



Our glaS

2021-22

Hello Ourglass Community!

Ourglass, now in its 42nd year of publication, is the journal of the English, Graphic Design and Visual Art Departments at Community College of Denver. We are dedicated to providing a forum for the poetry, prose, drama, design and artwork of our students.

Students, submit your work!

Ourglass publishes the best creative work produced each year by CCD students. To that end, we accept submissions from each academic year (summer to spring).

Please submit one 10-minute play, one story, essay, set of 3-5 poems, or a set of 2-4 flash-short stories, as well as any interesting combinations thereof. We aim to publish a variety of styles, voices, and genres.

All writing submissions will be eligible for the Leonard Winograd Award. Now in its fourth year, this award, named in honor of Leonard Winograd, longtime English professor and editor of Ourglass at CCD. Finalists are chosen by the editors, and the winner selected by a faculty member.

To find out more, or to donate to the Winograd Award, go to [CCD.edu/Ourglass](https://ccd.edu/Ourglass). The link for writing submissions is located at [CCD.edu/Ourglass](https://ccd.edu/Ourglass). To submit artwork, please contact Lincoln Phillips, Professor of Visual Arts, at lincoln.phillips@ccd.edu.

Due to the sheer volume of work we must consider, please be patient with our response time, usually 4-6 months. If you don't hear from us, please contact us at ccd.ourglass@ccd.edu.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook I [Facebook.com/CCDOurglass](https://www.facebook.com/CCDOurglass)

If you have any other questions, email us at the address above.

Thank you,
THE EDITORS

Letter from the Editors

The Community College of Denver is a place of change driven by its ever-evolving student body. Students from every background come here to learn and grow, and Ourglass is proud to be a space where such a community can share their voices among one another. This year's edition continued the legacy of reflecting CCD's diverse student body while allowing the ever-evolving voices found here to guide the journal's vision. Through the multitude of walks of life at CCD, we hope the readers of our Journal will find a collection of galaxies built beyond what a singular perspective could ever create within this year's edition. However, like the galaxies connected by space itself, the act of living life and the desire to bottle such vastness into a creative work connected to the diverse assortment of voices—no matter if it was through a dark and gritty mystery, the complex simplicity of poetry, or the innumerable stories captured within the visual artforms like drawing, graphic design, and photography. This edition displays some of the finest work CCD has to offer and we at Ourglass couldn't be prouder of our student body for allowing us to honor their work. Ourglass is pleased to display the finest of the 2021 to 2022 submissions to you, our community. We hope that you will see a bit of yourself in this diverse and beautiful edition.

Sincerely,
THE EDITORS

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Blackbird

by Bianca Gonzalez

The black SUV rolls through the timid streets of my suburban childhood like a hearse. Identical houses and their identical oak trees flash past my window, one after the other, and I feel like I'm in a time loop. Sitting on the black leather driver's seat is my father, his hands on ten and two of the steering wheel, staring intently at the stale gray horizon. Next to him, my mother gnaws anxiously at the already short nail of her index finger. This, and cigarettes, are her only faults, since every other aspect of her screams austerity. I, on the other hand, am full of faults, and in an effort to forget this well-known fact begin to pinch the skin hidden beneath the sleeve of my shirt. Lucas has already fallen asleep, his small hands wrapped gently around a worn-down teddy bear. The air is so thick with silence that I can hardly breathe.

What's for dinner?" I ask quietly, knowing very well I won't be eating with my family tonight. My father quickly glances at the rearview mirror before returning his gaze to the road.

"You'll see." replies my mother honestly. She doesn't know I saw the signed papers, the ones with my name written in perfect cursive next to the letters typed "Patient Name." Dangling off my shoulder is a heavy school bag, usually packed with books and pens, is now stuffed with winter clothes, a toothbrush, and \$857 in cash. I smooth down the pleated skirt of my uniform and adjust the collar of my white polo, the one where the embroidered 'L' on the "Our Lady of Lourdes" has unraveled to look like a short 'l'. I pretend not to notice when I hear the sound of luggage tossing violently to one side of the trunk as we turn a corner. It's a 45-minute drive to the rehabilitation facility, and I've got 35 minutes to think of a way out of the car.

The idea of running away is not something new to me. When I was younger, Isaac and I used to think of ways to escape from our parents, making up elaborate plans to sneak out and move to a big city. It was the constant arguing between our parents that Isaac hated the most. When things got too loud he would take me into his room and play music on his stereo. As we grew older, Isaac spent less time with me and more time alone in his room with his stereo at the loudest volume possible. Next month marks two years since I knocked on his blue door to listen to music, only to find him hanging from the ceiling fan, his lips purple and his neck broken. I couldn't speak for weeks.

One by one I hear the familiar sound of raindrops crashing onto the roof of the car. We're 10 minutes away from the freeway now, on the sketchier side of town. The only people outside

in the heavy rain are those without a home to run to. I know that if I escape it has to be before we leave the city, or else it will be too late. I swallow the lump that has been forming in my throat since Monday, the day my mother found my diary. She was probably expecting to find pages written about cute boys, calculus tests, or vapid high school drama. Instead, she found the word "addiction" hastily written in sparkly purple gel pen. She searched every inch of my room, scattering clothes on the floor, rummaging through purses and backpacks, until she finally looked inside my old toy chest and found the things I wish I had never touched. I came home from school to see the 12-ounce whiskey bottles displayed in a neat line across my wooden desk, the same way my 'Star Student' trophies sat on the living room shelf. Between the screams and pill bottles rattling in my face, I could hear my wheezing breath struggling to escape my lungs. I couldn't look at anything except for the blue door across from mine, thinking about how I would be shoved into some dark corner in the same way Isaac's death was hidden from the prying eyes of our church. I didn't try to explain or defend myself, I just sat there, waiting for my parents to leave so I could reach inside my wallet for the two Ambien pills I kept for emergencies.

I never thought I'd be a drug addict. No horoscope or teen magazine personality test can predict that. I guess I should have known something like this was going to happen to me the day I was diagnosed. When I was nine years old, the nice doctor with the big desk told my parents I had obsessive-compulsive disorder, among other disorders, and that it would be hard for me to forget about something once my brain latched onto it. I always thought of it as separate from me, my brain, like it was a person I was stuck with for the rest of my life. I was normal and complete. My brain was the one that was fragmented, like a broken record repeating the same part of a song.

"I hope you made meatloaf and mashed potatoes." I say, a bit louder now. Mother shoots me a glance from the rear-view mirror. She knows that was Isaac's favorite meal, and we aren't supposed to talk about him.

"Lucas is sleeping," she whispers harshly, her eyes now on the logo of my uniform. "And I thought I told you not to wear that shirt. What message do you think you're sending?" I move my hand to my upper thigh, gently grazing the scars I have made over the years, and pinch my skin until the urge to cry subsides. After a few seconds of silence, I take in a big breath of air.

"I sure hope people don't think I look like a drug addict or anything." I answer, wiping the tear that has escaped onto my right cheek, and laugh. My father looks at my mother, who has now unbuckled her seatbelt to face me completely. Her stare makes my throat close up. I try to avoid looking at the dark eyes glaring through the space between the headrest and the seat.

"Don't you dare speak to me like that. I didn't raise you to act like this. I did everything right. Everything. Always cleaning up other people's messes, helping everyone but myself. Always," she says, still whispering. She sits back down and buckles up, muttering things under

her breath about how she never treated her parents the way I did.

Without warning my eyes fill up with tears. The familiar feeling of regret dances into my head, sarcastically pirouetting until I come to the conclusion that birth was my greatest mistake. I turn to look at my baby brother, at his rosy cheeks, and I'm reminded of what youth looks like. The brightness in the eyes, the subtle smile that rests on a cherubic face of blissful oblivion. Lucas tightens his grip on the teddy bear, the same one Isaac gifted me when I turned 8. I let the tears cascade down my face, but it doesn't feel like I'm crying. I feel like I'm exhaling.

The car is inching closer and closer to the freeway. If I escape it has to be now.

"It's your fault, you know. I turned to all of that stuff because you were the one that decided medication wouldn't help me. You were-" My heart beats aggressively, mimicking the quick patter of raindrops on the window next to me. My father, for the first time in days, looks into my eyes. I shut mine and keep talking.

"How can you tell a child that her compulsions were because of the Devil? It- It doesn't make sense. Prayer doesn't help with this and you know that. God, you have to know it's your fault." I say, really crying now. I open my eyes, and through the blurry mess of tears and mascara see that my father has stopped looking at me and is now staring vacantly at the raindrops falling down the windshield. My mother, holding her crying face in her hands, starts to pray.

My throat has closed up and I can't seem to inhale properly anymore. I'm having an anxiety attack. The car has shrunk to half its size and the seatbelt feels as if it's gluing me in place. I look at the speedometer. The car is going 45 miles an hour. I can't possibly get out now. We're not close enough to the sidewalk so I'd have to run across the busy street. I don't know if I can pull this off, but I also don't mind if I die trying.

All of a sudden, the blue light of the radio flashes on and plays loud Christmas music. Lucas wakes up, drops the bear, and starts crying. As my mother fumbles with the dial of the radio, my father turns into the right lane, placing me two feet from the safety of the sidewalk. I stop breathing entirely. I know I have to act now. As quietly and as slowly as possible I unbuckle my seat belt, hoping to God my mother keeps trying to get Lucas to calm down instead of looking at me. The rain pours down harder than before as the SUV comes to a stop. I unlock the door and quickly pull at the metal handle. My mother turns towards me and reaches out her hand, grasping at any part of me she can hold onto. I thrust open the door and hear the sound of fabric tearing. I rush out into the cold, cutting off my mother's cries as I slam the black door shut behind me. Putting one foot in front of the other, I run faster than I have ever run in my life. The rain drenches my red curls completely until they almost straighten, growing darker and darker as I run farther and farther away from my family. I feel the cold water on my skin, washing away every bit of pain and suffering I have felt since the moment I was born. I laugh maniacally between breaths. I don't care if I get caught. For the first time in my life, I feel free.



Hair Study by Jessamyn Geesaman
Best of Drawing Level I

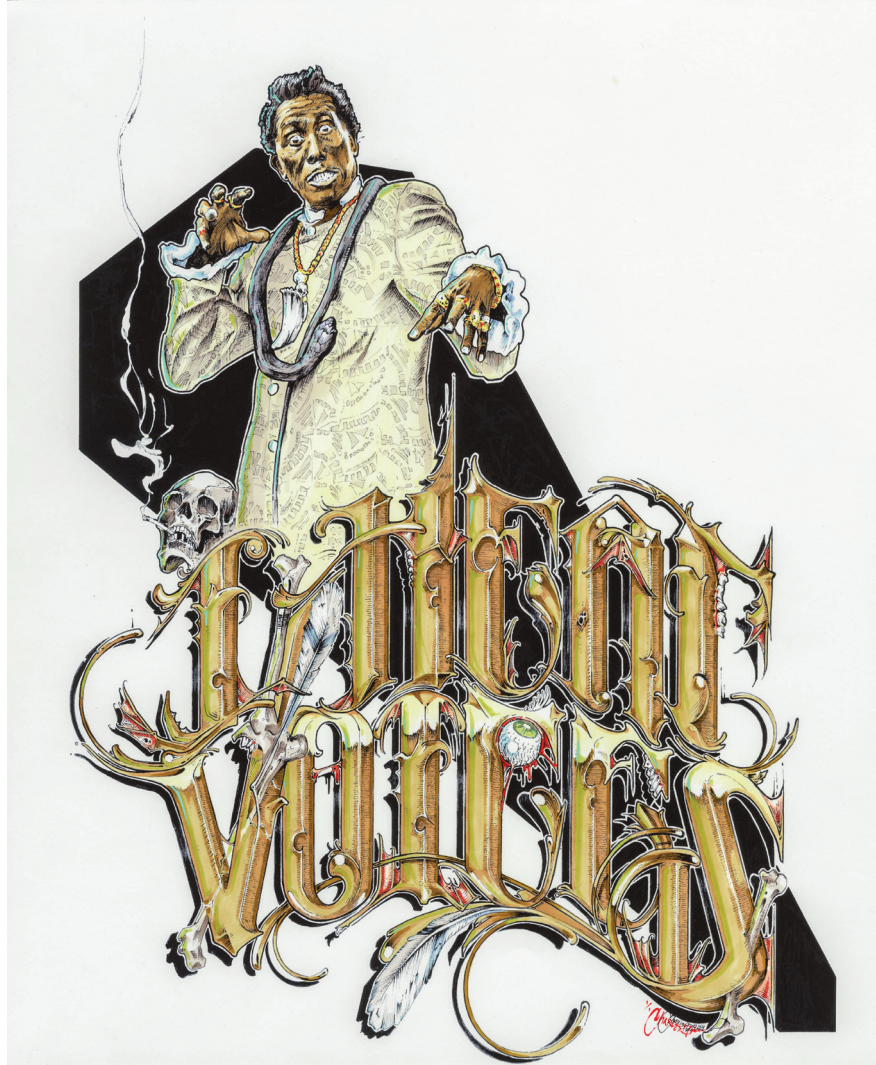
if walls could talk

by Jasmine Marshall

My mouth, full of plaster,
spits nails when I crack a smile
sending paintings sliding down me as their weight pulls them down
and when I let out a sigh,
the foundation groans with the stress.
But wait until they hear me speak.



Orange Blossom by Rositsa Dimitrova
Drawing Level II



I Hear Voices by Charles Daley
Drawing

Moon Pool

by Grace McClung

Leonard Winograd Award Winner

no longer a pool
but a crater
as lonely and dusted
as the moon itself.
everything chlorinated
and sun bleached
chipped tiles
rusted steel drains
bits of foam from
waterlogged pool noodles
punctured floaties
abandoned goggles.
the silence is chilling
where is the sun?
so barren and dull,
this pit pines for
its summertime astronauts
when water
is not so different from space

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П А Р Е Н Ъ

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C o r r i d o r

H u m a n i t a r i a n

Water

by Jenna Duke

Leonard Winograd Award Winner

Water tastes different after a long time away from home. I know this already, but every time I'm back I fill my cup with hopes that it will somehow morph back into the water I drank as a kid. It tastes bitter, fermented, soured by the years that pass with my absence. It punishes me for leaving. Remember who you used to be? It asks.

It runs down my throat like silk rather than liquid necessity as if I should feel lucky to drink it again. I don't feel lucky, though. I don't feel anything.

I stand at the kitchen sink holding my glass (skinny, tall, painted with scratched acrylic teal flowers) and stare out the window. Standing here used to be a ritual of mine. There was something about the simplicity of the act that stopped time and held me in place while thoughts and daydreams swarmed my head. I'd stay frozen there until someone interrupted me or I ran out of water.

The window frames my parents' backyard, a place so far removed from the rest of the world that the one-stall garage from 1941 is beginning to cave in on itself. Mom painted it bold purple a few years ago hoping to offset its dilapidation rather than tear it down. It must run in the family to value the past more than the present.

I try to recall at what age the sink and I traded places, me looking down at it rather than standing on my toes to reach the faucet. I see myself growing in front of the window, stretching with time, getting further and further from the sink until my mom enters the room pulling me back to reality. Suddenly I'm dizzy.

She's thinner than I remember—a product of cancer's chokehold. She wears black leggings, fuzzy socks, and her favorite long sleeve Snoopy tee. It used to embarrass me how she'd sport the shirt with pride as if she co-created the Peanuts with Charles M. Schulz. Now it hangs loose from her torso and Snoopy looks tired.

"It's so good to have you home, Blondie." Her eyes glisten while she gazes at me with a soft smile and her head cocked to the right. She cried at the airport too. It's been a long six months since I last came home.

In May 2021 she was diagnosed with colon cancer. When my parents called my siblings and I to tell us, our reactions reflected our personalities.

My older sister—crying.

My brother—pragmatic questions.

My younger sister—silence.

Me—"you'll be fine" denial.

Watching my mother undergo treatment from afar taught me that illness shines a spotlight on the dusty corners of people. I saw cobwebs of fear in familiar faces. Friends flashed pitiful looks disguised as sympathy and distant relatives overcompensated for a reality they'd rather not get too close to—after all, it isn't their mother.

My water is halfway gone, and I think of the cliché about whether a glass is half full or half empty, then I wonder why it needs to be anything. Can't it just be water? Maybe I'm becoming a realist.

The window grabs my attention like gravity and I'm stuck again. The late October leaves are swirling on the back patio like a mini tornado. When I was 7 years old a tornado almost destroyed my house, but I don't remember any fear

during the storm. All I remember is staring at the tiny box tv with the static weather channel and hoping my dad would come back down with our cat he went to find. The tornado came within a mile of our house—too close.

Mom opens the dishwasher while she searches for what to say next.

"I've been swimming at the Y with your aunt Glenda. The doctors said it'd be good for me."

Dishwasher closes. I hear myself say, "that's nice." The mini tornado leaves disperse outward, exhausted from the season and surrendering to the impending winter. My glass feels lukewarm and clammy from holding it too long.

My dad walks in and breaks my trance. He puts his arms around me. Like the sink, his hugs are immutable, ignoring the laws of time. I wrap my arms around him still holding the glass of stale water and feel myself shrink into a child. He's not too tall, maybe six-feet, but years of habit cause me to stand on my toes.

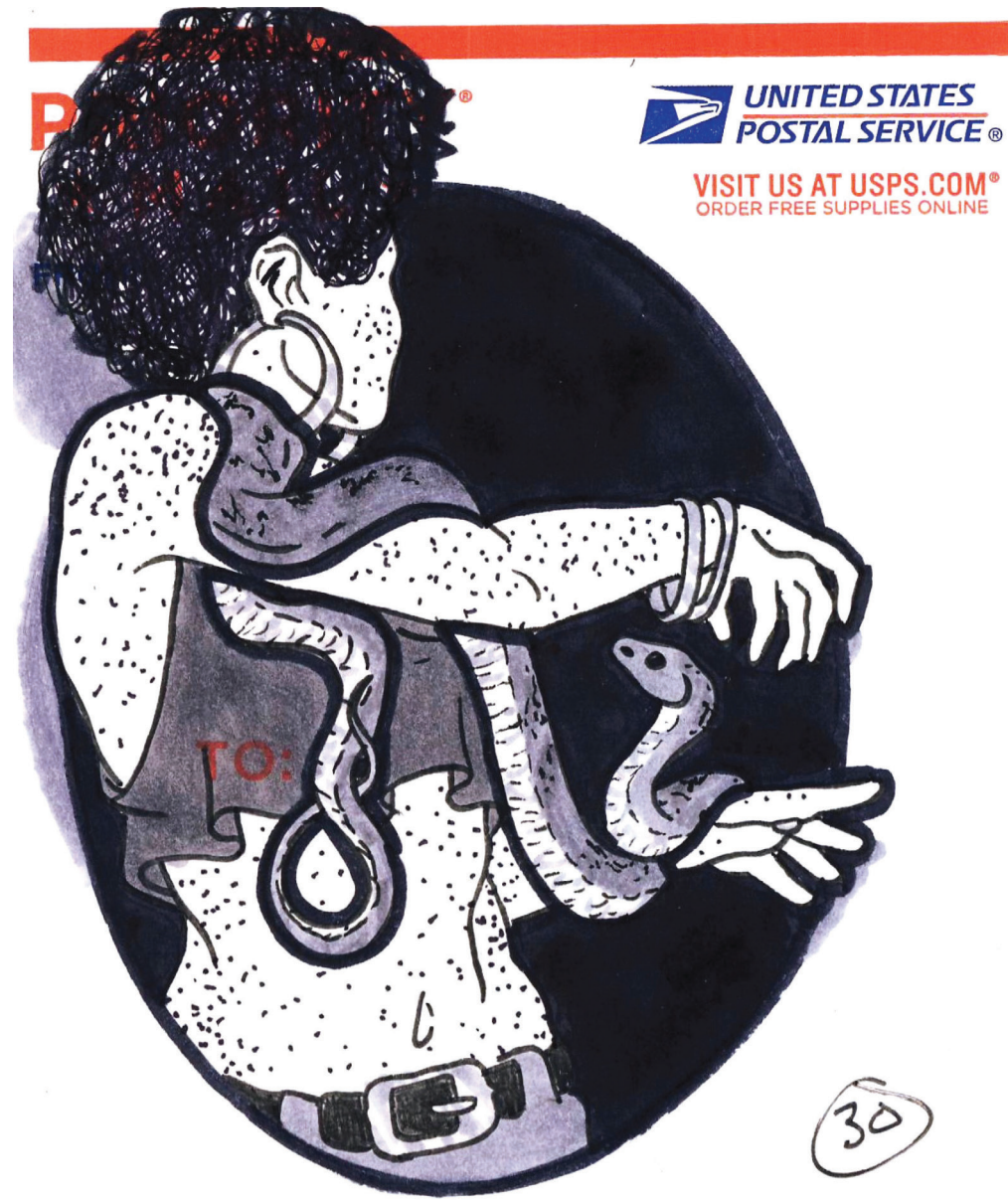
Maybe it's because of the hug, or the water, or the sink, or the dead leaves, or the tired Snoopy, or the past lurking around, but without notice, I say, "I'm sorry I wasn't here." He hugs me tighter and I feel my mom's hand touch my back.

"We know," she says.

She takes my glass and pours the water down the sink.



Consternation by Charles Daley
Best of Drawing Level II & Above



Label 228, March 2016

FOR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL USE

Real World

by Aileen DeSantiago

The dissatisfaction of this world is the,
Heartbreak in the air-intake.

Slither by Zaida Sever
Drawing

drop, drop, drop, drop, drop

by Michael Gilland

Leonard Winograd Award Winner

CHARACTERS: *Diane* in her mid-60's, *Phoebe* in her early-to-mid-30s

SETTING: At first a car in transit, then a showing parlor at a funeral home with an open casket surrounded by Gardenias beside a blown-up photo on an easel that says "OUR BELOVED HELEN CONSTANCE HAWTHORE 1936-2021"

drop, drop, drop, drop, drop

(PHOEBE and DIANE are in the backseat of a car. PHOEBE stares through the window wearing sunglasses, while DIANE is focused in on texting someone on her phone.)

DIANE: *(Not looking up from phone)* You couldn't have worn a shirt that covered your tattoos?

PHOEBE: What? They are covered. Mostly.

DIANE: Not the ones on your wrists.

PHOEBE: Yeah, so what?

DIANE: You know how your grandmother felt about tattoos, as well as myself if I'm being honest. They're simply barbaric.

PHOEBE: Barbaric?

DIANE: Yes, and low class. What are you, some sailor's girl-in-port?

PHOEBE: Jesus, here we go again. Mom-

DIANE: Or do you enjoy being some cocktail napkin people doodle all over?

PHOEBE: Yep, sure do.

DIANE: Do you know how it makes me look, that my daughter doesn't respect herself? Your sisters never did that to themselves.

PHOEBE: *(rolling her eyes)* Whatever.

DIANE: Yeah, "whatever."

PHOEBE: Well, what would you like me to do about it? Get out a cheese grater and shred them off?

DIANE: I'd like it if you had never done that to yourself.

PHOEBE: As fun as it is to have this conversation, *again*, maybe let's just drop it? It's too late for me to change anyway. Or do you want me to jump out of this moving car and run the 1700 miles home for a new shirt? Grandma will just have to live with it, except-oops! She's dead.

DIANE: Phoebe, that's incredibly disrespectful, especially on the day of her funeral. And there's no need for the melodrama, I'm just telling you the truth.

PHOEBE: Whatever. *(looking over at DIANE's phone)* Who're you texting so much over there?

DIANE: Your great-aunt Cheryl. She couldn't travel so I'm going to take some pictures for her.

PHOEBE: Of what? *(beat)* The funeral?

DIANE: Yes, she was just so broken up about not being able to come, so she asked if I could send her a few pictures of, let's see *(scrolling through the phone)* ...the flowers...everyone who came...the showing...

PHOEBE: Wait, the showing? Like...she wants a picture of grandma? In her casket? Like, all dead?

DIANE: Yeah, so what?

PHOEBE: So what? You don't think that's a little *Disrespectful*?

DIANE: Oh Phoebe, give it a rest, will you?

PHOEBE: But-

DIANE: Just drop it.

PHOEBE: Fine. *(Looking out of the window.)* Oooo, why not just take a picture of those pretty flowers. What are they called, um...*(thinking)* oh, Lilies-of-the-Valley! I love those.

DIANE: Yeah, they're pretty, but I wouldn't want them in my garden.

PHOEBE: Why Not?

DIANE: They just spread and spread, they're very invasive. Hard to control.

PHOEBE: But they're so beautiful!

DIANE: Yes, but you can love something and still not really want them.

(Uncomfortable silence.)

PHOEBE: I hate funerals.

DIANE: Get used to them, they just keep happening as you get older.

PHOEBE: It feels like I've been to too many already. *(Takes off sunglasses.)* Like, I keep seeing so many of my friends just, going away...overdosing, offing themselves. Like Sarah, you remember Sarah? She *(puts finger to head and mimes pulling trigger, blowing a raspberry)* and everyone saw it coming, but also no one saw it coming. She was bipolar, but no one ever took her seriously when she said she would do it. And then she was just...gone. I think about it a lot, like, was I a part of that reasoning for her? We were never super close, but maybe I could have been nicer to her. Like, it feels like we all carry around this cup of...life, or whatever, that we're drinking out of, and everyone around us puts in a tiny little droplet of their poison, but that one little drop

isn't enough to kill you. It's the accumulation of everyone's drops that does it...and I think, what if the drop that I put in was the one that made her "cup" mortally toxic? Or if I could have evened out the mixture with an antidote, or something. You know what I mean?

DIANE: *(Barely looking up from her phone)* Huh?

PHOEBE: Of course. *Of course* you're not even listening to me.

DIANE: Phoebe, I have a lot on my mind right now. We are going to my mother's funeral for God's sake.

PHOEBE: No, but this is just like you, isn't it? I can't even pour myself out to you, you don't even care.

DIANE: Great, more melodrama. You know what, all you think about is yourself.

PHOEBE: Oh yeah? Wonder where I got that from?

DIANE: Not from me, if that's what you're insinuating.

PHOEBE: Well it wasn't from dad, was it? Not from the bottom of that bottle he crawled into when he couldn't stand you anymore and ran off to Texas.

DIANE: Your father's choices are not my fault.

PHOEBE: What ever is, mom?

DIANE: Don't you start with this. All this blame. I have done nothing but my best for you and your sisters. And they didn't come out as terribly as you, that's why they're in their cars with their *wives*.

PHOEBE: Oh, I'm terrible now?

DIANE: Yes. Terrible.

PHOEBE: What's so terrible about me? Or my life?

DIANE: When's the last time you held a job for longer than a couple months? Or even used that college degree that I paid for?

PHOEBE: That's not fair, you know I tried—

DIANE: Or how about the endless parade of less-than-respectable men that you run through like Kleenex?

PHOEBE: That's none of your business—

DIANE: Or the way you dress, the tattoos, the drinking, the—

PHOEBE: Oh, STOP IT! I'm so very sorry that you don't *approve* of my choices. The daughter of Diane Hawthorne can't be seen as some sort of loser, what would all the ladies-that-lunch think?

DIANE: That's not what this is about—

PHOEBE: Oh, okay, sure. You don't think you had some hand in how I, "turned out?"

DIANE: More blame...

PHOEBE: Yeah, I blame you! Maybe it was the constant judgement, or the pressure to "make something" of myself, or the actual physical abuse?

DIANE: What are you even talking about?

PHOEBE: You totally hit me more than once.

DIANE: It's called discipline. All parents—my mother—

PHOEBE: Not the way you did it! Remember when I was ten and I was learning to ride a bike, and I couldn't stand up straight and was crying and crying? Did you offer encouragement and hold the handlebars? No, you got frustrated and punched, punched me in the face.

DIANE: Okay, but you got on the bike and rode two full blocks away on your own.

PHOEBE: With my nose gushing blood!

DIANE: Maybe I got frustrated at times, but it was for your own good.

PHOEBE: Yeah, my own good. And how has that worked out?

(tense silence.)

PHOEBE (cont'd): (*putting sunglasses back on*) I swear, I think every drop of poison in my cup were put there by you.

DIANE: Phoebe—

PHOEBE: I think I leave as soon as the funeral's over. I can't stand the thought of you having to spend any more time with your terrible daughter.

(Tense silence.) Lights shift to reveal the funeral parlor around them. They rise from their seats and go to the coffin. (*DIANE* hovers over the casket and raises her phone about to take a picture but cannot. She breaks apart. She collapses to the floor, one hand on the casket, sobbing. *PHOEBE* stands watching in surprised silence.)

DIANE: (*Holding the phone out to PHOEBE*)
Could you...could you please take the picture?

PHOEBE: What?

DIANE: (*Looking up at PHOEBE.*) ...Please?

PHOEBE: Fine.

(*PHOEBE* takes the phone and looks at *DIANE* kneeling before the casket. *PHOEBE* shrugs and takes a picture.)

Got it.

(*PHOEBE* looks at *DIANE* for a moment and takes off her sunglasses. *PHOEBE* decides to scoop *DIANE* off the floor. *DIANE* rises slowly and wraps her arms around *PHOEBE.*)

DIANE: I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. You're not terrible.

PHOEBE: Yeah, I know.

(They sit back down, hands folded together. DIANE leans on PHOEBE's shoulder.)

DIANE: I always thought I would do better than her.

PHOEBE: She's the one in the casket, not you. It's not too late.

(Long beat. DIANE stares over at the casket.)

DIANE: You know, when I was growing up my mother had this big rose bush in the front yard just below the porch. It was massive. But she hated taking care of it. She wasn't much of a gardener anyway. So one day she took a machete out of the shed and just chopped it all down. Down to twigs that just barely poked out of the dirt. I was so mad at her for that. I loved sticking my nose in those roses. It was just twigs for years. No water, no nothing. But one day I was sitting on the porch, and our porch had these hollow brick columns that held up the awning, and I saw this little vine peaking out of the top of one of the columns. So I climbed up on the porch railing and I looked down...and it was this rose vine that had somehow found a way to grow up and inside this thing. No sunlight, no water...no nourishment. It just grew. It didn't have any buds, but it was alive. And I thought, "way to go." I was rooting for that little vine. I thought, "maybe you'll bloom one day."

(Long beat.)

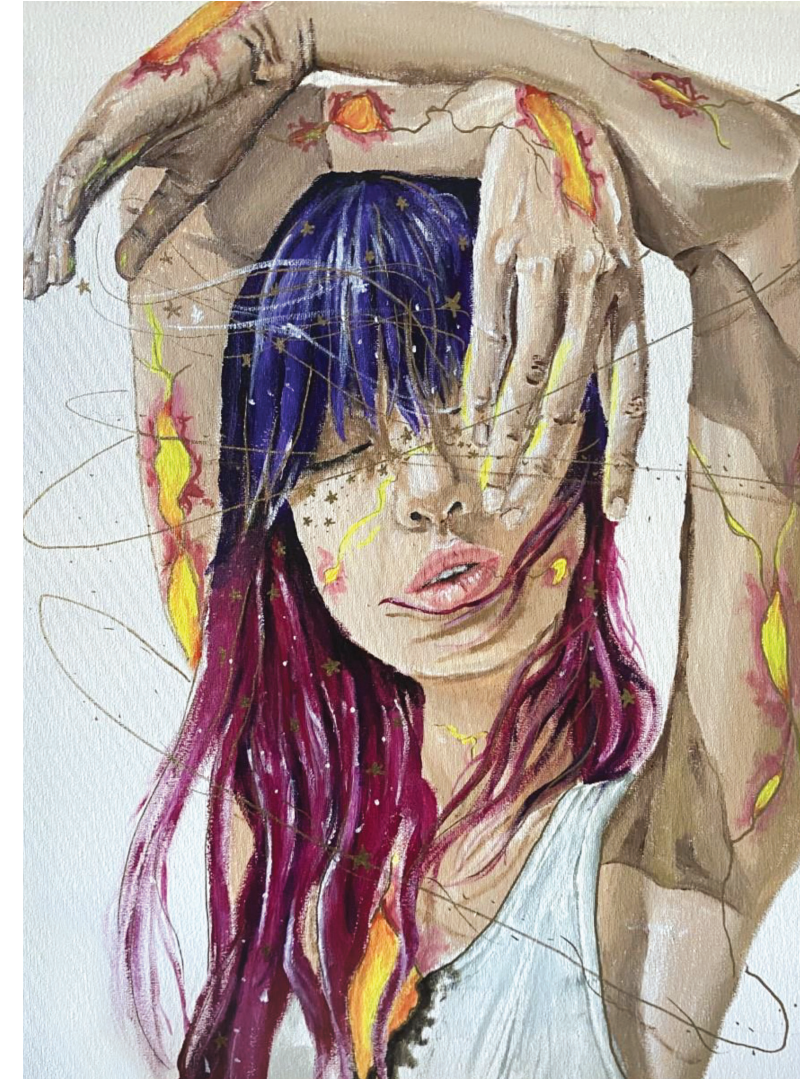
PHOEBE: Wait, am I the vine in this story?

DIANE: What?

PHOEBE: Forget it.

DIANE: Did you get a picture of the Gardenias?

PHOEBE: (putting sunglasses back on) You gotta be kidding me



Burning Out Bright by Bethany Summers
Painting



Groovy Skates by Carson Kavathas
Graphic Design

10

by Juliet Holdren

Have you ever been
10 years old
Did gravity seem
Negotiable
Did physics
Not bring you down
Yet

Perhaps
You can still be
In spirit
And soul
That levitating
10 year old

Birthday Song

by Nicole Weber

I can't come in today.
I have
Been a horrible person.
And feeding
Hamburgers to the mall
Of America,
Just isn't something
I can stomach.

My apple pie smile
Can't hide my hubris:
Illegally parked
In the fire lane.

My bouncy pony can't
Bring anymore ketchup,
If she keeps hitting that
Gap-toothed boy who wanted
His birthday
At Denny's.

At Denny's,
While his Dad smoked
A red with the syrup covered sweetie.
Hoping for a short stack
When he ashed in her bed
A surreptitious sweetness.
My cherry chapstick
Lips can't sing with the
Cook about your
Solar orbital number seven.
While we beat the pans
From the pantry that
Never go cold.
Beneath the sign that
Never goes dark.
Next to a highway that
Never goes empty.

My orthopedic sneakers
Can't brew more coffee as the
Giant drunk boys beat the table.
Slurs in a neighborhood of gapped teeth,
Living for tequila with a syrup chaser.
Calling for their birthdays
At Denny's.

Paul Bunyon Country Livin’

by Neil Fitzmaurice

You stare at the clock above the kitchen cabinets. It is a quarter past 10pm on Friday night and she’s still not home. You’ve checked the GPS locator on the phone but her signal is still off. Where could she be? Worried sick and it’s near the end of the month as well you’ve told her time and time again that the end of the month is always busiest in the lumber yard. Sitting up from the kitchen table you begin to pace from the living area back into the kitchen. You notice the few small pill containers sitting idly under the cabinets on the kitchen counter. Your last name is prominently labeled across the top. You think to yourself, “she must not have taken her meds this morning”. You tell yourself that she’s probably sleeping off the months’ worth of Adderall that zombifies and sedates her to a level that is “respectable” to society. You wish she wouldn’t take them. Without them, she is playful, giggly, every bit the girl you fell for all those years ago. You’ll see about refilling those on Monday when the pharmacy opens back up. For now, your mission is solely focused on figuring out where she may have gone to. Thoughts consume you as to the possible scenarios. You rely on old military strategy and instinct to begin your search. You pull your phone out of your pocket and call your in-laws. Mary, my mother-in-law, is a wonderful woman. The true classic Minnesotan woman. Always polite and will never tell you something nasty, at least to your face. She as well as your father-in-law are into their late 60’s now. They have a small amount of property about 25 miles away from us. You have a short conversation about where she might be. She mentions to me that she had seen her just this Wednesday but really doesn’t have any idea where she might have gone. She suggests that I call some of her friends to see if she might be with them. My father-in-law, the former cop, with a little more

urgency says he’ll put a call into the department to have them start a search for her. Before I can object or even thank them, they bid you goodnight as they need to get up early for their farm chores. Most people in your small northern Minnesota town have similar mannerisms when discussing things that are unpleasant. Hang up abruptly when things were getting too real. Not her. Somewhere along the line what we had been doing wasn’t working anymore. “You work too much” and “You don’t make time for us anymore”. You feel bad because it’s mostly true. You don’t know how to tell her you’re in a rut yourself. Your folks were never around to teach you these things and God knows you weren’t learning that from her parents. You can’t help but feel she’s run off this time for good. Shaking your head, surely, she still loves me and would at least have the decency to tell me if she didn’t.

You pick up my phone again and ring some of her friends. Each one has a different story as to where she might be. “Try the bowling alley,” says Liz, one of her girlfriends from the college, Brianna says that she is probably at her parents’ house. You get the feeling none of them would tell you where she was even if it meant life or death. You’ve decided that this is getting you nowhere. You look outside to see little droplets of snow like tiny dancing stars in the pitch black of the country night. Snow is better than no snow in these parts where the temperature can get below negative 30 degrees. It’s when the snow stops on the cold winter night that you should be worried. You move to the living area to gather the red flannel, your black beanie and gloves. You don these over your worn coveralls. Freshly caked muddy boots await you at the front door. You can’t remember where you were that they could have gotten so muddy.

You start up the old F150, another hand me down of a previous generation. You’ve been saying for 9 years that someday when you get the finances in order things will be different. Things will be different between you two. The thought evaporates, snow on a hot car wind-shield. You begin the long drive down the country road. These roads are not what you see in the twin cities down south. These roads are untamed. Wild trees loom over the street like vultures hanging, hungry and waiting. The pitch black of the night is like a great mouth of a beast threatening to swallow you whole. The light from your headlights is the only saving grace preventing the night from taking you. You continue to drive down the road when suddenly you see a man in a red flannel shirt in the middle of the road. You can’t help but think he looks like the real-life Paul Bunyon you can see in town next to Lake Bemidji. Black hair and a big black beard mask his face like a shroud. Blue jean overalls cover his flannel shirt and a big Carhartt jacket overlaps it. Unlike any other place in the world, you think “There are no axe murderers around here” You come to a slow and roll down your window and ask “You alright their pal.” He says “Sorry to bother you stranger, seems my bull has gotten loose and won’t come out of the bank by the side of the road. You think you could give me a hand?” You oblige and follow him a short way.

It's not long until you get to the bank and see the beast. In the evening light, his fur looks almost blue. The kind of blue that makes you think the ocean swallowed the night. Huge horns adorn his massive skull. The sheer beauty of the thing escapes you. You can't help but think this animal is the father of all cattle on earth. He is at least the size of the truck if not bigger. You compliment the man on his bull. He tells you that he and this bull have been together for a long, long time though the beast gets a wild hair sometimes like this instance. "How on earth are we going to move this thing?" you ask the man incredulously. He laughs, "Well we're going to rope him in son. Utter shock takes you. "Surely we aren't going to pull him out of here?" The man says "Well, we aren't son, but I will. You'll just hit his flanks with the broad side of this axe as hard as you can, He'll turn enough so I can get this rope around him." You turn back to face the man. In one hand he is holding a long rope and in the other a large wood cutting axe just like the axe you have back at home in your garage. Was he holding those when we met? Before you can ask, he tosses the axe towards you. "Go on son, give him a good tap on the behind and I'll handle the rest. "This man is crazy!" you think to yourself. For some reason or another though I can't seem to get the words out to say no. Your heart thunders in your chest. Adrenaline has heightened your senses at this point now as you stare down the flanks of the beast. You can feel the unapologetic power exude from it. Or is it you? Your muscles tense, feet grip the ground, legs, shoulders, hands become taut like you are about to take the side of a tree. "There you go son give him a good tap!" The man shouts from behind me. You swing, you feel the connection a hit so clean it feels that you've surpassed the flesh and torn his leg in two. This bull barely twitches. It was enough to get his attention where he turned to face you. You fall backwards dropping the axe. The bulls' eyes flash red with rage in the light of the truck's headlights. You feel in this moment he would have thrown you over the road if he hadn't been brought down himself. In a flash rope loops around the beast's neck. With a pull of the man's arms, the beast is dragged out of the underbrush and out onto the street again. You look to see if the man has attached the rope to some sort of unseen wench but none are to be found.

Looking upon the man again in this moment he seems larger than life. The real Paul Bunyon they mention in the stories. You think "Surely, he couldn't be." Before you can open my mouth, he is walking the bull towards the other side of the street. "Thank you, stranger! You've done me a great service!" Hurriedly you stand from the ground and make your way back up to the street. Axe in hand you call out to the man but he has seemed to disappear like a ghost into the night. Clutching the axe, you notice a bit of blood on the axe's surface. You think must have nicked the beast at least. Shaking the dizzying feeling of the encounter you throw the axe into the passenger seat of my pickup and continue back onto the road. What a strange encounter. It's hard to tell what was real and what wasn't. Either he was the strongest

man you've ever seen or the beast ran up the hill. Though it just happened, the thought blurs in your mind. For now, you need to focus on tracking her down. Thirty minutes later you manage to make it into town.

The Paul Bunyon statue next to Lake Bemidji stares you down. Ignoring it you make your way into the pub "Hard Times" The irony in the name speaks for itself as many that go there go to drink away the sorrows of a day-to-day existence. Approaching Harry the bartender you ask if he's seen her recently. He mentions that he hasn't seen her since you were both there last weekend. Your friend Derek in the back corner of the bar. The bar is really like a long hallway. Old bottlecap tables covered with fill the left side of the bar, the chairs embody the name of the bar with their torn cushions and rusting metal frames. There are a few booths on the right-hand side to leave room for a few billiards' tables in the center. Derek is sitting in a booth next to some of your other friends. "Nice of you to join us!" Haven't seen you without the old ball and chain for a while." "Derek that's why I'm here. I haven't seen her since yesterday. Have you seen her?" A look of surprise comes over his face. Some of the other guys look at each other before they address you again. "Look, just take it easy, have a beer it might settle your nerves." Derek says. You exclaim "What are you talking about Derek! I have to find her! Have you seen her or not?!" They pause and look amongst themselves. "You better check with her therapist and see. She's probably over there." Rage swallows you, thoughts swirling like the snowstorm looming outside. Of course, the Therapist.

You had been through this time and time again. Your thoughts are fuzzy. She had asked you to go with her to see this guy but my pride kept you away. She had been seeing the therapist more and more over the past few months. Those months where she kept asking you to spend more time together and talk about your collective issues. You should have listened then. Now she's in bed with the guy that she told you not to worry about. Rage's companions join you. Fear and doubt. You tell yourself she hasn't done anything with this guy. Maybe she's just stayed at his place to get some space. Surely that's it. A feeling in your gut tells you it's not the case. You thank the guys and lie You tell them you're just going over to talk to him and see if he has seen her. You fake a small smile, wearing it like a mask to cover a face of craze. A face that is smiling as you beat the life out of this man that has taken her from you. Derek reluctantly gives up the address to the therapist's place. He tells you he is a few miles out before you get to the reservation. You make your way back out to the truck and get it started again. The snow has begun to fall a little more heavily. Upon entering the truck, I pick up the axe to put it on the floor. Whatever that Paul Bunyon look-alike guy had done with the axe before had covered the axe head in goo. Black residue coated the axe head like honey on a honeycomb. The spots of blood from hitting the bull still caught the center of my attention.

The therapist lived a little way out of town to the east. A few more lamp posts line the road by the city before it returns to dark. The solitary light on the country road is from the headlights of the truck. It's a winding road with bends and turns just like thoughts that continue to swirl in your head. "What if she is having an affair with this guy?" "What if she is having sex with him when I get there!" Grip tightening around the steering wheel you tell yourself to be patient. "You'll hear her out. do the things she is asking you to do if she'll just come home." You know in your heart it isn't true. Jealousy like a boa wants to twist and twist the life out of both of them.

You pull up to the therapist's house. It is a small ordinary house much like the one you own on the other side of town. Exiting the vehicle, axe in hand, you make my way to the front door. There is a light on in the front window but the curtains are drawn. You Scream at the top of my lungs. "I Know you're in there!" "Let me in we need to talk!!". There is no reply. You make my way to the back of the house slogging through snow and mud up the small patio to the back door. The back door's been broken open. Splinters of wood lay about the back entryway. The sweat and tears freeze on your face as you rush inside. There is nobody in the living room though someone has been there. The couch has been overturned and the lamps have fallen to the floor in the living area in front of you. To your right in the kitchen dishes and pans fill the sink. Muddy footprints from the back door lead through the kitchen to the bedroom. Shadow and vile darkness envelops you like an oozing slime. Your heart has sunk into your stomach. The footprints have stopped at the bedroom door, the shadow has manifested in a pool in front of it. Pushing the door open the most horrible stench you can imagine penetrates your nostrils. The last vestiges of a long-forgotten slaughterhouse. Blood, piss, and shit pale in comparison of the rotten fetor of this room. You retch, falling to your knees you feel the carpet like waterlogged earth but instead of water it's sticky as syrup. You lift your head up, tears in your eyes to see the off-white walls but splotched with black and red. Like a demented twister board though the hands and feet are not in the right spots. Rising from your knees, you look onto the bed. The grey duvet cover has now become as black as a tar pit. But instead of decomposed bones, there are arms, legs, and pieces of chest are strewn about like the chewed-off limbs of a dog's toy. You find the head of the therapist first. Cleaved in two like a piece of wood. Then you see her face again. That wonderful sweet face that would tell you "I love you" now screaming hate, hate, HATE! mouth wide open. Her head speared on the corner pillar of the bed frame. Like the bust of a Greek god, it remains there. Horror-filled eyes stare deep into the pit of your soul. You scream. You scream until there is not one molecule of air left in your lungs. Until croaked whispers escape like dust at the end of a log through a chipper. You can't look away. Not even when the Paul Bunyon red and blue lights come to take you away. You think to yourself "Surely there are no axe murderers here."



Pass the Peas by Charles Daley
Drawing Level II, Best of Show

Deep Breath

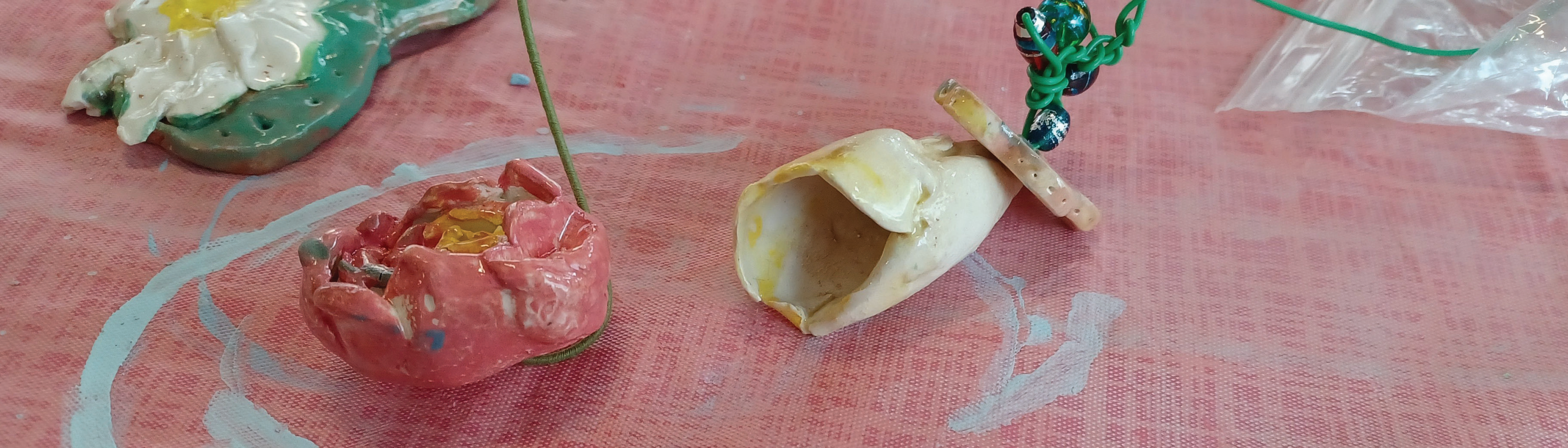
by Asma Al-Masyabi

breathe in
the stars
and their surrounding darkness
cold, crisp air
with a hint of burning firewood

breathe out
and stretch your fingers
towards the warmth,
the first rays of sunlight
waking up the sky



City by Carson Kavathas
Graphic Design



Flower Love by Skylar Kosciuch
Best of 3D Design & Sculpture

The Runaway

by Daunitia Lewis

Thwap thwap thwap.

It's the sound of my feet hitting the ground. Over and over. Sound and image create chaos in my mind. Both battle for control.

Thwap thwap thwap.

"Hurry up! You have 3 more miles if you don't make it home before Ara!" screams Mrs. Allen.

I kick it into gear. We have run 8 miles already today. At Ruby Hill. Even thinking about the hill gives me anxiety. The massive hill is more like a miniature mountain. The incline is so steep, I've witnessed cars with bad brakes slide back down the side. Yet I've run that hill 6 times today to reach 8 miles. Then Ara and I got into an argument. Now, for punishment, I have to run 2 more miles before I can go home and do my homework.

I am 15 years old. I hate foster care. I hate my family too. If there is anything I have learned it is to trust no one ever. When I was 5 I trusted my step-dad when he said he couldn't breathe and needed CPR. But he had me give him CPR on my knees. I don't trust him now.

Thwap thwap thwap.

When I was 8 I trusted this girl. Arsinoae. She was so pretty. I used to like to be near her. I liked to listen to the casual melody of her voice. Something in me that was too primitive to comprehend was excitement. I always grinned like a stupid fool when I

saw her. No wonder she thought I was weird. The boys liked the girls. The girls liked the boys. I.... liked my pretty Noaye. And Jin. He was so cool! I was digging to Africa during recess. Jin liked to dig too. He wanted to go to China to see his gran. So we dug together. After recess was gym. Today was a run day. Ugh! I hate running.

Thwap thwap thwap.

We all sat down for English class. I was happy! So happy. My pretty Noaye and I had shared our secrets. I told her my favorite TV show and she told me she couldn't read. Then the strangest thing happened. I looked at her and I kissed her cheek. I don't know why. I just had to. Like how my Gamma kissed mine when I was sad. I pulled back shocked. But she laughed and told me I was pretty. I told her I thought she was pretty too! This made me so happy.

The teacher told us it was time to read.

"Arsinoae, would you be so kind?"

Arsinoae stood up. She turned to face me. In a clear and icy tone, she read from our book. Perfectly. I stared in confusion. That's when she suddenly yelled, "Lenae watches Barney!"

I ran from the room in tears! I ran all the way out of the school. Ran all the way home. Pretty girls that are friends cannot be trusted.

Thwap thwap thwap.

Jin is so cool! The whole school never forgot I watched Barney. Jin didn't either. But the next day at recess, when I dug my hole with a fury I'd never had before, he came up and dug in right next to me. Jin dug on the other side. China and Africa were not close. We knew we'd start together and eventually break apart on our journey. I paused.

He looked at me and quietly asked, "Where in Africa are we going?"

"Egypt. I want to see the kings there." I said.

"Neat! I bet no one in Egypt knows who Barney is."

I looked at him and grinned.

I bet he was right.

Thwap thwap thwap.

Figures! Why would I be so lucky?

4 years separated me from my friend Jin. Yet I found him again here in this facility. Vision Quest was an RTC. To see his face here among so many strangers made me glad. We laughed and talked. We had moved, Gamma and I. Then Gamma had to put me here. Jin said he ran away too and had tried to find me. They caught him and he ended up here. He said we should leave together. I was scared. I didn't know what to do in the world.

"I have to go tonight but I'll come back for you." He said. I believed him.

Too good to be true.

Jin got tased trying to sneak back on property for me. The taser affected his bad heart and he crumbled outside my bedroom window. I opened the window and ran to his lifeless body. I hugged him and sobbed.

How could he leave me alone in this world? I needed him and he left me here! Nice boys cannot be trusted.

They took him away and put bars on the windows in the days that followed.

That didn't stop me from running away.

Thwap thwap thwap.

I thought Mrs. Allen said if I didn't pass Ara I'd have to run 3 more miles. Guess she didn't feel like waiting for my exhausted body to run that far. But why did she beat me so badly? Was I ugly? Was I unworthy of her love? I went upstairs and pondered this while I put all my clothes in my backpack with my homework, schoolbooks and my teddy bear BunBun. Thank God I am so athletic.

Exhausted and with tears stinging my eyes, I ran and ran and ran.

Thwap thwap thwap.

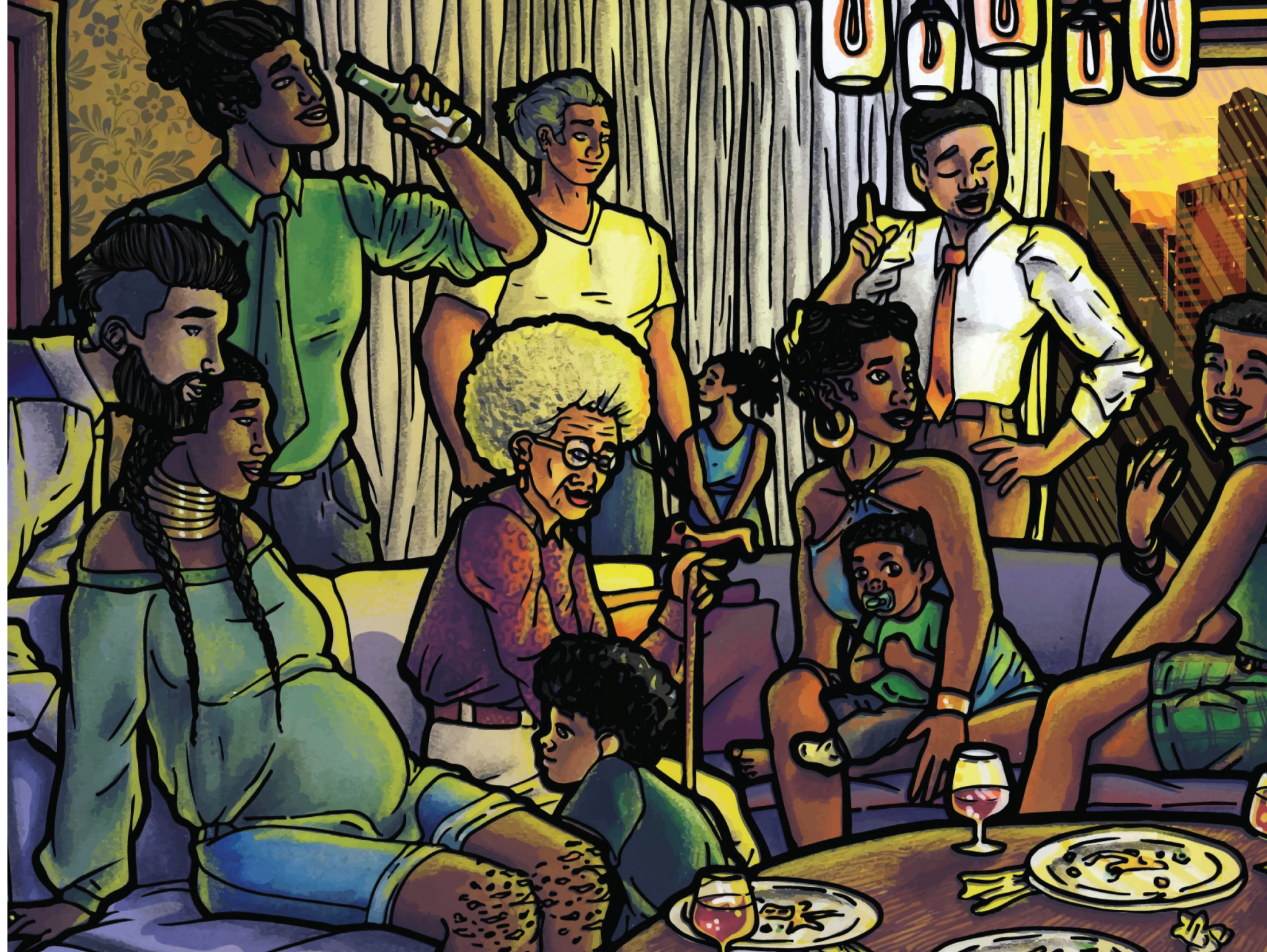
.....
I usually avoid this entire side of town. But the images that are in my head rush forth unchecked. I cannot think. I cannot function like this. I know what to do. My piece of shit car acts as though it wants to slide back down the steep incline of this hill. No matter. I park in a flat alley and get out. I know this area well.

Grandma is dead now. Just like my beloved Jin and the innocence of my youth. There is a panic in my soul that threatens to overcome me. I run. This time instead of shying away from the new images it brings, I embrace them. Fighting pain with pain. Until there is nothing left. I obliterate my old mind to give way to the new. Thwap step-dad. Thwap. Arsinoae. Thwap Jin. Thwap Mrs. Allen. Thwap Grandma. I am hot and cold. I am fire and ice. The sweat that drips from my body is not from exhaustion. The pain I feel is not in my lungs. Good. I face them all. All of my demons. Every single one. Thwap thwap thwap thwap thwap.

And I let them go.



Family Dinner by Zaida Sever
2D Design & Mixed Media



Ears Open Wide

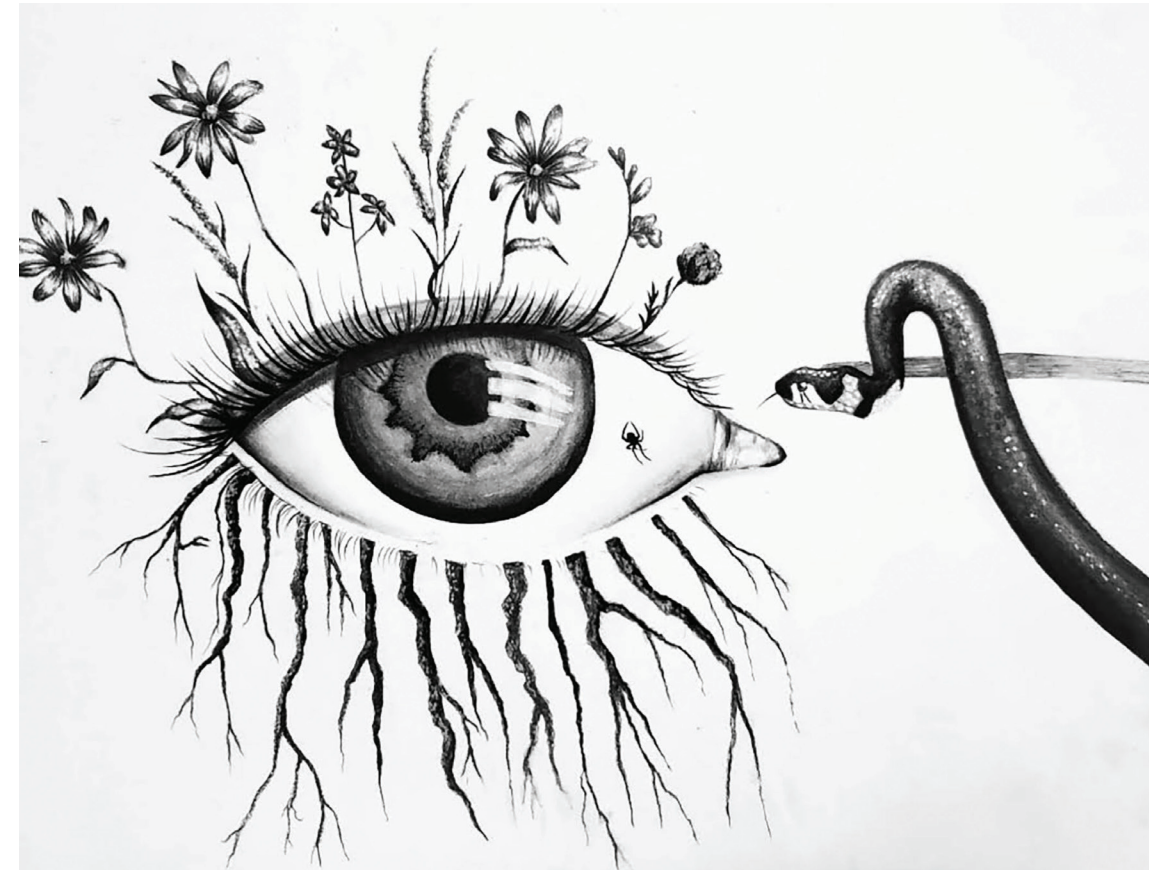
by Charlie Ruderman-Pratt

Music is everywhere —
It's in the mechanical snores
of the hospital monitor
that flashes my heart rate
in complementary shades of green and red.

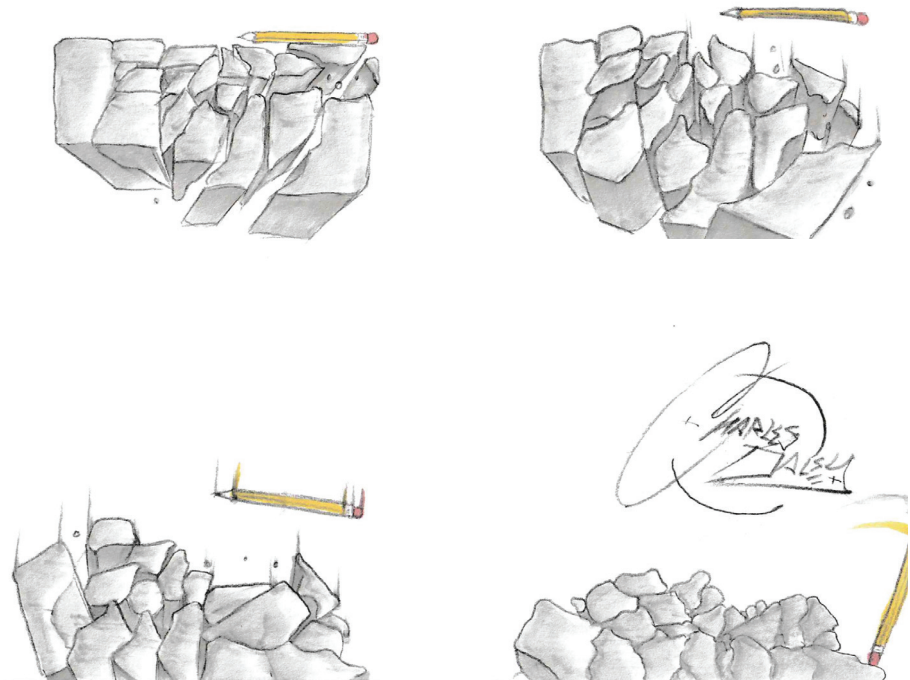
It's in my mom's melodic page turning,
the reliable metronome
consumed by the more forceful grunts
of my dad's growing discomfort
as he flops around on the blue and white pinstriped couch
like a beached whale --
only this time there's no marine biologist
to dig a trench and keep his skin cool and damp.
I know because little beads of perspiration
are pooling on his wrinkled forehead
and the doctor told me she's scared of the sea.
But the music plays on.
It's in the Teen Titans Go theme song
telling me I know who to call
when I'm in trouble.
But I've tried and the only Raven I see
is beady eyed and thinking of ways to steal my orange J-ello
from its perch on the other side.

So I shut my eyes.

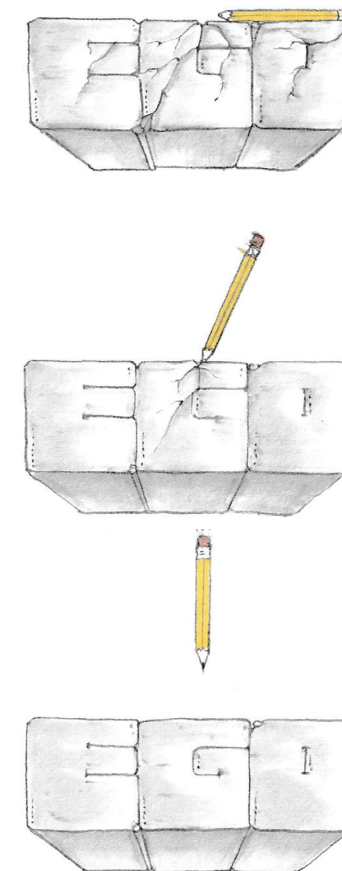
And I make music.

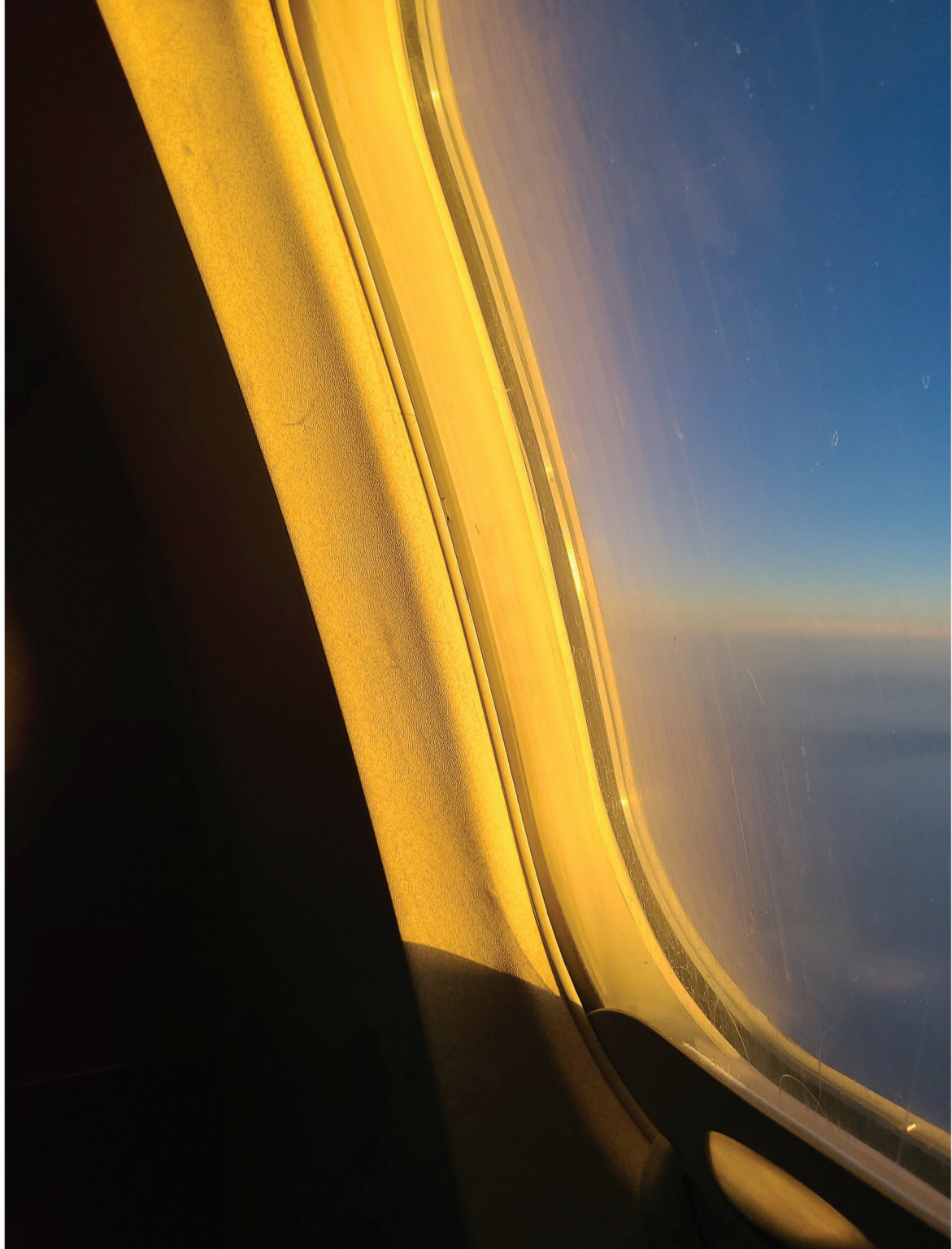


Optic Jungle by Alexandra Smith
Drawing Level II



Rock, Paper, Ego by Charles Daley
Best of 4D Design & Time Based Art





View in Two by Jessamyn Geesaman
Photography

Butterfly Child: A Lupus Anthology

by Tianna Davis

Honorable Mention

Diagnosis: Should I Be Crying

When the news is given to me that I am chronically ill
Untreatable
No cure
Those around me start to cry and worry
They grieve for the life I might not get to have
And the things I might not get to do
And I watch them and wonder
Should I be crying, too?
And when those around me start to shut down
And try to hide from my diagnosis
And pretend it isn't there
Because it is too painful to think about
I watch them and I wonder
Should I be hiding, too?

1st Hospitalization: Bleached Floors and White Walls

Sanitized - the smell of bleach
Stuck to every surface in this room and in the center
A bed - it isn't mine
I can't get comfortable in it because my arm is pricked and laying on it hurts
Unfamiliar - it's my first time,
A virgin to the act of dying so instead I just feel
Tired - if I sleep, maybe
I'll wake up and be okay at a minimum because its the only thing to pass the time
White walls - four of them
And a wood door where the white coats come through to gawk
Bleached floors - the tiles are cold
When I get up to go to the bathroom I am offered assistance because
I am weak and fragile and annoyed at the disturbance, just let me go home and rest in my bed
instead of this unfamiliar, sanitized jail with white walls and bleached floors.



Existing by Racheal Bennett
Painting I

2nd Hospitalization: 5th Floor Window

There is a window on
The 5th floor
Next to my hospital bed
With a great view of the ground.
And when I am alone with my thoughts
I dream of this window
Opening for me
And me closing my eyes and soaring like
A brick
Enjoying the weightlessness of the free fall
Until I reach the ground
And no longer am I sick
I am, instead, peaceful.
I am, instead, nothing.

Treatment: White Coats

My doctor told me the plan
Like they were the coach and it was game day
They gave a few pauses to allow me to speak
But I just smiled and nodded
The plan was set and I am on team White Coats
Hopeful that they would win
All my money was on this game
Betting on my life
Ante up,
it's time to play
My bloodwork shows we are the underdogs
But that's okay - it's not my first time winning while behind
I've stood here before
and did just fine

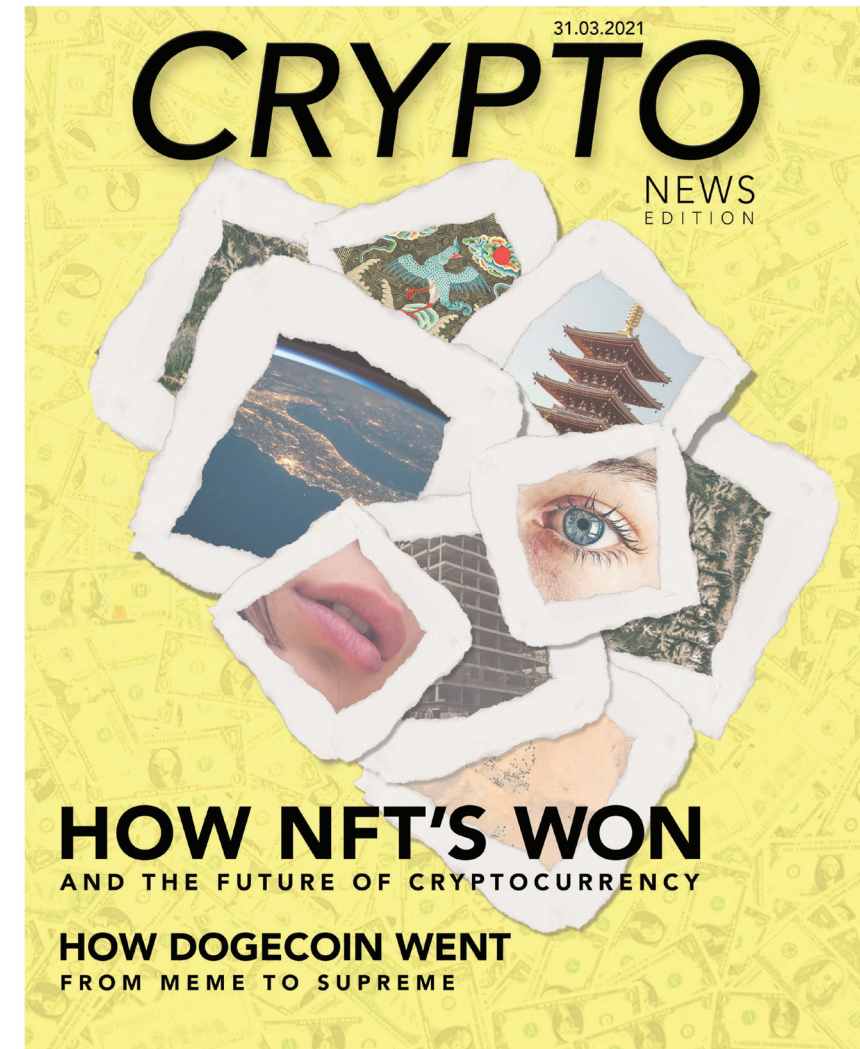
Aftercare: A Bowl of Ramen

The store is small and crowded
I am ushered to a far corner
My table is sticky (I don't mind) and
My chair wobbles a bit (habitually, I will teeter back and forth). I order my favorite bowl of ramen (Tan Tan)
It's a little spicy, but I think it could use more
I take my first bite and smile
At this moment I am happy to eat and
Exist (alive)
I can smile and pretend I am normal
Away from my illness - it is resting right now
If it wakes, I will deal with it
For now, I am happy (happy) to be
Eating my bowl of ramen.

I Poem

by Ricardo Perez

Flip Flop, Flip Flop I like my Flip
Flops Can I flip my coin to flip my
luck
My coin my luck my lucky charm
I sound like Spongebob with my Flip
Flops Can I flip my luck like Spongbob
Flips patty's Pattys? I like Fattys, Fetty
Wap I like that Wap Cardi B, Fake, Boooo
I do like boose Luck is my charm and t
hird time around Is to much, I like things
now like my luck Action, apply pressure
to what I like Knowledge is useless with
no action Execution, I'm waiting for
dinner
Cut my head off, leave a full plate.
Tree, three, multiply like money tree
Multiply the execution and you'll have
a tree Work hard, enjoy later
Back at it again with the white
vans Shortys shoes are yellow
Yellow light I take it, Red light I still Go
go Go GO, I am speed, Mcqueen number 97
Took 97 seconds to write this, Flip Flop
I like my Flip Flops, Crawl? Walk? Sprint?
I can't do either with my Flip Flops.

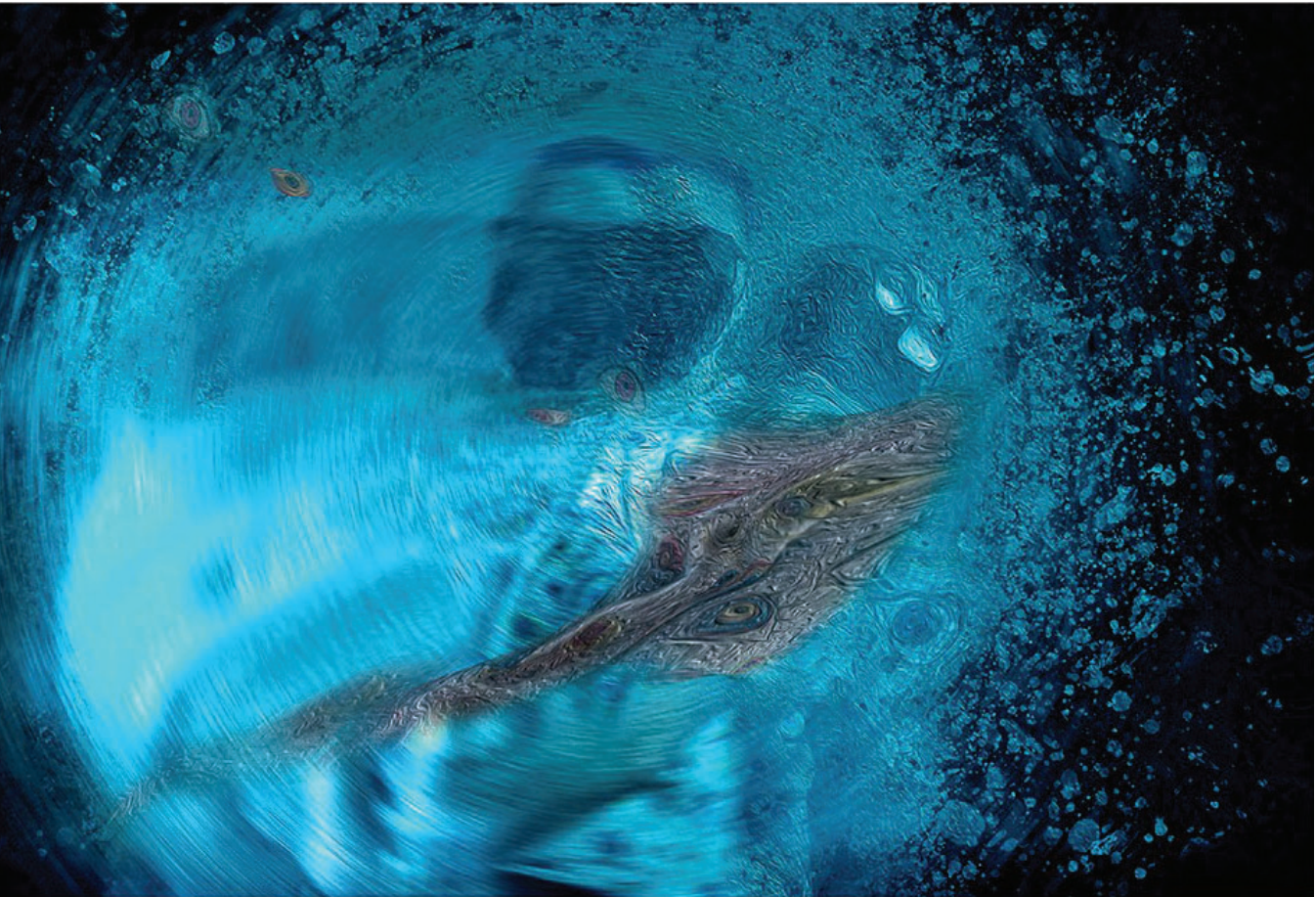


Crypto Magazine by Jacob Corbo
Best of Graphic Design



Get Out the Series by Rositsa Dimitrova
Best of Photography





Get Out the Series by Rositsa Dimitrova
Best of Photography



Revolutionary New Technology

by Gregory Rucker

CAST:

Ned: Mid 20's, male, Door to Door vacuum salesman.

Barb: Mid 50's, female, housewife

Bill: Mid 50's, male, house husband

Stacey: Mid 40's, female, blue collar repair worker.

SETTING:

Daytime. Barb and Bill's suburban middle class living room. Dated, but clean, not cluttered, neutral tones. Front door at stage left, couch and chair setup, large carpeted area in center stage. Rear of living room leads to back of house.

(Lights up on the living room. Knocking on the front door.

KNOCK, KNOCK)

BARB: Coming!

NED: Hello there! My name is Ned and I'm wondering if I could have a moment of your time and tell you about a revolutionary new technology being applied to home cleaning devices today?

(BARB stares with a blank face and allows a moment of silence)

NED: It's a vacuum. I'm selling vacuums.

BARB: Then yes! Absolutely, come in at once. Now! I demand to know more about this vacuum. Come!

NED: Umm, Ok. What a lovely home you have here. It's so...lovely. But I'm sure you're a busy woman, so I'll get to the revolutionary new technology that our experts say is...

(NED takes vacuum out of the bag he's been carrying)

BARB: I'm not busy. I haven't been busy in years. Except for keeping this living room sparkling clean like His Royal Highness demands. You know what I mean? What really is busy if you're always busy, but never busy? Ya know?

NED: Uhhh, yea. I know what you mean.So you might be asking yourself "What is the true strength of a vacuum, and our experts have found out that..."

BARB: What's your name again?

NED: Ned. And I don't think I got your name.

BARB: What do you do Ned?

NED: I...sell...vacuums. I'm literally at work right now, selling vacuums...to you.

BARB: Ah yes, vacuums, but do you know anything about gutters? Like how long do they REALLY last?

NED: What? I...I don't know anything about that. Is now not a good time? Perhaps I can leave my card and then you can contact me and I can come back when it's a better time for you.

(A loud crashing noise comes from the rear of stage)

NED: Is someone else here? What was that?

BARB: I didn't hear anything. (BARB shrugs shoulders, dismissing the loud sound)

(Very loud crashing sounds come from the rear of the living room area. BARB shrugs shoulders again)

NED: OK, what the hell is going on here? This is freaking me out.

BARB: I don't want you to leave. But he'll be so mad that you're here. Please stay.

NED: Oh my god. What are you talking about? Are you ok? Do you need me to call the cops?

BARB: NO! Just, Umm, hide maybe, I don't know.

(Sound of a door slamming from rear of living room)

BARB: Oh Jesus no. He's coming. Umm, ok, just act cool. Pretend you're a firefighter or the pope or something.

NED: What?!?! Are you serious? Are we in danger? Who's coming?

BARB: Perfect! You've got this.

NED: This is nuts. I don't feel comfortable, I'm getting my things and..

(BILL enters from rear of stage. Startled by Ned's presence, BILL looks back and forth between Ned and Barb. Awkward silence)

BILL: What the hell is going on here? Who are you? Who is this Barb?

BARB: Never seen him before in my life.

NED: What? Ok this is crazy, I'm getting my vacuum and leaving.

BILL: Oh! You're a salesman. Should have known. She has a thing for salesmen.

NED: Look dude, I don't know what's going on here. I'm just doing my job, I don't wanna get in the middle of anything.

BARB: I wanna be free, Bill! I wanna be free from you and this jail you call a house! I wanna live!

NED: What the hell is going on here? Are you being kept against your will? Is this your husband?

BARB: Yes! Please help me!

BILL: Oh Jesus, this is ridiculous.

(NED pulls phone out of his pocket)

NED: I'm calling the police.

(BARB smacks his phone to the ground, shattering it)

BARB: No!..Oh geez, I'm sorry about that. I ummm, if it's broken I'll replace that. I...

NED: This is so creepy. I don't know what game you two are playing. I'm leaving.

(BARB grabs his duffel bag with the vacuum pieces in it)

NED: Give me the bag.

BARB: But I want it.

BILL: Oh my god I need a new life.

NED: Screw it. Keep the vacuum. I'm calling the police as soon as I leave anyway.

(BARB desperately blocks Ned from the door. Ned is startled and visibly realizing that he is in danger)

BILL: Jesus Christ Barb. Let him go. We don't need another.

NED: Another what? What's happening? Are you gonna hurt me?

BARB: YES!

BILL: NO!

BARB: BUT I WANT IT!!!! You promised if I keep the living room clean, that we could discuss me getting more. And look how clean it is. And I want more! I want MORE!

BILL: Barb YOU ARE SICK! This is a disease! You cannot expect to keep paying this high of a price for this disease. We can't take in any more dead weight.

NED: Yes, please! Don't allow it. Stop the killing Barb, please let me live!

BILL: Oh god. You're fine. You can leave, she's harmless.

BARB: Don't tell him to leave, I LOVE HIM!

BILL: You'd love anyone with a product and a price. Let him leave Barb, he's scared. You already broke his phone, that's gonna cost hundreds to replace, we can't afford any more.

BARB: It has revolutionary new technology...

BILL: Barb!

BARB: That the experts say is...

BILL: BARB!!!

BARB: Fine!

(BARB steps away from blocking the door. Sulking, she hands the duffel bag to a confused and exhausted Ned)

BILL: Here kid. Here's my cell number. When you get an amount to replace your phone, let me know and I'll mail you a check. Sorry about all this. We have a "no solicitors sign" out front, but it doesn't deter everyone, such as yourself. And I'm sure you're a great guy and this is a great product, but please don't come back to my house. We don't allow your type of people in my house.

BARB: You! You don't allow them in our house. I think they're just fine.

NED: What do you mean "your type of people"?

BILL: Salespeople! She can't say no! We have 3 vacuums that were bought within the past year. We are halfway paid on a baby grand piano. Got four sets of Encyclopedias. All the charity chocolate bars you can imagine. Got our gutters refurbished! During the summer when it doesn't rain! What even is gutter refurbishment? It's a scam is what it is, I'll tell you...

BARB: That Gutter Lady was a nice woman! And gutters need the most delicate amount of maintenance to be effective so that...

BILL: Oh my god! This is why you aren't allowed to open the door. We aren't rich! We've mortgaged the house to the hilt! You can't keep spending money like this. All the things you buy, we don't even use.

BARB: We can donate extra things to the church, they can use...

BILL: They don't need 3 vacuums!!! Just like we don't need 3 vacuums. We got boxes up to the ceiling in the back with all the crap you buy, it nearly killed me just a minute ago when a giant air fryer brought down a whole wall of boxes.

BARB: The Frymatic Platinum Series XL?!?!?! Did it break? Is it ok?

NED: What kind of vacuums?

BILL: What?

NED: Just wondering, you said they were bought within the past year, so they're almost new?

BILL: They have never been used once. They are still in the packages.

NED: What kind? What model?

BILL: I don't know, it's the ummm...

BARB: There are 2 Eclipse Upright Models. And a Voltaire 1500.

NED: Oh wow. Those are practically hotel-grade. They cost thousands each.

BILL: I KNOW!

NED: How about we make a deal?

BILL: What do you mean?

NED: For the phone. I take those vacuums off your hands, since I can resell them, and I'll forget about the phone.

BARB: NO!

BILL: YES!

BARB: Not the Voltaire! Please just leave the 1500! It's My favorite.

BILL: They're yours. The garage door is open, you'll see them lined up on the side. Along with the rest of our crap. Just leave kid, go.

BARB: Good bye Ned. Treat them well. Visit us often.

BILL: Visit us never.

NED: This is one of the oddest days of my life. But, I mean, I guess I came out ahead. So... Thank you?

(NED grabs his bag, and walks out the door.. BILL glares at a sullen BARB with a look of anger and disapproval.)

BARB: I just wanted to hear about the revolutionary new technology that the experts say is...

(Knock at front door)

BILL: Oh god. What does this kid want now?

(BILL opens door to a woman)

STACEY: Hi! I'm here with Gutter Pros. We're here to install the new gutters you ordered!



CULTURE

Sweater

by Lucas McCoy

I purchased
The sweater
From Goodwill
That you
Wanted to buy
Earlier that day
Forgive me
It is comfy
And so warm

Culture, Civic Engagement by Augustine Rodriguez
Graphic Design

The History of Beer Gardens and Pretzels

by Jana Noble

Introduced to the United States in the 1890s, the beer garden has become a commonality for many millennial, artist communities. But where, you ask, did the term “beer garden” come from?

Beer garden is actually a poor translation from German. A more appropriate name would be “beer orchard”. It is in these orchards that beer is grown on trees. The beer develops inside of a pint glass that starts off even smaller than a shot glass and is carbonated from atmospheric carbon dioxide. Unlike many unripe fruits and vegetables, beer stays the same color throughout its life. To determine a beer’s ripeness takes the special eye of the bierbauer, who spends their whole life learning the subtleties of the beer tree. As the beer approaches ripeness, a ring around the top of the glass becomes thinner and thinner until it is able to be plucked loose, leaving the glass lid behind on the tree. It is the bierbauer’s job to pick the beer before it falls to the ground, shattering and spilling beer everywhere.

In nature, beer is consumed by small animals such as raccoons to warm them through the winter and used by bears as projectile weapons.

Commonly found growing with beer trees are pretzel bushes. These plants have a sort of

symbiotic relationship, absorbing different nutrients and putting back into the soil the minerals that the other needs. Pretzels have unfortunately been commercially bred beyond recognition, now growing on large trees harvested by undocumented, illiterate migrant workers that deserve better. Due to the unnatural proportions of sodium chloride and high fructose corn syrup that are now fed to industrial pretzels, they develop large salt crystals on their skins that small children at the zoo lick off and adults brush away onto the sidewalks.

Fortunately, a handful of cottagecore lesbians in Alsace Lorain have started a farm of heirloom pretzel bushes. One can take a tour through the orchards on Sunday, Monday, and Thursday for only €15 per person, including pretzel samples.

This Oktoberfest, remember your local bierbauers and cottagecore lesbians, and support naturally grown beer and pretzels.

RELATED ARTICLES:

How mustard is made from the sap of pretzel trees
Bratwurst: is this root actually a vegetable?

Life After

by Sabrina Spann

I come home to piles of mail, some opened,
all left untouched. I can't read his name today.

The temperature is dropping. I peel off
his denim jacket—I've been wearing it

since autumn began. I know the house
won't smell of him: not even the stink of

wood stain lingers. Saws and sanding blocks lay
in the garage gathering the dust of neglect. Inside,

over the room my bed now claims, a golden painted
plaque reading "Captain" still remains. At his desk,

I ready my pen: ink, paper, a cursive waltz waiting.
But tonight, evening's secrets are quiet. I stop resisting

and let my sobs break the choking silence.



Impulse / Down of Life by Rositsa Dimitrova
Drawing Level II

Compulsed

by Sophia Galambos

It felt like a normal day. The stench of cleaning products and medication filled the long halls. The nurses still talked to patients like they were speaking to a puppy. Jerry hugged the lamp and Sarah was on her knees screaming for drugs. Every time the light flickered, Gerald jumped and hid under an oak cabinet, while Betsy began to cry.

Paintings flapped back and forth with the gust that came from the few fans that didn't help with the mid-July heat. To a stranger, the paintings looked like something you would find in a kindergarten classroom. They were splotched with primary colors and scribbled with stick figures, clouds and flowers. Mae liked to examine each one. She noticed how the bold strokes and dark lines came from the patients who were stressed, and the most detailed paintings were mostly from the teenagers that tried too hard. After living in the psych ward for four years, she could finally tell who painted each picture without looking at the initials on the back.

Mae was one of five teenagers that was institutionalized. They didn't have much in common despite their ages. They were addicted to drugs, while Mae was addicted to perfection. She had never spoken to them before. In fact, she hardly spoke at all. One of the only times she spoke was once every week during a five-minute call with her parents. The call involved the same few bland lines every time. The "How are you", the "Sorry we couldn't make it to visiting hours" and the "We miss you!" If they really did miss her, they would make time to see her.

There would be moments when Mae overheard the others talk on the phone with their parents. She fumed with jealousy as the other girls laughed at their dad's corny jokes. It wasn't like she argued with her parents, but she felt as though she was speaking words off of a script in the few times she talked with them.



True Beauty Abandoned by Kara Griffith
Best of Painting

Mae liked normal days. Days where she could clearly count the 374 tiles leading to the bathroom entrance without interruption. She never felt in control of anything in her life, especially in her head. But counting gave her the most sense of ease.

Normal days were best. A few days ago, Jerry was where he always was, latched onto the lamp with his skinny body. Mae began her daily routine, counting each tile, checking for their perfection. Everything was going just fine. She brushed her finger against the 272nd tile, when Jerry jumped, freaked out by her crawling on all fours. Then down crashed a glass of water, spreading sharp fragments all over. It wasn't the danger of being cut that scared her to death, it was the black label, "Harry's Brewery: Since 1995", blocking her view of tile 276 and 277. This was a surprising incident. Glass was not something easily accessible in the psych ward. In fact, an entire meeting was held to figure out how this could've happened. They concluded that it must have been left behind by a visitor. But Mae knew that it was one of the nurses. They weren't very good at following the rules. These accidental incidents happened too frequently. Mae was aware that the place was ancient, and she didn't mind, but she thought that some renovations should be made to prevent things like this from happening.

The day after the incident, all Mae could remember was the sting of cuffs piercing her ankles and wrists. The scene was all too familiar—another manic episode.

Normal days save her from panic— from the unraveling of her thoughts. She knew these days were all she had. She often found herself staring out the window, into a world she felt kidnapped from. She saw small details—squirrels collecting leftovers from trash cans, not nuts like she reads in books. The world looked so stable through the window—the grass swayed from left to right with the direction of the wind. If only this stability could exist in her mind.

Instability had been the contrast of her life. She always wished for a logical, conscious mind at all times. Sometimes, she would picture herself standing in the center of the world, traffic buzzing in her ear, the smell of fresh pizza and gasoline fumes flowing up her nose. No urge to count. No intrusive thoughts. She loved to imagine it. Living amongst people, unbothered by tiny imperfections. Living in the real world should be scary to her, but it wasn't. Sometimes all she wanted to do was walk around Times Square, regardless of the inevitable consequences.

She watched as people passed by the psych ward, always a look of concern smeared on their faces. They would take a moment to stare at their feet. It was almost like Mae could see their mouths move like they were whispering a prayer,

"God help these people". Which was fair enough. Everything and everyone around her could use a little help from God. Gerald could use a premium-grade chill pill, Betsy could use a visit from her daughter, and the cafeteria meatloaf could use a little more meat, and a little less plastic.

At around 12:30 pm it was lunchtime. Everyone was gathered around what felt to Mae like the biggest room in the building. It was filled with small tables made of cheap wood. Most of them wobbled, so much so that there was almost always milk spilled on the floor by the time lunch was over. Mae couldn't stand the wobbles. She hadn't sat at a table for a meal since her first day. She felt embarrassed, but sitting in her corner kept her from having to count each wobble before taking a bite to eat. She could starve to death if she got distracted! And there were a lot of things that she could get distracted by. Who thought it was a good idea to put a chronic OCD patient in the same place as people who are actually insane? Within the last hour, Jerry swallowed an entire egg from the cafeteria counter. The eggshell crunch sounded like teeth being filed on a cement block, and then, he just slurped the raw egg like it was a milkshake. Mae cringed at the recollection of it. And then there were the instances of waking up in the middle of the night to her roommate screaming, "THE DEVIL HAS ARRIVED. THE DEVIL HAS ARRIVED AND WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE!!"

The first few weeks were the worst for Mae. The inconsistency of every day made her blend in with every other insane person in the place. The first time she saw Liam spit on the light switches, she couldn't flick it twice. And she screamed. She screamed so hard the oxygen would leave her brain and pull her thoughts out with it. But she had learned to deal with it. She knew everyone so well that she could almost predict what was going to happen and then mentally prepare. The psych ward was her home.

It was another day in the cafeteria. The food was fine. It looked like what would be served at a high school cafeteria. The only difference was that patients were not allowed to serve themselves. The last time Mae was in a cafeteria was in elementary school, a few years before she was instituted by her parents. Even though the children barely knew how to form a sentence, she was known as, "The Girl Who Always Washes Her Hands" and the "Counting Freak." From what very little she remembered, the food tasted the same. Everything bland—rice cakes disguised as a sandwich or a lump of meat. Edible, but not great. It was spaghetti day. Mae got about 3 full bites in, without every noodle slipping from the plastic



Sting by Hanna Holt
Painting

spoon. She heard a nurse call her name, explaining that her parents had called requesting to speak with her. As she walked to the phone booth she nervously brushed her hand across every crevice of the dirty white walls. It wasn't the second Thursday. She wondered why her parents were calling her. It should've been a pleasant surprise, but the lack of calls made it apparent that this call was urgent.

"Hi, honey," said Maes' mom. Honey? She had never called Mae that in her life. "guess what?" she continued with sarcastic excitement.

"We're picking you up today! You're coming home." her dad added Mae looked up, confusion written on her face.

"Why?" Mae asked.

"We don't have the money to..."

"We... we miss you sweetheart!" her mom quickly cuts in, practically yelling.

"Oh." Mae said, staring dillgently at her feet, anxiety creeping to her head.

"Can't wait!"

She hung up the phone and sighed. *This was what she wanted, right?*

The next day, Mae began to pack the few things she had collected over the past few years- a toothbrush, a water bottle and a baseball cap left by one of the visitors. She thought about how strange it would be to have things of her own once again. Things she doesn't have to share or hide between her mattress.

The sky was gray the whole morning. The clouds menaced the day, growing darker and heavier until they burst, rain flooding the sidewalks. A car arrived at the front of the gate. The same gate she had waved goodbye to her parents four years ago. She wondered if her parents had changed. What did they look like? Would they even care to see her? They didn't seem very interested in her all those years. They didn't bother to visit, not even once. Would they run up to her and wrap their arms around her? Would they tell her how sorry they were and how there was a valid reason for them not to visit her? Maybe once she arrived back at her family house, a "Welcome Home!" sign would be strung at the entrance. A million questions passed through her mind as she walked towards the car. She kicked twice at the cracks on the sidewalk one by one.

She looked up from the ground and met her mother's eyes. They were darker than she remembered and wrinkles covered the vein that would pop out whenever she would yell. There was an awkward moment of silence, when finally her mom wrapped her arm around Mae in a half-hug. Mae remembered- her mom was never much of a hugger. Unless it was a colleague or friend. Or anyone, she realized,

except for her. Her mom helped her onto the leather seat. Mae sniffed around for the Armor All cleaner on the leather seats—signs of absolute cleanliness.

Maes' thoughts raced faster than the cars on the highway. What was this world she was entering? What was the world she left? Maybe it was a good thing. She could go back to school, talk to strangers and drink out of glass cups. She could have friends, real friends that didn't scream or spit on light switches.

She started to tap her foot, overcome by panic. She tapped the back of the driver's seat. Her world as she knew it, watching squirrels, eating bad meatloaf, and living among chaos, was over. She felt that was a world of instability, but as she sat in the back seat, she longed for that world she had adapted to. She would no longer be the sane one in this new life. And her parents? If they didn't care for her all those years, would they care for her in the midst of a manic episode? Her mom could hardly stand to touch her. All the pizza, traffic and everything she had romanticized became irrelevant.

She refused to accept this change. Everything was moving too fast. Her every thought scrambled together in a blur, but the voices in her head were clear. She had to get out of the car. Unable to breathe, Mae gasped and started to open the car door.

The car door swung open, and the road resembled a treadmill. The bolting cars and blasting horns drowned out her mother's screams. Mae waited, listening for the voices. A signal to jump. A signal to close the door. As she gazed at the flashing lights of the city, a breeze blew over her face pulling droplets of sweat to the ground. The voices were clear—jump. Jump back into the car and lock the door three times. Then everything will be fine.



Mechanical Heart by Rositsa Dimitrova
Best of 2D Design & Mixed Media

I Call Your Ribs the End of This Lonely Town

by Luna McConnell

Leonard Winograd Award Winner

One day you will reach into that empty place
The hole beneath your perfect collar bones
Which we dug together
And laughed with your flesh on our spades

I will not be there
As I always have been
Waiting somewhere
Deep in a chip on your sternum
Buried in the slick purple meat of your lung
No
I will be trembling away from that heaving palace

I resigned myself to living in your hollow trunk
A yellow bird tired of fighting iron bars
I roamed deeper into the city of your bones

Your shoulder blades a perfect place to read
Your hips the meadow beyond your train track spine
Your ribs the end of that lonely town

But today I am curled up next to your heart
And when your hand reaches in
I take it
Like a bus straight home

Put Your Head on My Shoulder by Zaida Sever
2D Design & Mixed Media



Family Dinner

by Kelly R. Sage

Sonorous snores rattle from

Sagging, Stained, Rough

Whiskey Brown Couch

Heel toe tipping,

I wince when the stairs creak. One step,

Two step,

Three... Fifteen

in total -

I count them every time.

Jar brown sticky peanut butter, washed

down

with

tap

water

My room - On the right

On the left - Hard rock king size mattress,
always empty.

A fan spins on high

at the foot of my bed

I drape and tie my sheet to it.
It

billows,

forming

a

cocoon

around

me.

I tell my stuffed animals about my day.

Self Defense

by Nicole Weber

Water used to fall

From the sky and I

Root for the underdog

May she be our demise

In the grey malaise this

Mal-ease of lighted night

Whispered words weave comforts

Of our eventual eviction

Battered wife turned

Bank-robber-bandit

I will cheer as the bees and the briar

Bulge from her bag, robbing our mouths blind

May she rise, catalyzed from her

Catatonic coma and cold cock us a

Cosmic colostomy bag and ride

Ride off into the crimson cataclysm

In our high school crush's Camaro, Corvette

May her rising tide push gaping mouths wide

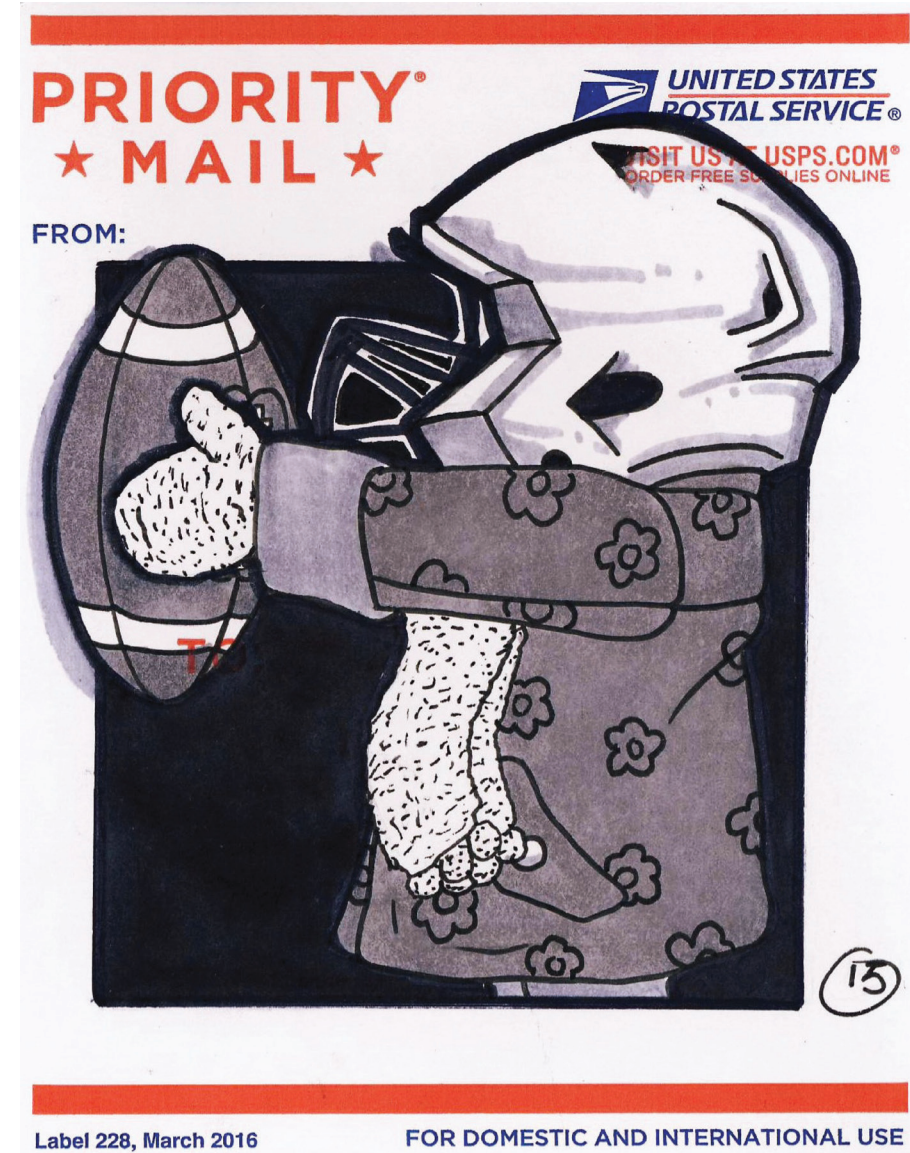
So that we may choke on amber

May her particles cling to our ashes

So that we may gather dust

As a docent tells our children

Not to run.



Helmet by Zaida Sever
Drawing Level II



Celestial Seasonings Energy Drink Packaging by Megan Sullivan
Graphic Design, Juror's Choice

Early September

by Ananda Corum

Burning sinuses, scalded by over-chlorinated swim, but can't bring arms to surface, tension supporting leaves but not frogs, float submerged as I do. Unaware that they are drowning.

Lungs are tight, I pull my knees to my chest, of decaying pool toys obscured by unsettled water, irritates my eyes, peeled open like cucumbers, rough and dusty under my feet. Acorns and algae on faded vinyl.

Sodden equilibrium, fragile and murky and tepid, surroundings immerse their acquiescent quarry, dug deep into apprehensive granite flooded over years—like I am flooded by the years.

I could get out, but I'd be cold.

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Editors

Jeff Becker
Brian Dickson
Aaron Durst
Claire Ibarra
Riley Nguyen
Sabrinna Spann

Art Editors

Karen Danielson
Lincoln Phillips
Sandy Guinn

Design Editor

Gretchen Ochinerro

Magazine Design & Layout

Cassie Renier
Zoe Whitely

This magazine displays the work of students in the areas of Creative Writing, Fine Art, Graphic Design, and Photography. All submissions were carefully considered, and the selections were based on originality, coherence, and quality of work. Ourglass is a publication of Community College of Denver, which reserves all rights and hereby grants them solely to the original artists.

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CCD currently offers ENG 221, Introduction to Creative Writing, a GT (Guarantee Transfer course).

ENG 2021 Creative Writing I

This course examines creative writing by exploring imaginative uses of language through creative genres (fiction, poetry, and other types of creative production such as drama, screenplays, graphic narrative, or creative nonfiction) with emphasis on the student's own unique style, subject matter and needs. This is a statewide Guaranteed Transfer course in the GT-AH1 category.

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This program allows you to pursue your interests in creative writing while earning your Associate of Arts degree. We offer smaller classes that operate under the assumption that would-be literary artists must do what all aspiring writers must: read and write. In addition, our program focuses on providing a solid foundation in the study of multiple genres, broad academic preparation in literature and other arts, and exploring literary models from diverse cultures, races, and contexts.

This guaranteed course transfer only applies to the University of Colorado, Denver.

To find out more about our program email jeffrey.becker@ccd.edu.

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ART 1021 Drawing I

This course is an exploration into Drawing as an expressive medium for human creativity! As a human mode of communication, drawing and 'mark-making' have been part of our collective experience since our ancestors inhabited caves. As part of this class, you will enjoy projects that investigate various approaches, techniques and media needed to develop drawing skills and visual perception.

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This course provides introductory lessons and explorations in the basic elements of design, visual perception, and artistic form. It is an essential course for anyone wanting to be an artist, a designer, or an architect!

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Free your inner photographic genius! This class will deliver the fundamentals of photography in a fast-moving, creativity-focused, workshop-style class using state-of-the-art workstations and software to bring your photographic ideas into reality.

MGD 1001 Introduction to Graphic Design

If you want to improve your skills with the Adobe suite or start learning to be a graphic designer, this is the class for you! This course will introduce you to the computer system and software used to develop graphics. Just think, you will learn about the hardware and software components for publication and multimedia production through execution in various vector, raster, page layout and multimedia programs!

MGD 1016 Typography I

Type is an essential way that we communicate. This is true not only because we use it to type messages but because the design of it has emotional, instructive, and informative elements. This course introduces the history and concepts of typography as applied to graphic communications. You will have the opportunity to appropriate typography in a variety of design applications, emphasizing the basic design principles of typographic compositions and typesetting!



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