose, praying the spice doesn't stick to me. Even as my sisters kept their home in Nigeria, they loved their American vacation home, my home. They filled it with their American Girl dolls, dressed in handsewn Nigerian native dress.

As I grew, I continued to merge with my home on Frazer Street, leaving my Nigerian heritage in the dirt. People would ask me my race, and I couldn't help but wonder why they laughed when I said my answer of "American". They'd ask me about my tribe, and now it was my turn to laugh as I hollered in ignorance. They'd come up to me and say something in my native language, and we would get lost in each other's eyes as they waited for a response that would never come. I knew everything about my home on Frazer Street. I knew about the basement I wasn't allowed in, the dogs in the blue house down the street, Vikos Pizza and Grill down the corner, yet I knew nothing of my family's home in Nigeria.

When my oldest sister left for boarding school, right at the peak of my American life, my family was evicted from my home on Frazer Street, and forced to move to a dingy, two story house, where we had access to both the first and second floor because we owned the house. Even though my home on Frazer Street was a 30 minute drive away, it felt like I was trapped in a whole new country, surrounded by unfamiliar faces in an unfamiliar land. I was lost, trapped inside with the memories I had left of the culture I had claimed. All I could do was dream of leaving this long vacation and going back home to Frazer Street. I hated their home on Shaw Street.

By the time I started my tenure at Deerfield, I had regressed, fearful to talk to anyone that didn't remind me of my home, crying myself to sleep on my first night. I'd call my mom any chance I got, asking her to visit when she could, but

she never would. My home was all but gone. I realized that if I wanted to succeed, become the epitome of success like my parents dreamed of so long ago, I would have to adapt like my sisters had. I would stare those unfamiliar faces straight in their eyes, overjoyed when I realized how familiar their faces truly were. I managed to not just find my home on Shaw Street, but to also enjoy my Deerfield vacation home. I filled them with my memories of Frazer Street.



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*“In the sacrifice
I didn’t even notice until I held each year up to the light.”
-Katie Kim, “incubation ode”*

