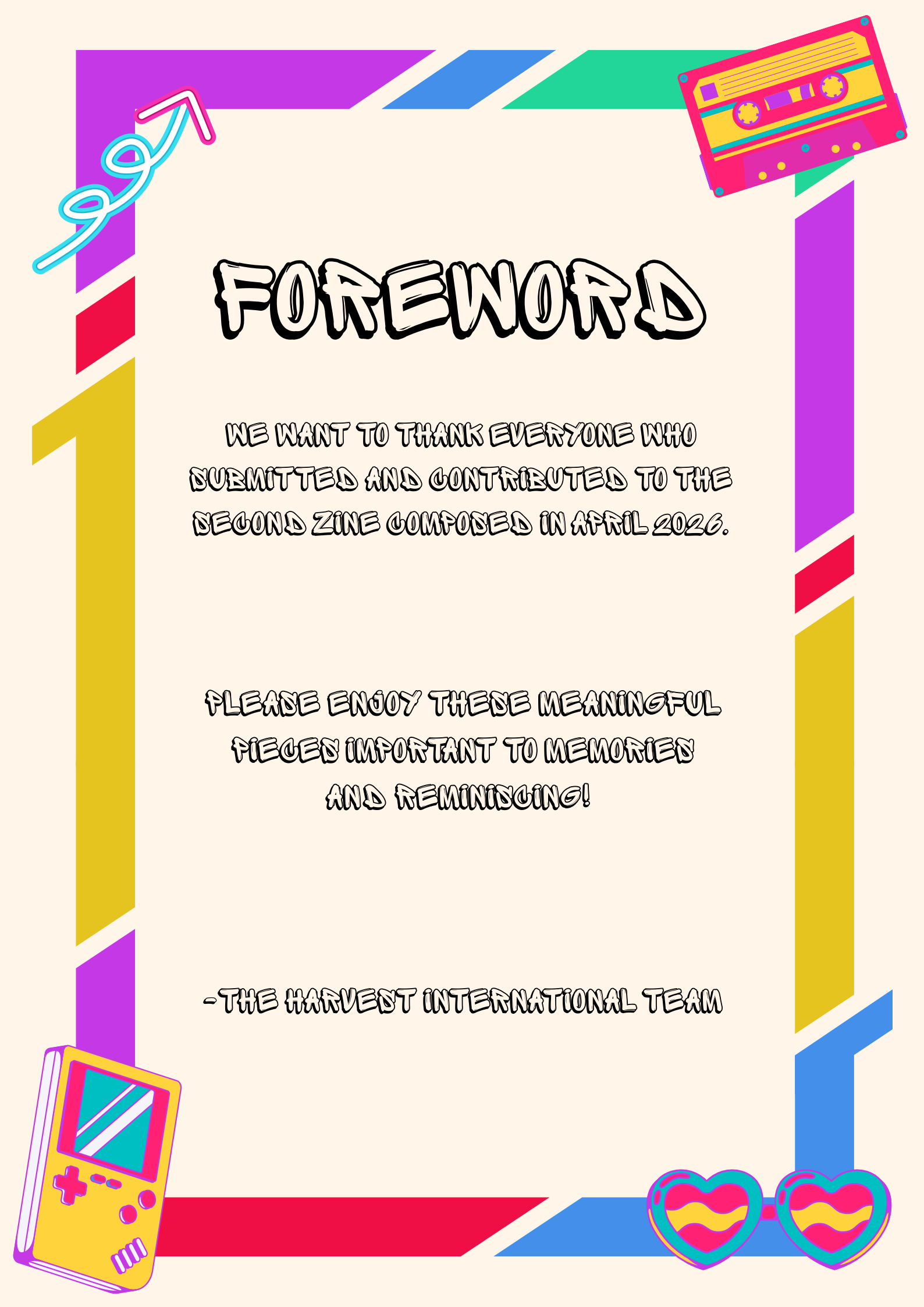


April 2026

Rewind The Moment



Harvest International



FOREWORD

WE WANT TO THANK EVERYONE WHO
SUBMITTED AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE
SECOND ZINE COMPOSED IN APRIL 2026.

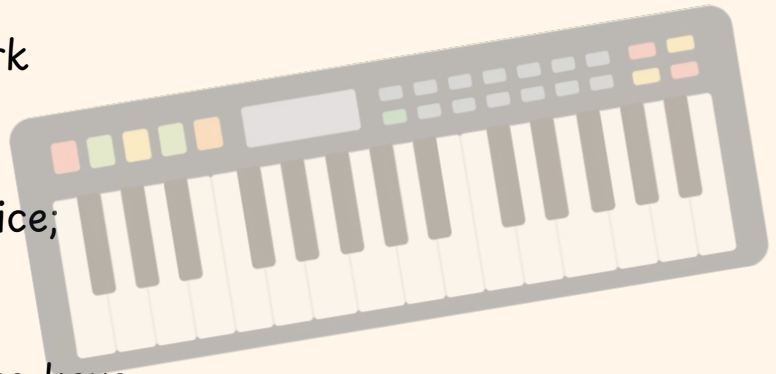
PLEASE ENJOY THESE MEANINGFUL
PIECES IMPORTANT TO MEMORIES
AND REMINISCING!

-THE HARVEST INTERNATIONAL TEAM

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I got my keyboard from Goodwill
cracks, scars, and all
The seven keys that don't work
The layer of dust
Remnants of its other life
Past owners lending their advice;
I have a real piano now
But it doesn't play the same
So I sit and tap those noiseless keys
And let the past play away.



Running

I am running from what happened to me at fifteen
Running from the events of that night
Until it swallows me whole

I trip, I fall, I am burning in hell
The past haunts me every night in my sleep

At eighteen, I run toward my death
Only to be alive to find a future I didn't plan on having



TIRED SOLES

MY DOC MARTENS
I PURCHASED YOU THREE YEARS AGO
MY DOC MARTENS
YOU WERE ONCE SO SHINY AND NEW
TIRED AND USED, YET I LOVED YOU SO
WHY CAN'T I DO THAT WITH YOU?
MY DOC MARTENS

The Bassist (Excerpt)

By Grayson Rodriguez

Nearly an hour later, I hear the keys shuffle in the door socket, and as the door opens, I look to my left as I'm sitting on the couch, and all I feel is disappointment. Seeing Brandon trudge into the living room, smelling like booze and looking just as bad, gives me a scary picture into what my future could be like if he doesn't get his act under control.

Approaching me, he sets his bass down next to the couch and plops right next to me. I am at a loss for words, and I think Brandon knows that.

"I know..." He looks at me with those eyes that plead for forgiveness, but it doesn't mean anything until he says it, "I'm sorry..."

Shielding my eyes, I realize I'm only saving him from seeing the disappointment that he causes within me. So regretfully, I look him in his eyes, "Are you really?"

"What do you mean?"

"I just thought, you know, if you were truly sorry, this wouldn't happen again. And yet, about a week removed from your previous attempt at an apology, here we are again." I see his expression turn. He doesn't like being called out. But at this point, I can only be honest; I can't pull my punches anymore.

After a few seconds of silence, I realize he has nothing of substance to say. "What am I supposed to do? I could've gone into labor, and you wouldn't have even bothered to answer your phone... I'm supposed to depend on you... What happened? Did you not get enough partying in you the last few times? Or was this because you were celebrating the coming of your newborn son, and you thought a good way to commemorate the occasion would be to act like an irresponsible soon-to-be father?" Now he's leaning forward; this should be good.

"My band got an offer." Leaning on his elbows, Brandon turns his face toward me, almost reluctantly giving away that information.

"Oh... That's good..." I unintentionally say in an unconvincing manner. I'm not even sure what to say or what to think. This is everything he's been working for.

"It's not." Looking at him with concerned eyes, Brandon continues, "We got offered to tour in the UK for four months."

"Wow..." Looking down, Brandon isn't elated by this information, and I obviously know why. Having to give up a great opportunity like this to focus on family has gotta be tough. "Babe, I'm sorry that this happened at this--"

"I said yes."

Atlas

By Chelsey N. Quezada

The village wells have gone dry.

Reverend Hart said they are being punished for their transgressions. Everyone works on the sabbath, down at the fishing coasts. They are all lazy bums. Sinners who spend each day working themselves to the bone.

Until their eyes sink.

Until their boots drag muck and sludge onto their creaky, warped-wood doorsteps.

She knows because she people watched.

There was this twelve-year-old boy she spent a week studying. Each morning, he woke before dawn. Before the blanket of fog lifted from the pathways to the coast. Lanterns hung from posts, but the fires were at the candle ends. Each one he passed snuffed out. Their smoke trails coiling like a snake, slithering after him.

He could smell the sea before he saw it.

The salty scent so thick that he could stick out his tongue to taste it. A sample of the freedom those cresting waves offered. The endless horizon that Reverend Hart said held devils and sea demons. All those who fish in the coast are sinners.

They are the reason the wells dried up.

They plunder from the sea—from the waters of life—she is angry at them.

He reached the docks last. Always last because the older fishermen had longer strides. Some even slept in their boats because it was more spacious than sleeping like sardines with their wives, children, cousins, nieces, nephews, uncles, grandparents, parents, and so on.

Atlas Cont.

A chorus of 'Atlas' sang from the group. Their greetings a mix of back pats and hair ruffles. The fishermen don't take off until everyone is accounted for. One by one, they decide who is paired off with whom. Old Garren—with his sagging face, clothes as scraggly as his hair, and brittle fingers—takes Atlas.

With a boat only big enough for two people and a net, they set off into the misty green waters. Atlas casts the net into the water. He is the one that tosses in the bait. He is the one that watches the still water while Old Garren reclines with his arms crossed and eyes closed. From here, he is more hermit than fisherman. His rags are gowns that blanket his bony ribs. Each wrinkle on his face is like the rings on a tree stump. Each marking his age.

Today their luck is no good.

Small fish swim into the net. Caught up in a trap, their tiny little brains could never think of, but Atlas can think. He knows about the wells. The goddess is upset. He thinks of letting the fish go, but her friends have been taken. It is only fair that he gives her a friend back.

Old Garren is no heavier than a net of their fattest fish.

"What are you up to, boy?" The old man jolts from his slumber, but it is too late.

Atlas has thrown him into the sea. His rags soaked in seconds, but this is what is demanded of sinners. An eye for an eye. She takes his gift. Grips Old Garren in a current, an unforgiving swirl that sweeps him under and out into sea.

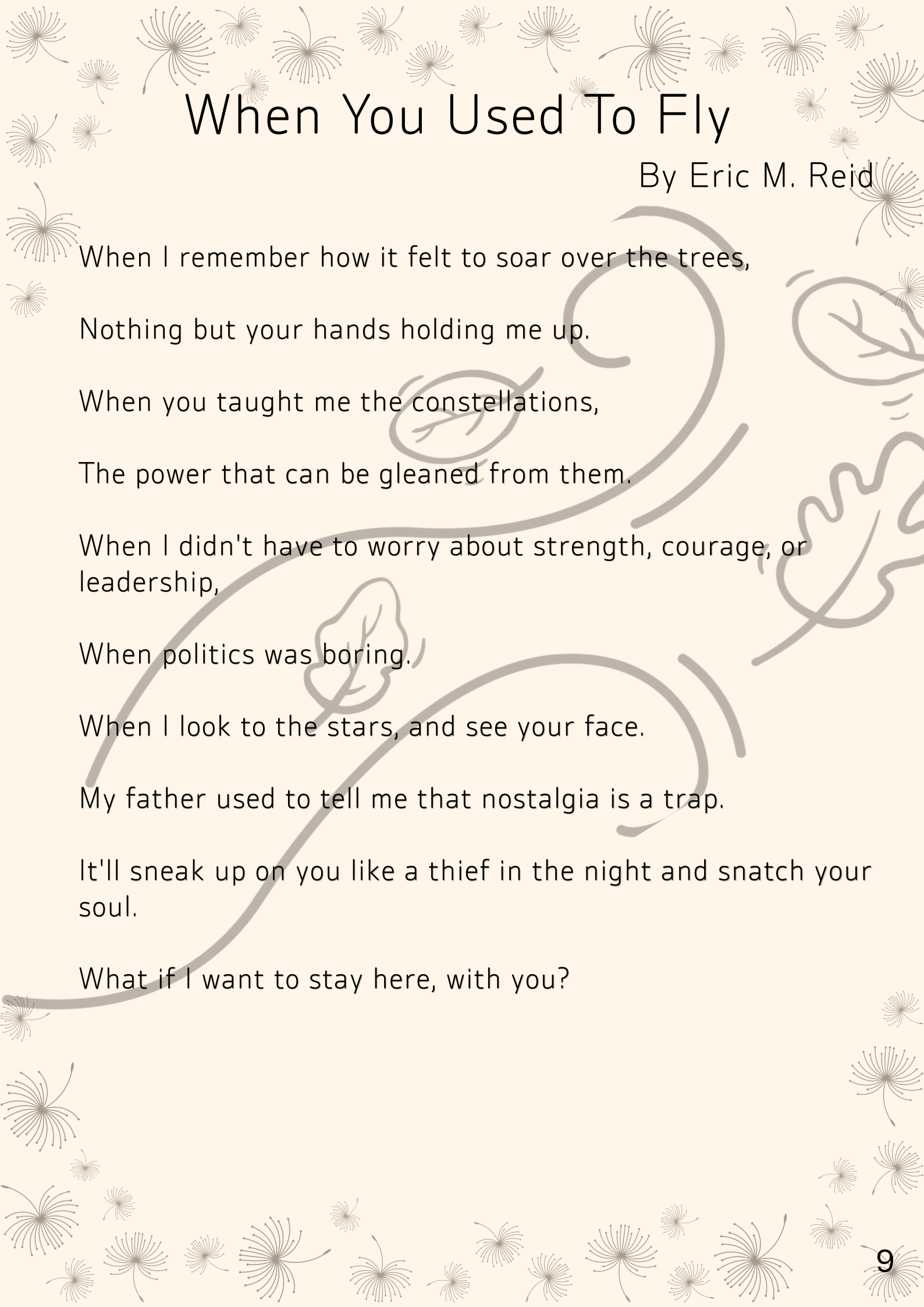
Because all has been set right.

And from that day forth, there was water in the wells.

Sisyphusian Task

By Jameela Abdullah

Stuck in a loop. Failing to advance.
Wanting to skip over the stings of
abandonment.
Consumed in real time. Longing for the
fantasy.
Two scoops of happiness, please. I'm
flatlining.
Take my hand. Close your eyes.
Reminisce with me.
Oh, how you scorn me!
Bargaining with you is a futile exercise.
Nostalgia, a dear gold crusted...Trap

The background of the page is a light cream color. It is decorated with numerous small, stylized dandelion seed heads scattered across the top, bottom, and sides. A large, thick, grey swirl or ribbon-like graphic curves through the center of the page, looping around the text. There are also some faint, stylized leaf outlines on the right side.

When You Used To Fly

By Eric M. Reid

When I remember how it felt to soar over the trees,

Nothing but your hands holding me up.

When you taught me the constellations,

The power that can be gleaned from them.

When I didn't have to worry about strength, courage, or
leadership,

When politics was boring.

When I look to the stars, and see your face.

My father used to tell me that nostalgia is a trap.

It'll sneak up on you like a thief in the night and snatch your
soul.

What if I want to stay here, with you?

BY DAVID ARTIGA



MEMORY LANE IS NOW REMINISCE AVENUE

BY OSCAR GOMEZ

When I was little, all I could think about was growing up. I wanted to grow up and be an adult like my parents and my older siblings. I was the youngest in the family so I had a mountain of rules, a curfew and a bedtime decided for me against my wishes. My oldest brother had fewer rules to follow in my eyes back then, since about the only rules I could remember were that he had to be home by a certain hour, watch his language, and study hard since he was in High School, but that was about all. No rules like: eat your vegetables, no spoiling your appetite with snacks, no videogames 'til you've done your homework, and keep your laces tied. Childhood wasn't all bad: I remember waking up at the crack of dawn for Saturday morning cartoons, scrambling to find loose change and chasing the ice cream truck down when I heard the jingle passing by the house, showing off the new bike I got for my birthday to my friends. It's those days when I remember being told: "Enjoy being a kid now. You'll never have this opportunity again." My parents would tell me in between moments where I would be enjoying life. I couldn't grasp back then what they meant by that. I used to wish the clock would run faster and let me grow up faster, so that I could become an adult sooner, so that I could become a free adult that much quicker. I'm sure that most of us couldn't understand during childhood just how much the desire to "grow up faster" would come back to bite us.

I'm all grown up now, and long ago realized just how much I took what I had for granted. I was sitting down in the living room of my family home, going through a photo album labeled "Memory Lane," smiling, seeing old photos of me growing through the years. I'm sad that things aren't the same as they were back then; my parents were right about never being able to enjoy those things again. All the things I remember being fond of back then are now gone and replaced by something new: Ice Cream trucks were replaced by Ubereats & Doordash, waking up early Saturday mornings was replaced with subscription based cable networks, checking to see who was calling the landline housephone was now blocking incoming "Scam Likely" calls on our smartphones, playing different tracks on a CD player became switching playlists over Spotify. Even going house to house to see what my friends were up to is now just scrolling social media to see what they were posting; it wasn't even by the same friends I knew back then. I closed the album and stared at Memory Lane. That lane should've become sidewalk and asphalt by now, and those memories aren't memories anymore; they're gentle reminders of a simpler time.

Before

It is getting warmer. Before, when it was only cold day after cold day, nothing survived. Even us, we struggled in the cold without warmth besides each other. This is what the older ones say. The warmth is young and growing stronger as time passes, just as I am. I have only known the hot, and then the cold, and then the hot again. Each cycle of heat brings new life to the earth.

The sun warms my back as my stone tool digs into soft dirt, and a hole is left behind. I give seeds back to the ground so they may sprout again. This is how we survive now. Our patch is small but healthy. We do not spend as much time away hunting down animals, not like before. We have more time now, so in the cool night we sit and tell each other stories. Stories of the god who shares Her beautiful gifts with us. Stories of beasts in far lands. Stories of life before this new one.

The older ones tell us about the thrill of hunting. We used to eat what the earth gave us with Her outstretched hands. There were no questions of more or less as we clung to life. Maybe we are ungrateful now, taking what we want and greedily planting more. I was shown how to hunt and forage, but we do not need to anymore.

There are days, some cold and some hot, that I wish to hunt. I dream of chasing something through trees and over mountains and across rivers. The older ones lived that life once, before the warmth blanketed us like a downy fur skin. Now we plant. We plant the seeds to take from the earth endlessly. We plant our shelter to make the land ours. We plant ourselves underneath the ground, laid to rest underneath our homes to live on in those who live there after.

Is this what She intended? When She first poured life into us, and gave us the ability to make new life ourselves, did She know of our hunger? Did She know we would not stop? Did She know we could not stop?

WALKIN WITH MOMMA

By Jacob Zuniga

Hey momma,
Let's sit down and have a discussion right quick
A lot of shit to get off my chest, I don't want to be sick
But it's important I tell you, want to be tighter than cliques
So, I want to be forward, don't want to come off so selfish.
But what you did when I was a kid, that wasn't normal
What you and dad had fought over, it could've been formal
It was psychologically pathologically destructive and awful
I don't blame you for that though
I think right on back through
All the time that we spent
When you made me the happiest
Not in the moment, I guess
More in the future, I guess
Every sacrifice and gleaming gift, all of it for family
Now I share it with a sister, and you give her what she needs
Always think of yourself as a villain, but to me more like venom
Did some bad things, but you were young when you had em
The boy, I mean me, you gave right up on a passion.
After everything, I just gotta say that I'm sorry for all the bullshit that
happened.
I was the first and you guys were young, so you got some mistakes that you
did
A tiger mom who would boss up on anyone and all the other kids
But you grew and I saw that, now you treat sis even better
I'll end it with a simple thanks and I'll love you forever.

LET'S BE OPEN/TOGETHER HONEST

By Jacob Zuniga

You know, sometimes I miss us. At least I like to think I do. I don't really know honestly. I thought I didn't—never wanted any of this. Love never seemed to be something I wanted to let myself feel, but now with you, I felt it.

I felt it until I couldn't feel it, you know? I don't know, maybe that's just me. Maybe I was meant to keep fucking up, and for you to keep accepting that I'm just some guy maybe I was supposed to keep acting like an asshole. Is that what you like? Men being around you and your body just to feel like you matter, that you belong? Or maybe it's that feeling you said you got when your dad—Wait, I'm sorry. I am an asshole and that's me, and I'm so ashamed of that being me. Shit, we only fucked because you were desperate and I was bored.

I don't think I loved you, but I know you loved me. I took advantage of that love and now I can't stand myself. Sometimes, I used to think it was human nature. To use something for your own benefit until you can't no more. But I don't know, maybe that's just me. I had been searching for something normal and eventually I got exhausted. So, all I have to say is that...

I'm sorry if I burned you out of love. That wasn't what I wanted, but your anger is crazy. You have such a short fuse, and it is so frustrating. I want to forget you, but I can't get you out of my mind. You get me so mad, but still, I want you.

You're a hypocrite, selfish, unloving megalomaniac who can't ever get over himself. You say you hate everything, but it's all a cover up because you can't allow yourself to be open. You disguise the fact that you have no personality with being an asshole or bragging about expensive shit that you buy or experience. I did everything to help you and try to save yourself, but nothing happens. You always say you'll be different, always saying sorry, and yet nothing happens. Then you get mad at me again, making fun of me and who I am, and become so cold. All of this because you have the fucking audacity to blame it on some bullshit hate you have towards—dude fuck you. I get you have issues and “mental illnesses” but that's not an excuse to be a dick to your partner.

I know I love you, and I hope you love me too. But I don't know what you want. You say you want me back, saying you miss how our touches felt together. But then you get so cold and push me away. You say you need your space and that you have issues, but I feel so alone now; I just need you back. Please, I need you, I need...

Kermit and Jim

written by Gaven Tovar

Synopsis

On the night of the very first taping of The Muppet Show, visionary puppeteer Jim Henson finds himself overwhelmed by doubt. Behind the curtain, the theater buzzes with chaotic energy—missed cues, malfunctioning props, and anxious performers—while the weight of years of effort threatens to crush him. What if the humor doesn't land? What if the audience doesn't understand the heart behind the felt?

As Jim wrestles with the fear of failure, he finds an unlikely source of comfort in his most famous creation: Kermit the Frog. In a quiet moment away from the noise, Kermit comes to life—not as a puppet, but as a voice of clarity, humor, and reassurance. Through a series of intimate and quietly magical conversations, Kermit challenges Jim to confront the very insecurities that brought him to this moment.

Blurring the line between creator and creation, Kermit and Jim becomes a heartfelt exploration of artistic self-doubt, identity, and belief. As showtime inches closer, Jim must decide whether to trust his instincts—or let fear silence the magic he's spent his life trying to share.

In the end, as the curtain rises and the first notes of laughter echo through the theater, Jim realizes that Kermit was never just a character—he was the part of himself that always believed the show could go on.

Cast List:

Jim Henson: The creator of The Muppets and performer of Kermit the Frog

Kermit the Frog: The face of The Muppets brand, a manifestation of Jim's mind

The Stagehand: A crew member just doing their job.

Sweetums Suit Guy: Silent role, meant to be Kevin Clash

Miss Piggy Handler: Crew member in charge of setting Piggy for her next sketch, a silent role

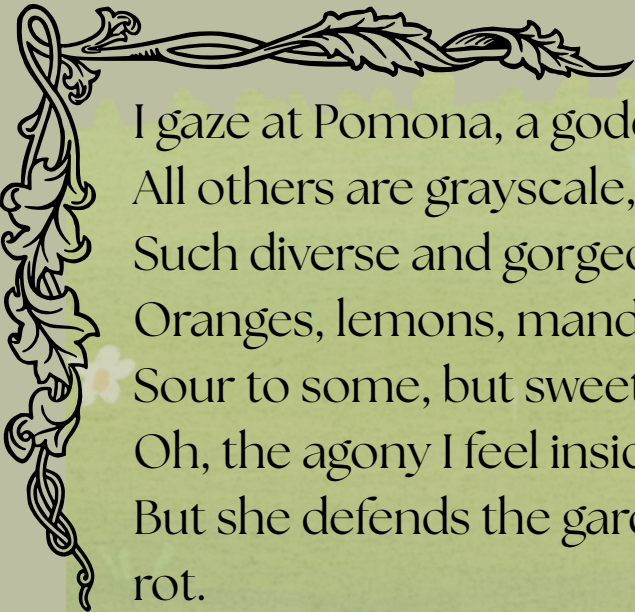
Fozzie Handler: Crew member in charge of setting Fozzie for his opening joke, a silent role

Animal Handler: Crew member in charge of setting Animal in his spot in the orchestra pit for the opening, a silent role.

[Click here to view Kermit and Jim](#)

Vertumnus' Ode

By Vennessa Chase



I gaze at Pomona, a goddess unlike any other.
All others are grayscale, while she explodes in color.
Such diverse and gorgeous fruit her sweet orchards emit.
Oranges, lemons, mandarins, limes, and loquats.
Sour to some, but sweet when you least expect it.
Oh, the agony I feel inside when I see her distraught,
But she defends the garden valiantly from the damage and the rot.
She fights the pests, blight, intense sun, and drought.
Problems may torture her, but the fire within never goes out.
Never have I seen a woman so deeply devoted to her trade.
I watch her now as she carefully works with her pruning blade.
As the seasons change, her unmatched beauty grows tenfold,
And I think how blessed I am to have such a lovely woman to behold.
When near her, I am happiest, and I will never take her for granted.
With a goddess like her in my life, I will always be enchanted.





Paint Me In Full Color

by Cierra Martinez

Paint me in full color and don't leave a single thing out

Paint me in dark greens or ivories

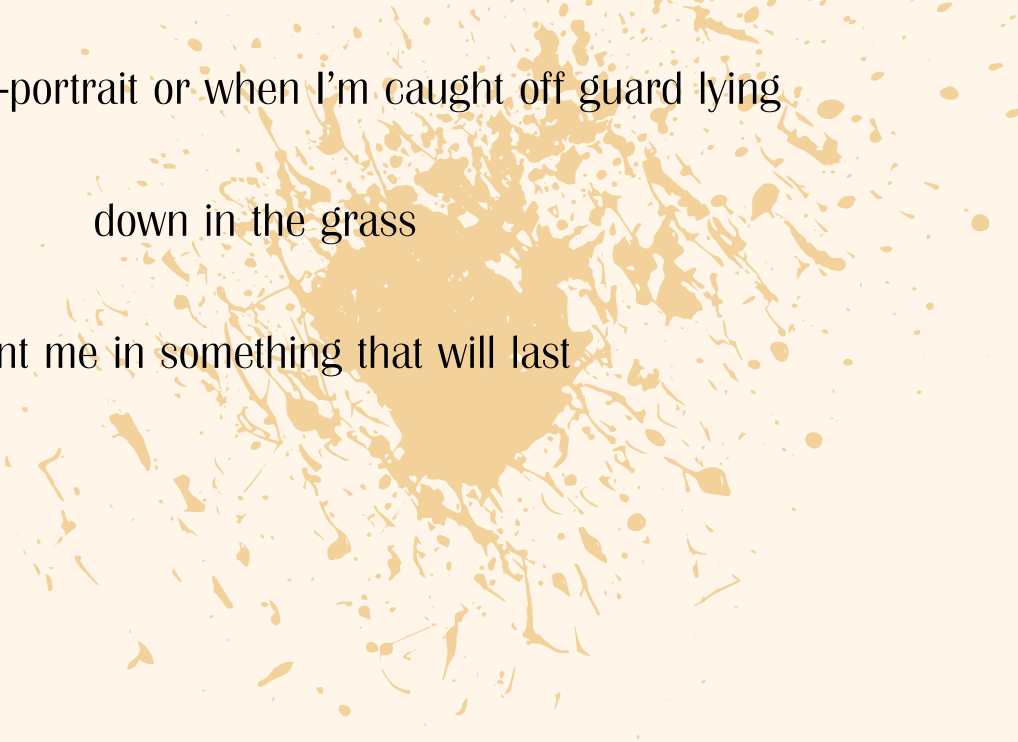
Paint me in golden embers when I shine the brightest

Paint me, but don't stay inside the lines, because I'm not one to follow the rules

It can be a self-portrait or when I'm caught off guard lying

down in the grass

Paint me in something that will last



THE SMELL OF DUST

BY JASPER JAMES

I fluttered down the tree to see you.
“Hello,” I said, the leaf.
“Do you still remember the color?
Or the winter air on your cheeks?”
I was caught on a branch.
It was supposed to be a spiral,
like the one in my dreams.
You used to be a seed.
“Am I in your eye?
Do you still see me?”
A beetle ate me last Friday.
One of those shiny greens.
I saw the ten corpses,
piled up special for me.
I sprouted from the sandy soil.
“Do you know my name still?
Do you have the same one?”
I killed the beetle with a blade
of grass forged in your garden.
It used to be ours,
when height was impossible.
The sun forgot your shape
but your shadow haunts my dreams.
Did you ask for the beetle?
It whispered your name
as it snapped off my head.
Its pincers sealed my throat.
I bled sap and it stuck in your hair.
It’s not really you, I know,
it’s the clouds and the dirt and
the color of the sun and
the dryness in my nose and
the smell of dust.

El Recuerdo

By Andrea Miguel Dolores

Nos robastes de nuestra niñez,
Pero aún recuerdo la casa,
Las paredes que escuchaban mis llantos
Y la niña que esperaba que cambiaras.

Había días en que creía en tus promesas,
Como si fueran cuentos antes de dormir,
Y yo, tan pequeña,
Pensaba que podía salvarte.

Aprendí a esconder tu nombre
Cuando preguntaban por mi papá,
A inventar historias más suaves
Que la verdad que me hacía llorar.

Crecí entre tu sombra,
Entre amor confundido y miedo,
Y aunque te odié con todo mi fuerza
También extraño a la niña que aún creía en ti.

Porque el primer corazón que se reompió
No fue el mio
Fue el de esa niña que aún esperaba en la puerta.



The City of Rain

By Ori Bird

The city was damp. My rain boots were full of water, and my socks soaked cold. I didn't really notice, though. I was having too much fun splashing in the puddles during recess, wood chips floating in rainwater while it poured down on my little body. I sometimes miss the rain because of this, the innocent fun that came with the gloomy weather overhead. Playing with other kids and our silly little games like tag and make-pretend. Now I just sit inside, watching the rain batter the window loudly, getting lost in the swirling storm of ideas tickling my brain.

This tempest is only calmed by these nostalgic feelings of innocence, gazing longfully to experience the whimsy of childhood once again, not a care in the world. I imagine a great city, dampened by the endless downpour of an endless rainstorm—the perfect rainstorm. Great wheels catching and dumping rainwater, drains impossibly large and overhead that siphon into equally impossible buildings. There were only three rules: No hitting, no biting, and follow the first two rules.

I'm not alone, there's other children here, too, waiting for the gates with the word, 'PLAYGROUND' hanging overhead to open. We can't see the sky yet, there's a ceiling above keeping us dry and warm for the meantime. Just beyond, we can see puddles of the greatest quality, perfect for splashing and stomping in. The ground is made of soft wood chips, slides soaked in rainwater. There was a wooden sign on the ground. It said, "NO ADULTS ALLOWED."

The gates do open, and we all yell in glee, storming out of the warmth and into the damp cold. We are all having fun, splashing in puddles. The slides are fast, and our boots fill with water. Our raincoats keep us mostly dry, but water does slip through. This city of rain is our forever playground.

I know this isn't what really happened, that our playground wasn't this impossible city. Recess did only last so long, and by the end, we were all shivering and wet from rainwater, not a towel in sight to dry us off. But I want to go back to those simpler times. Back to that impossible city of rain that we called our own. I want to feel the rain hitting my face as I try to catch raindrops in my mouth, stomping my water-filled boots for what always felt like an eternity of fun and joy.

I'm an adult now. And adults aren't allowed in the city of rain.

Memoir: Corre Caminos

by Carolina Rodriguez

One of my earliest memories was going on our yearly trip to Mexico. More than anything, I remember the actual excursion, the arduous journey to get to where my mother was born. In total, it would take an exhausting 48 hours. The copious numbers of buses we had to take, the long wait at the bus depot in Juarez and having to sit on the hard, orange plastic chairs for six to seven hours because there was only one bus that went to Santa Maria del Oro. I would ask my mother for a few pesos because, since we were at the bus depot so long, I would have to use the restroom. You would have to pay to enter and would be given a few folds of toilet paper by a woman standing on the other side of the restroom door. I remember being on the final bus and falling asleep to the dark and ominous shadowy outlines of the staggering huge and winding mountains that we drove along. By the time we were on the last few hours of the journey, I would learn that it would become routine for the batteries in my C.D. player to die out. Unfortunately for me, the spare pack of batteries was packed away in one of our seven duffle bags, which were stowed away underneath the bus.

We would arrive before the sun would start to peep out. When the bus finally pulled into Santa Maria del Oro, all of the shops would be closed, the cobblestone streets empty except for the stray dog or two wandering around looking for scraps. Fog would be present hanging down and low; it would be bright and sunny within a few hours. There to meet us would be the retired school professor; my Tio Chavelo, with small twinkling eyes, dawning a small white mustache, his body tall, tan and lean. He would be patiently waiting in his red, old (but carefully maintained) Chevy pickup truck. He always looked the same; a pair of dark slacks with a light blue (or white) button-up shirt, neatly tucked in. And, on his head, he would always have a cream-colored wide brimmed hat that undoubtedly helped shield him from the unforgiving desert sun. A man of few words, he would not say much upon getting out of the car and grabbing all seven suitcases, but it was obvious that he was overjoyed to see us. We would all proceed to pile into the truck, driver and elders claiming their seats in the front; my sister and I would excitedly opt to sit in the truck bed. The seven bundles sliding left to right as the red Chevy drove along the uneven, unpaved, dirt roads. We would cruise along at a cool twenty miles per hour. We would continue to roll along until we reached a small town with a bridge. This bridge used to connect the town of La Granja and El Alferez (I say “used to” because I recently learned that the bridge collapsed due to strong floods and has not been repaired since). By this time, the dark early morning sky would change into a light pink dawn, the sun ready to make its grand appearance. The truck would continue to drive along, and I would be able to see elderly women with brooms in their hands, removing any dust or dirt that may have accumulated since the last sweep (conducted a swift nine hours before). We would arrive at a long narrow road with a row of lampposts in the middle. The few townspeople who still stubbornly remained would come walking out and joyously wave to the truck, to all of us inside. I could hear them yelling, “Hola Medranos!” and I remember looking around and thinking I was probably related to more than half of them. The car would come to a crawl as it would descend at a 45-degree angle to my grandmother's house. As we got closer, we were able to see my grandmother's red handkerchief, which was wrapped around her head, slightly peeking through a row of daffodil flowers and lavender plants. As she heard the low rumble of the truck, she would look up from her routine morning pruning and would struggle to make out who was approaching. Upon finally realizing who was pulling up, she would grab onto her cane, exhale and cry out, a mixed bag of happiness and shock.

All of us, tired from traveling the last few days, would be eager to hop out of the car and grab our things. My grandmother would hurriedly open the gate, and both my aunt and mother would proceed to hug and kiss their mother, encapsulating a vulnerability that I would witness so rarely. Next up would be my sister and me. My grandmother would embrace us, her words plugged up; streaming tears would tell us how much she missed us. Her small, freckled hands were so wrinkled and soft, she was so sweet. This was my first trip to Mexico.

Pedazo de Papel

by Carolina Rodriguez

Yo soy un pedazo de papel
I am a piece of paper

Como todas las demás,
Like everyone else

comencé como un listón en blanco
I was born with a blank slate

Con el paso de los años, los pliegues y dobleces
Over the years, the folds and bends

dejan sus marcas en forma de arrugas
leave their marks as wrinkles

Con cada experiencia,
With every experience

se acumula un nuevo borrador.
A new rough draft is made

Otra historia ha sido escrita.
Another story is written down

Soy lo que mi entorno me moldea para ser.
I am what my environment shapes me to be

Me guste o quiera admitirlo
Whether I like or want to admit it

He sido arrugado y arrojado,
I have been crumpled and tossed

borrado hasta que la base del papel se desgastó;
Erased until the base of the paper wore thin

Con trozos de cinta adhesiva
With pieces of tape

Cubrir, sujetar y unir las rasgaduras y desgarros.
Covering, holding and seaming together the rips
and tears

Entre tú y yo
Between you and me

*Hay historias que desearía no haber tenido
que escribir nunca*
There are stories I wish I had never had to
write down

Pero supongo que a veces las cosas son así
But that's just how it goes sometimes, I
guess

Esos escritos ya no existen
those writings no longer exist

Ni volverán a existir jamás
Nor will they ever exist again

Y eso me parece bien
And that's okay with me

Ocupa demasiado espacio.
It takes up too much space

Y siempre puedo escribir mejores historias
And I can always create better stories

Borrar, redactar, escribir, doblar.
Erase, draft, write, fold up

*Guardado en un bolsillo, escondido en un
libro,*
Put in a pocket, tucked in a book,

sigo adelante en mi viaje
Along I continue on my journey

permanezco,
I remain,

un resiliente trozo de papel.
A resilient piece of paper.

Hands

By Carolina Rodriguez

When I look down
I see my hands
But when I miss you
I have those same hands to gaze at
I have the freckles
That every Barrazza wears
(and some Medranos too)
Perhaps not as prominent
But they are there
A constant reminder
My fingers,
not completely wafer thin, but definitely not stubby
I share the fingers too
I remember when I was little
I used to press my hand against your palm
And think how big your hands were
How tough and thick your hands felt,
Slightly calloused and with bare unpainted nails
When I would ask you to paint your nails
You would say there was no point
Because they would just chip and get ugly in a few days time
It's been years since I've touched your hands
They're probably now the same size as yours,
If one were to really measure.
And as the years have trickled by
I too am beginning to lose the suppleness that youth brings
and they too have become slightly rough
I sometimes stop to think
What your hands are doing at that very moment
Are they chopping onions?
The white ones because mi papi doesn't really like the purple ones
Or maybe they're using a comb, not a brush
mostly because your hair is so thin,
a comb does a better job.
Maybe those hands are flipping through the pages of the book you're currently reading
The way you lick your thumb before turning it
People don't really do that anymore
(COVID put an end to that, I'm certain)
What are those gracious hands doing?
Those hands which have sacrificed and worked endlessly for me?



DESILUSIÓN

By FERNANDA LÓPEZ BRACUTO

HUBO UN TIEMPO EN EL QUE TUS OJOS BRILLABAN,
LOS DÍAS PASABAN FELICES, LLENOS DE COLORES,
AL COMPÁS DE TU ALEGRÍA, TU ALMA VIBRABA,
TU SONRISA APACIGUABA TODOS LOS DOLORES.

ALZABAS IDEALES DE PROFUNDA CONVICCIÓN,
LIBRABAS AL VIENTO TU MÁS HONESTA VERDAD,
TU CLARO EJEMPLO ERA TODA UNA LECCIÓN,
ERAS ORGULLO Y PASIÓN, ERAS AMOR Y BONDAD.

HOY SE TIÑEN DE NEGRO TUS PALABRAS,
TU ALEGRÍA SE ESCONDE DETRÁS DEL RENCOR,
ESTÁ TODO OSCURO, TU AURA NO ALUMBRA,
HOY HAY SÓLO ODIO, DONDE ANTES HABÍA AMOR.



Eyeless Sight

By Haylee Chavers

Beary Bear has perfect eyes
Eyes that remind me of my grandmother's eyes
Kind eyes that light up her warm smile
A smile I think about and remember the train tracks we
assembled around the tree every
Christmas
How I miss my grandma's eyes
Eyes I see every time I look into the life reflected in Beary
bears eyes
Beary bear, you hold so much in your eyes
Though they've been reattached many times
They've never lost the spark of grandma's light
Thank you, Beary Bear,
Because of your eyes, grandma's light is everlasting



**Lonely by Ljaydadonn ft.
NailyDaGoat**

Below is a link to listen to Lonely:

[Lonely by Ljaydadonn featuring NailyDaGoat](#)

Bergamot, vanilla, tuberose,
You fill the air, making the room so sweet
Everyone is drawn to you
And your soft intensity

A jasmine, or a rose
Stokes the heart with desire
Your subtle sensuality
Are tinder for the fire

Lavender, patchouli
You bring a sense of calm
All of these you can capture, bottle them up and sell
But they've never quite been able to replicate
Something that smells like mom.



With Eyes Turned Behind

At times we spend our lives
With our eyesight pointed backwards
Visions of warm hugs,
Tchotchkes
First tastes, a lot of first realizations

These visions
Permanently encapsulated
Warm our bellies
Flutter our hearts
They muddle the less savory
Things we'd rather forget

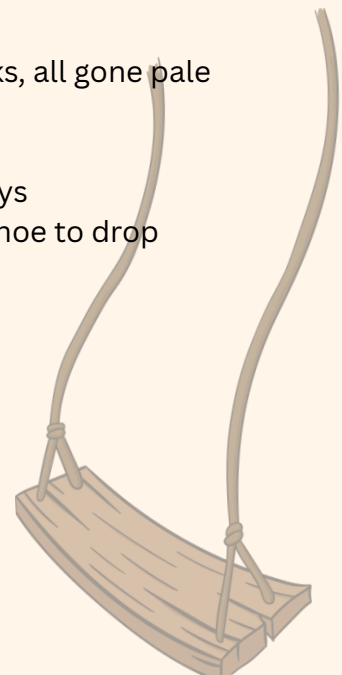
When we're stuck in these memories,
It's so easy to miss
What would be right in front of us
If only we looked ahead
These times, objects, stuck in our peripheral vision
Are waiting to be romanticized

Broken Porch Swing

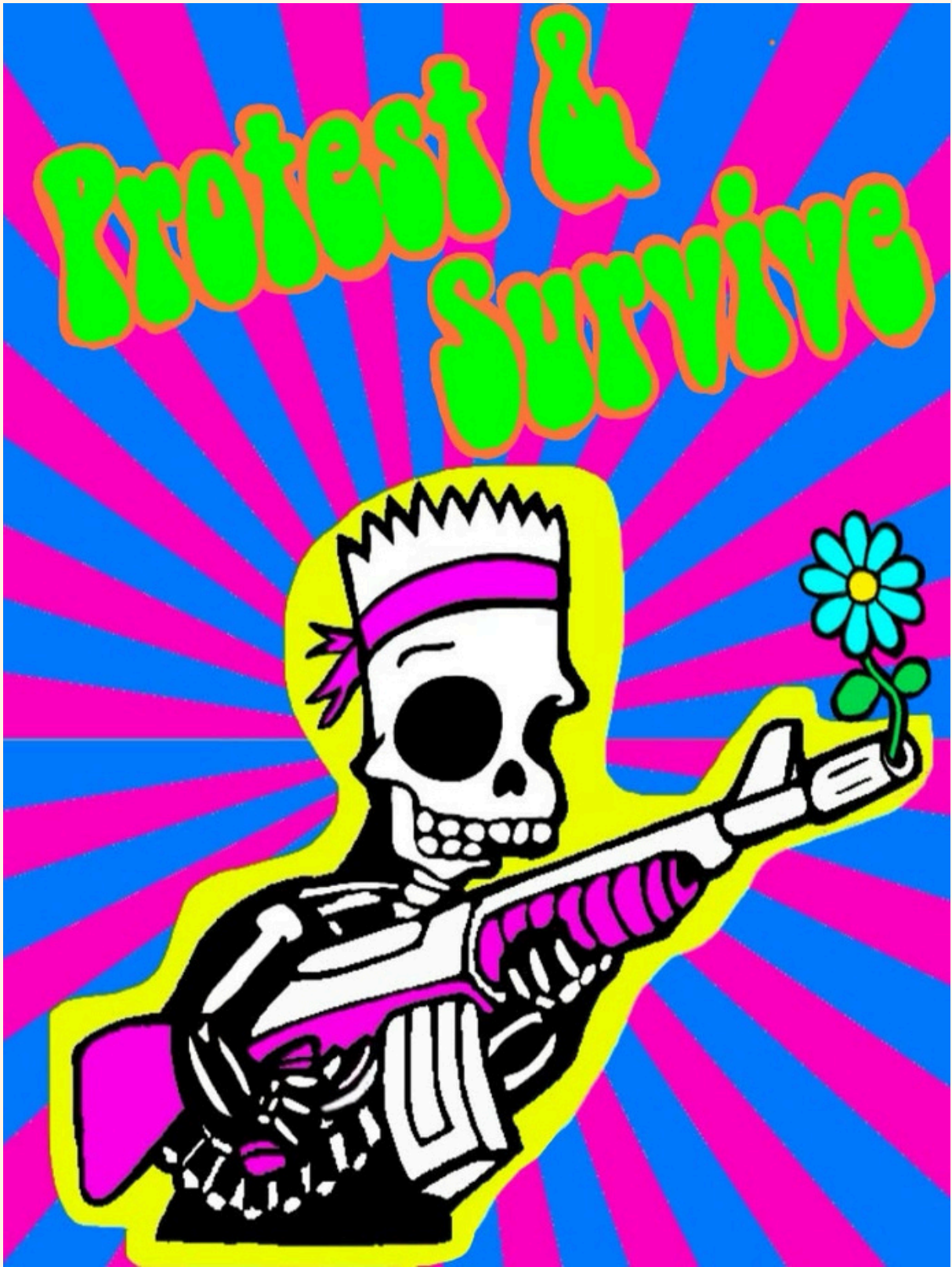
Hilly green fields
Catch up with the kids next door
Let's run around in a thousand circles
Climb trees, climb hills,
Swing on the neighbor's swing, catch bugs, stir up trouble

Spring, Snap
The sky is falling
Four sets of rosy cheeks, all gone pale

The sun goes down
We go our separate ways
Waiting for the other shoe to drop



Protest & Survive by Cannibal Circus



The Ponte Tus Tennis Code

By Denise Gonzalez

The mini hurricane while entering Cardenas

Confusion

Sitting in the cold cart, legs stamped with squares

Pain

Combining my little hands through the beans

Satisfying

My mom is on the phone making amends to our family

Anxious

I get to pick out the cereal

Happiness

Mexican pottery piggy banks

Nervous

We bump into la comadre

Boredom

Always selecting a hot pink concha

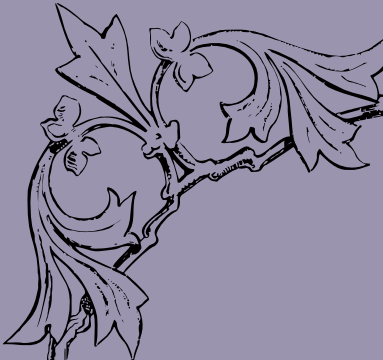
Routine

Strangers smiles

Shyness

My mom is leaving me at the checkout line to grab one last item

Terror



1:07 am

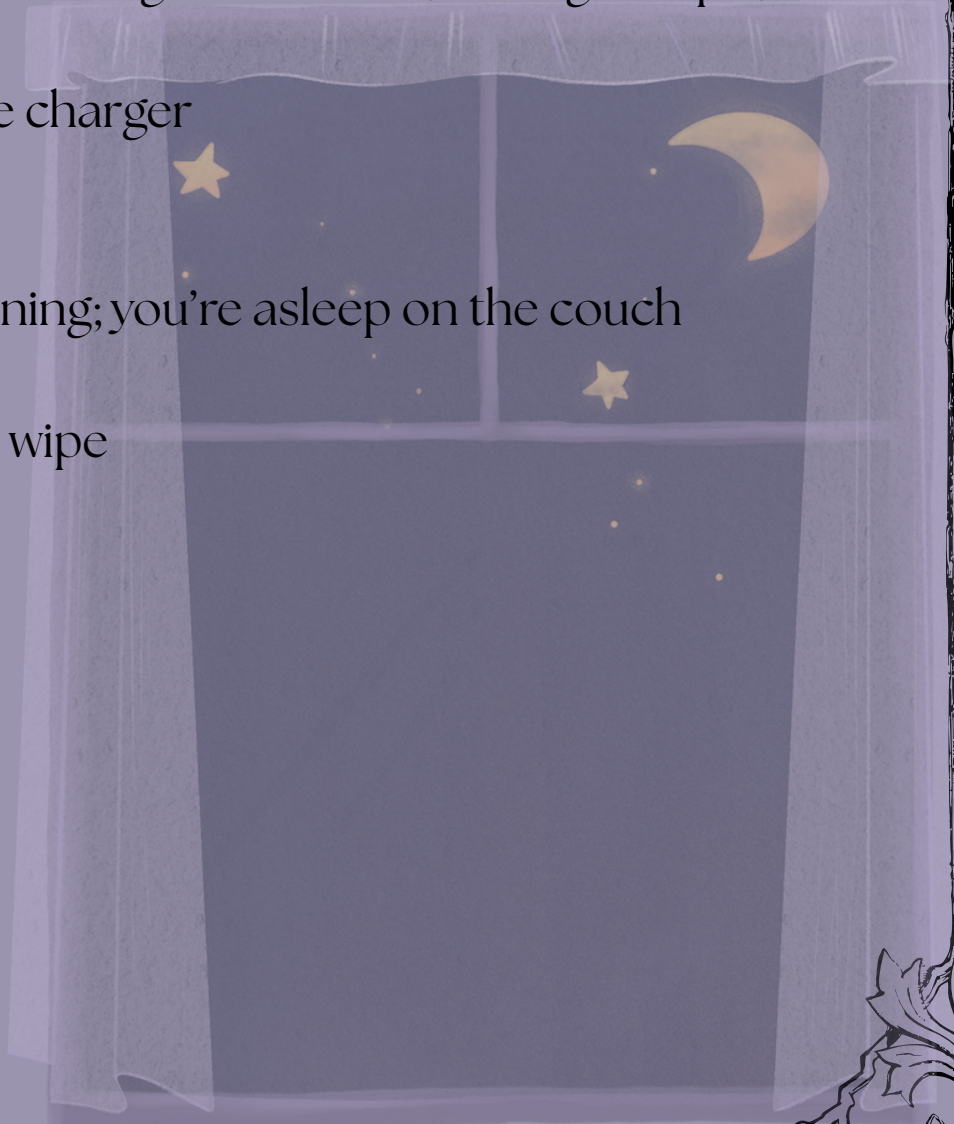
By Emily Summers



Champagne corks pepper bright orange shag carpet
The guest room full, the TV on
Loosely wrapped in someone's coat, my cat runs in his sleep
The kitchen is sticky, the trash can is packed
The fridge is left open, someone will Venmo me tomorrow

On my bedside table is a glass of water, a hangover pill, and a
pack of liquid IV
My phone is on the charger
My makeup is off

I get up in the morning; you're asleep on the couch
Holding a makeup wipe



Ages 7-12

By Trevor Brown

**rainbow sugar squares between my teeth
sugar-bait brown misprint crunch
tongue crying “sour mistake”
array of color bleaching throat
fresh pink pushing through
the first gutting of Fish
poking Fish’s eye
thinking, planning, on crawling
name: Fish Skin
feathers peeling off
twin-thin broken leg
tip-toe to
my plan: feathers on Fish Skin**

Everywhere and Nowhere

By Alyssa Borja

You're nowhere, yet you're everywhere. Hidden in the lights, casting shadows on the street. Sitting at the edge of my bed, watching me sleep. The barista making my coffee. The greeter at church. The waiter at the restaurant. You are everywhere, and still you're so far from me. You linger in my bones, playing with my nerves, sending shivers when I feel you. The busy crossroads of my mind never ceasing except when you run through. Everything stops to watch you. You flow through my veins freely, going straight to my heart. Stopping it completely would be cruel. Palpitate it to remind me my heart belongs to you.



BY CHERI FEYER

MY SISTER

MY SISTER, AIMÉE

I REMEMBER A LIFE COMPLETELY SEPARATE FROM THIS ONE. ONE WHERE THE DISTANCE BETWEEN MY SISTER AND I WAS THE SHORT HALLWAY BETWEEN OUR BEDROOM DOORS. I WOULD WALK TO HER DOOR, KNOCK, CRACK OPEN THE DOOR TO FIND HER READING ON HER FLOOR, BE MET WITH THE INITIAL ANNOYANCE THAT OLDER SISTERS ALWAYS SEEM TO EXUDE AT THE SIGHT OF THEIR YOUNGER SISTER, AND ASK HER TO PLAY "BARBIES." SHE WOULD ALWAYS COMPLY. WE WOULD PLAY FOR HOURS IN MY ROOM, OUR KNEES SORE FROM THE ROUGHNESS OF THE CARPET, OCCASIONALLY TAKING RUSHED BREAKS FROM OUR GAME NARRATED BY "PRETEND THIS. . ." TO GET ICE CREAM (MINE CHOCOLATE, HERS MOOSE TRACKS); A CHOCOLATE STAIN STILL LIVES ON THE DOLLHOUSE, NOW RESIDING IN ITS NEW HOME, MY GARAGE. SOMETIMES WE, ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS FOR THE BARBIES, WOULD FILL UP THE SMALL PLASTIC DOLL POOL WITH WATER, AND WE WOULD HAVE POOL DAY. (WALK SLOWLY SO AS TO NOT SPILL THE WATER ON THE WAY BACK). OTHER DAYS, WE MIGHT TAKE THE LARGE PINK PLASTIC DOLL RV ON CAMPING TRIPS, WHERE THE DOLLS WOULD GO ON HOLIDAY, OR THEY MIGHT ATTEND A NO DOUBT CONCERT (COURTESY OF THE DAISY-PRINT CD PLAYER WE OWNED). IT SEEMS WE SPENT MOST OF OUR CHILDHOOD IN MY ROOM. IT WASN'T REALLY MY ROOM TO US; IT WAS THE FOREST, THE MALL, THE BEACH, A CONCERT. (HUG HER TIGHTLY, AND ENGRAIN THIS FEELING INTO YOUR BEING). AS WE GREW OLDER, WE TURNED OUR ATTENTION TO THE WII, AIMÉE TAKING PLAYER 1, AND I, PLAYER 2; I HAD ALWAYS BELIEVED, AS A YOUNG GIRL, THAT THIS WAS A POWER THING. IT WASN'T. AT GRANDMA'S, WE WOULD BUILD PILLOW FORTS OR RACE AROUND THE YARD. SHE WAS FAST, AND SHE COULD CARTWHEEL, WHICH I ALWAYS ADMIRER. (ASK GOD TO LET HER KNOW THAT YOU HAVE A JOB NOW, AND A CAR, AND A BOY YOU LOVE, AND THAT YOU ARE HAPPY). SHE SHOWED ME HOW TO SPREAD THE EGGS AROUND MY PLATE SO IT WOULD APPEAR I HAD EATEN MORE THAN I HAD, AND ON OCCASION, SIMPLY BECAUSE SHE KNEW SHE WAS GIFTED WITH DAINTY FINGERS, SHE WOULD PINCH ME; THIS WAS SOMETHING SHE WAS INCREDIBLY SKILLED AT. SHE WAS MY BIG SISTER, AND IT WAS THE NEATEST THING IN THE WORLD. I WOULD SAY HER NAME AROUND SCHOOLMATES JUST SO THEY KNEW I WAS AIMÉE'S LITTLE SISTER. WE WOULD SPEND ENTIRE DAYS TOGETHER. LOOKING BACK NOW, NO MATTER HOW OFTEN WE BICKERED OR HOW OFTEN SHE SHOVED ME OUT OF HER ROOM BECAUSE I WAS BEING A "MORON" (A FAVORITE WORD OF OURS WHILE GROWING UP), WE ALWAYS FOUND SPACE FOR EACH OTHER. WE COULD ALWAYS LAY ASIDE THE EVER-PRESENT AIR OF PIQUE SHARED BETWEEN SIBLINGS WHO HAVE NOT YET MATURED TO REALIZE THE VALUE OF SIMPLY HAVING THAT PERSON AROUND. I REALIZE NOW THAT AIMÉE WAS THE BEST FRIEND I EVER HAD. I OFTEN WONDER WHAT OUR "THING" WOULD BE NOW. WOULD WE TAKE REGULAR DRIVES TO THE BEACH?



Friends Forever By Sophia Madayag

It was you and I, just me and you.
Every memory we made still feels brand new.
Best friends forever, I swore it was true.
Hanging out every day is all we knew.

Cartoons before school while eating our cereal.
With our tiger-striped bowls, mornings felt surreal.
Laughing at nothing, the joy was so real.
Catching crumbs with our mouths, doing it with a seal.

Outfits that matched unintentionally caught stare.
Same colors, shoes, shirts— looked like we were playing fair.
We walked into school as the “identical pair.”
If one of us was nervous, the other was there.

Soccer and basketball, side by side we played.
Running in track meets, never once afraid.
Win or lose, it was the memories we made.
With you next to me, no fear ever stayed.

If bullies would come, we stood twice as tall.
I always spoke first, then you’d respond to my call.
No matter the pressure, no matter how small,
Together we stood so neither of us fall.

When adults argued and voices grew loud,
We held onto each other, away from the crowd.
Two kids in the chaos, scared but still proud
To find each other, with no one else allowed.

It still hurts to realize that all friends pass on through.
That they never last forever, which is what I am to you.
We’re now on separate paths, unaware of what each is up to.
And losing you feels like losing a piece of me too.

Credits

Editorial Leadership

Wendy & Trevor

Web Management

Sophia, Vennessa, Chelsea, & Sara

Submissions Management

Vennessa, Bella, Trevor, & Cheri

Printing & Production

Haylee, Wendy, & Aidan

Copyediting

Cheri, Haylee, Sophia, Wendy, & Bella,

Advertising & Social Media

Bella, Chelsea, Aidan, Sara, & Sophia

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Donald Kraemer

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