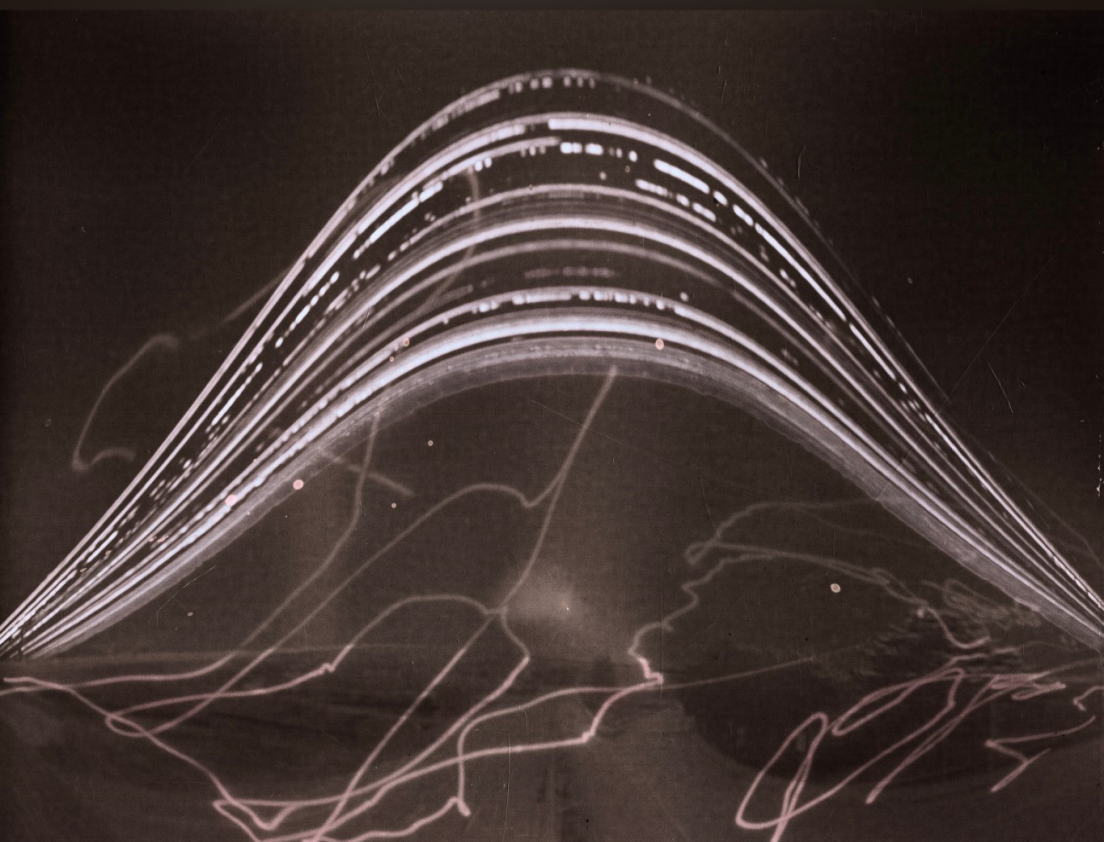


ESPRIT



SPRING 2024

ESPRIT

The University of Scranton Review of Arts and Letters

Spring 2024

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Spring 2024 Awards:

The Berrier Poetry Award

Bethany Belkowski

“The Fisherman”

The Berrier Prose Award

Zane Price

“Popsicle”

The *Esprit* Graphics Award

Cecilia Russell

“Vantage Point”

Spring 2024 Award Judges:

Poetry:

Bodo Johnson graduated from The University of Scranton in May 2023 with degrees in Philosophy and Political Science. She was a member of the SJLA program and served as production manager for *Esprit*. She is currently completing a year of service with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest in Spokane, Washington where she serves as The Creativity Project Coordinator for a brand new youth center and community garden!

Prose:

Molly Neeson graduated from The University of Scranton in May 2023 with a B.S. in Environmental Science and Philosophy. A previous member of SJLA and past Editor-in-Chief of *Esprit*, Molly now works in conservation and outdoor education. After a 6-month stint in the wilderness, she now works on a Mobile Nature Center project focused on overcoming nature-accessibility barriers in urban areas around D.C.

Graphics:

Sofia Zingone graduated from The University of Scranton in May 2023 with a B.S. in Physiology and Philosophy. She was a member of the SJLA program and a past Technology Manager of *Esprit*. Sofia now works at The University of Pennsylvania as a Research Associate studying potential immunotherapy treatments for pancreatic adenocarcinoma.

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**Hamish photos were provided by the Whittaker Family*

Forgetting You In The Receiving Line

Bethany Belkowsky

I agreed not	to shake	hands willing
to write	off	this family
your end	everything except	this day laid out
for you but	seeing baby brother	stand steadfast
in memory	as he placed his palms on	the swell of static song
I forgot	black casket	and acquisitive hands—I forget
so I should have	gone with the men	to seem strong like my brother
started	thinking	he <i>was</i> strong
so much	he would lift you	far
sooner	up	up and overhead



Dead Beach in Winter - *Maille Allardyce*

Voyager

Brenna Parker

I have this fear that everything that I've ever wanted is going to happen while I'm asleep. Restlessness manifests in goosebumps when the hand hits half past two. I hear someone breathing but no one's next to me.

Everyone keeps telling me that it takes time. I have all this blank paper just lining my walls, begging to be written on. *I'm ready*, I want to tell them, *just do it already*. I squeeze my eyes closed, but nothing comes. The dust never settles; my muscles never unclench. Time is not the only thing that has atrophied.

Something's bound to catch up. The tortoise. The hare. The hairpin turn. The drive home. The side of the road. Throwing up, and then throwing up again. I watch my mother comb my hair from above. Nothing's the same. That feeling's still out there on the parkway's shoulder. Something terrible is happening, I can feel it so deep down that I'm sure it was there from the beginning. Any moment now the second shoe will drop.

But the second shoe isn't a shoe. It's a piano. I'm in a black-and-white cartoon. From the side, my body's one thin line colored in on the one plane the world gets to see. My brain oozes out into the vast expanse of the beyond that exists behind the screen. I've already forgotten what I'm thinking about. I've already forgotten why I'm here.

I turn over and my grandmother lays next to me. She breathes softly as she watches me. I watch her right back. We breathe in unison until I finally vanish. Nothing good comes from late night wondering. But I'm not wondering, I'm *wandering*. I walk through planes and planes

of thought. I travel across lifetimes of what-ifs. I sail through channels of make-believes. I'm so far gone—they'll never see me again. I never got to say goodbye.

We're all pretenders and we're all wide awake, even when we're really not. Even when I'm sleeping I'm thinking about something. I'm always thinking about something; performing my metamorphic cycle from some script I can recite from memory. The hot air fills up 'til I'm so full that I burst. I'm right back where I started. It's a real nightmare. No, the real nightmare is real. The real nightmare is outside my bedroom door. I hide under the covers.

And what do they call it when every dream is a fever dream? What do they call it when the end curves right back toward the beginning? I'd look it up, myself, but I don't know where I am right now. Trapped between a rock and a hard place—my dad said that once. There's this ringing in my ears and I've heard it all before. I know every note before it plays, yet it still feels like the first time.

This thick ink drips down my fingers 'til it traces the curves of my palm and trickles down my arm. I whisper for someone—something—is someone there?—but no words come out. These tears won't stop tickling my neck—or maybe it's the ink. Either way, I refuse to rub them away.

I remember: The fawn staring at me through the game camera. Holding a worm for the first time. Our trains of thought passing in the night. You're not there, they're not there, I'm not there. We've been gone for ages.

I know how to have a nightmare!

Katie Till

watch:

feasting and gnashing of teeth and you
pleading that you are in love
with me and my mother
drowning in a submerged tractor cab

then.
your hands on me
too tight

my sister has a heart attack
my brother loses a hand and a man
I don't know
stares at me with fake concern
for what feels like years
till I melt into a puddle of something
that smells like burnt candy corn

an alien dictator makes me
kill a girl from high school
homeroom to save my life

when I wake up:
I am shuddering and retching
and the sky is black.
you lie next to me, still.

Never Reached the Other

Jill Tremblay

Nora never thought of her and Drew as akin to Thisbe and Pyramus, but looking back at the summer before sixth grade, she reckoned the hurricane was a sort of lioness.

The privileged ease of living next door to amicable neighbors with similar family configurations was not lost on the Morins or the Solivans. Seeing each other every day was a given, carpooling to school in the morning was presumed. In other words: there was no wall.

When the weather started to get warmer, sometimes as soon as March, Drew and his younger sister Eve routinely sauntered over to the backyard of the Morin household to recruit Nora and her older sister Reilly to play outside. The two sisters often did their homework with a performative studiousness in the kitchen, barely separated from the outside on account of the back entrance being a sliding glass door. Drew and Eve rarely ever needed to do so much as tap on the glass before Nora and Reilly were racing to get their shoes on, abandoning all pencils and papers. Within seconds, all four of them would be outside in their shared driveway that readily accommodated any field game they could dream up.

The games they played depended on multiple variables on any given day, but when it came to splitting into teams, the configuration never changed. Nora and Drew against Reilly and Eve considered age an indication of skillset, a faulty logic that undoubtedly favored Nora and Drew. At age twelve, Reilly was clumsy and only just growing into her arms. At age eight, Eve had all the energy and the spirit, but none of the comprehension skills to retain rules and regulations. Nora and Drew, two ten-year-old kids with eclectic athleticism, shared between them the speed and coordination that made it hard to even pretend to be losing. The consolation was losers got to choose what game they played next, and Reilly loved nothing more than getting to con-

trol precisely *what* they would be doing. Their wide range of adolescence was vital to the outside repertoire: Reilly bossed them around, Eve listened to Reilly with vigor, Nora and Drew hated to be bossed around but they loved to win. But the year of the hurricane evidently demarcated their age conglomerate. As she steadily approached thirteen, Reilly began to gradually remove herself from partaking and refereeing their games, instead electing to do homework or talk on the phone with friends from her class. Naturally, the system went into shock. Reilly's absence—now identifiable as a symptom of early onset teenage angst—corresponded to a sudden reluctance in Eve to play outside with just Nora and Drew. She undoubtedly contextualized the concept of third wheeling and its accompanying dejection all too early in life.

Nora and Drew saw no reason to not play outside on their own, but also saw no merit in splitting up a team with such a high success rate. As spring came into full bloom, Eve and Reilly progressively faded further into backyard retirement, so Nora and Drew took to the swing set in the Solivans' backyard. Sometimes they would make minigames out of it: they tried to swing in sync, they tried to swing perfectly out of sync. One of them would spin the other around until the chains could no longer intertwine, just to abruptly let go and watch as the chains unwound with a lightning speed. Once the dizziness subsided, they would switch roles. But more than anything, they talked.

Despite arriving at school in the same car, upon entry they generally drifted away from each other and towards niche groups of their own. Drew, ever the class clown, often stood in the center of social circles. He was the apex extrovert of the fifth grade. Nora contentedly remained on the outskirts, with a small group of girls who similarly found the perfunctory chatter of their peers far too overwhelming. While at school, Nora and Drew confined themselves to their respective spheres, never pretending to not be friends, but never acting in a way that reminded the other students in their grade that they were friends. Everyone knew they lived next-door to each other, but the fact often faded into obscurity.

Sitting on the swings after school, keeping rhythmic momentum by never letting their feet leave the ground, Nora and Drew filled each other in on the blanks the other acquired from their circles of isolation. Nora told him about the whispers of wallflowers who woefully willed for the quintessential popular boys in their grade to look their way. In return, Drew told Nora all the less-than-flattering comments the aforementioned boys said about the unobtrusive girls. Usually by the end of these conversations, Nora and Drew's shoulders slouched where they sat on the swings, unsatisfied for reasons neither of them could put words to. This became routine, too.

It was the first day of summer break when Nora told Drew that her best friend, Margaret, admitted to Nora that she did not like their classmate Jenna at all, but merely pretended to so she could use Jenna's good colored pencils at recess. Drew found this tidbit of drama particularly funny.

"That's like how you pretend to be my friend so you can use my swing set," Drew said, plucking at the chain of the swing Nora currently resided in.

"Shuddup," Nora kicked to her side to scuff Drew's leg, "I pretend to be your friend so I can play with your dog, actually."

"I know Eve can be annoying, but please don't call my sister a dog."

"You are too mean to her," Nora kicked Drew again, less softly this time, and Drew's swing slightly derailed from the straight projection. He ricocheted back to lightly knock shoulders with Nora.

"It was a joke!" he released the chains of his swing briefly to put his hands up in defense. "But I've noticed that babysitting Eve and taking Charlie out on a walk are very similar chores."

"Charlie is a lot of work," Nora commented of their dog, unwilling to contribute to Drew's berating of his younger sister, "I do love your swings, though. No chores."

"I can show you something that will make you love them even more," Drew replied. They increased their momentum, beginning to properly swing instead of loitering. Then he told her to close her eyes.

Drew's suggestions were never scarce and rarely unexceptional. When he told Nora to do something, she did it without reluctance. When she closed her eyes, she felt like she was flying. Not just levitating, but she had grown wings. What shocked her most was she felt no fear of falling. Uninhibited and weightless, she thought about never opening her eyes again. She felt more aware of the summer wind on her face, more in tune with the sound of Drew's voice when he asked, "Isn't it the coolest?" She did not need to see him to know he was swinging in the same fashion, his eyes closed now, too. And he did not need to open his eyes to know that Nora was nodding in agreement. He could hear the smile in her laugh.

They did this all summer. Reilly went to the beach with her friends and got tan, Eve went to summer camp and came home each evening with depleted energy, and Nora and Drew spent their days closing their eyes and speaking without looking at each other, convincing themselves they were touching the sky with their toes.

The hurricane came at the end of August, fierce enough to remind Nora she used to shut her eyes in fear—that she once was afraid of the dark. The winds flipped over the swing set, splitting one of the plastic beams in half. Nora felt especially stupid for never registering how cheap the physical thing was. When she asked Mr. Solivan if they would be getting a new one, he told her that "Drew would have outgrown it in a couple of months anyway." There was no point in getting a new one. Nora felt like this was unfair to Eve, but when she considered it, she could not remember the last time she saw Eve actually on the swing set.

The tree in her back yard lost enough branches that the amount of sunlight that came into the kitchen through the glass door was altered significantly. Reilly was spending more time on homework than ever, feeling the pressures of high school commence. Her incessant complaints of the glare from the sun resulted in the quick fix of putting up an opaque curtain, the outside no longer indistinguishable from the inside.



Bobbi - *Bethany Belkowski*

Shannon at Home

Katie Till

Characters:

SHANNON

PRODUCER

In a series of failed attempts, SHANNON attempts to create a sponsored online cooking mini show. All four "Takes" are included in the final cut, strung together with jump cuts. Her support staff is never seen, except for PRODUCER, briefly and only in the final take.

TAKE #1

In a beautiful modern kitchen, SHANNON stands behind her kitchen island. Behind her, a window above the sink looks like it's been recently broken. The hole in the pane has been taped over with blue painter's tape.

SHANNON:

Hello, folks! It's Shannon at Home, coming to you from my kitchen. Don't mind the construction project behind me, it's been a bit of a week in the Green-Dale household. Actually, this is just the Green household now. That's right! Greg left! She looks just like me, except you could bounce a quarter off her ass!

[To self]

Whew, ok Shannon, focus up, now.

[Turning back to the camera]

Today, we're making baked ziti! Our recipe today is sponsored by Corelle casserole dishes. Every good dish starts with a-

[She attempts to take a large floral casserole dish out of the drawer in front of her with a flourish. It slips out of her hands and shatters on the counter. She stares at the ruined dish for a moment in shock.]

Oh, for f- [BEEP]

TAKE #2

SHANNON stands in her kitchen. The view is from a new angle. She's next to the stove. Richly-finished wood cabinets and fridge are behind her.

SHANNON:

Hi there! It's Shannon at Home, coming to you from my kitchen. Today we're making a simple penne al pesto. It's a perfect quick dinner dish, if you're dashing between soccer practices, book club, or a meeting with your attorney! Ha!

[She clears her throat.]

Whatever you're up to, this 30-minute meal is a life-saver on a week night! Today's recipe is brought to you by Lowe's. I bet you didn't see that coming! Life is just full of

surprises. Well, now at Lowe's garden section you can find a variety of fresh herb planters. I use fresh basil in this recipe, and everyone says you can taste the difference. We'll get the water boiling for the pasta first.

[She turns on the gas stove and salts the water already in a pot.]

We're going to use a food processor to make our pesto. If you're in a pinch, a blender works as well. Oop, my producer is reminding me to make sure my pot is on the lit burner. Thanks, Fran!

[She moves the pot to the left.]

Now to our food processor, we'll add olive oil, pine nuts, basil and, guess what? Parmesan! And we'll pulse that till it's smooth.

[Yelling over the food processor]

What's nice about the meal is that the pesto lasts really well! And you can cook as much or as little pasta as you want!

[Food processor turns off.]

So you can cook for one really easily, if that's what you're doing... you know.

[She uses a spatula to transfer pesto from the food processor to a canning jar.]

Yeah, um. The kids are with Greg tonight.

[She drops the spatula and puts her head in

her hands.]

I'm sorry, can we cut?

PRODUCER:

[Offscreen]

No, you're doing great! We can cut this out in post!

SHANNON:

[Sobbing]

I'm sorry... I'm just... I'm just not over it, ok? Greg, if you're watching this, come back. I know we had our problems, but look, I can't- no one knows me like you do, Greg. I know I said some things, but I think we can get through this, I really do. I'm still in love with you-

PRODUCER:

[Offscreen]

Alright, we're gonna take five!

TAKE #3

SHANNON looks more disheveled. She's got flour all over her.

SHANNON:

We're makin' pasta. Whatever.

[Camera pans out to reveal the counter covered in flour. She's tracing her finger through the flour. Focus pulls in on the counter to reveal she's writing "Greg + Sha-"]

PRODUCER:

[Offscreen]

Wow, from scratch? Tell us what kind of

pasta, Shannon.

[Camera pans back up to Shannon.]

SHANNON:
I'm pregnant.

PRODUCER:
[Offscreen]
Cut.

TAKE #4

Shannon stands behind the counter, drinking a huge glass of white wine. She pours the rest of the bottle into the glass and looks confused as to why the bottle's empty. She shakes it upside-down over the counter, then notices that she's on camera and straightens up, puts the bottle of wine down. She takes a big drink, chugging the large full glass. She finishes it and puts the glass down on the counter. When she speaks, she's slurring slightly.

SHANNON:
Ok, fine. I'm not pregnant. You wanna know the truth? Greg hasn't touched me since Margaret was born. A woman's body changes after four children, m'kay? I'm not the spring chicken I used to be, I guess. And you know what, I know he's sleeping with that [BEEP] from his office. And I just have this itching feeling that she's not the only one.

[To PRODUCER]

Sorry, I know, I'm not supposed to curse. I get that. No, we can keep going. Whew. Ok. Today we're making a signature dish. I wrote the recipe myself, while they were cleaning up the flour. Sorry, crew. You're all incredible. Well- [Hiccup] this dish is called "Eat [BEEP] Greg." Sorry.

[To the cameraman]

Come with me.

[To producer, crew]

No, no, you stay here. Trust.

[She leads the cameraman out of the kitchen, down a short hallway, out a sliding glass door onto a back deck. She has a table set up with "ingredients" and an extension cord that connects an outlet inside the house to a blender on the table. Ingredients include: wedding photos, a lighter, ghost peppers, grapes, bananas, ketchup, pills, bourbon, whipped cream.]

Alright. To save some time [Hiccup] I've set up the ingredients out on this table. This is gonna be a smoothie of sorts.

[She puts the photos in the blender first.]

First ingredient: wedding pictures. Whatever, don't need 'em anymore.

[She leaves one out and looks at it.]

Damn. We were so young.

[She holds the lighter up to it and lights it on fire, and drops it into the blender. The rest of the pictures catch.]

You left your medication here, gotta throw that in. And, of course, your favorite.

[She takes a swig and then splashes some bourbon into the blender. The bourbon causes a burst of fire to whoosh out of the blender. SHANNON seems unfazed.]

Now, this is important to mention, should've said this first. For this recipe, you absolutely need to use the special Heat-Resistant Treated-Glass Blender from Pyrex. I'll post a link in the description. Oh, and the bourbon I'm using is Maker's Mark. Now, you're gonna add bananas for some potassium. Leave the peels on, this blender is heavy duty and can totally handle it. You're gonna pulse that a bit.

[Blender sparks but liquifies the flaming smoothie.]

To add some texture back in, we're gonna add the final ingredients and pulse lightly. You want this to be sort of unpleasantly chunky. Ghost peppers- I grew these myself, actually- sour grapes, and just a ton of ketchup. This is so Greg!

[She laughs and wipes a tear from her eye.]

Once that's mixed, you're going to get out a gallon-sized Extra-Safe Double Lock Ziploc Bag. It's important that you use these bags. You're gonna mail this, so it's got-

ta be totally water tight. This bag is also sturdy enough to go through the mail. Ok so, we're gonna pour that into the bag and lock that double-seal together.

[She shakes it, tosses it up in the air, and catches it.]

Wow, that's gonna work. Whew. Alright, Fran?

[PRODUCER runs onscreen with a UPS box, takes the bag and seals it in the box before exiting.]

SHANNON:

Great, so we're gonna mail that. Not sure what his new address is; pretty sure he's living at his mother's house right now, so I'm gonna send it there.

[She picks up the whipped cream canister, shakes it, and sprays the whipped cream directly into her mouth.]

Well, everybody, thanks for tuning in. You can make this yourself right at home. If anyone has any questions on the recipe, you can shove those right up your-

END.

Our Discography

Ryan Lally

I loved music, she loved music, I loved her. I was 16, she was 14, and she was beautiful. She was so worldly, she could speak French, she traveled to Iceland, she had seen every movie, and she loved music as much as I did. She grew up at CBGB in New York, her mom was the manager. Her dad played with the Goo Goo Dolls throughout Europe.

We swam together in high school. Our small town did not have the funding to build a pool, so we had to commute forty minutes to the closest pool in the area. We took a school bus there and back every night in the dark and the cold from November to February for two years. For the first year we sat together on and off on that long journey through the stars listening to music the whole way.

Her favorite band was and still is Dr. Dog. In 2017 she introduced me to Dr. Dog on her phone in the darkness through wired earbuds and a shared blanket. We listened to “Where’d All the Time Go?” and “Heart it Races,” the cover version. I loved her. She complained to me about her brother and her mom over the music that would define my high school years.

I wanted to impress her. She would ask me if I had seen a particular movie, or heard a song, and I would lie and say yes. I would go home and watch it or listen to it that night so she and I could talk about it. “104 Degrees” by Slaughter Beach, Dog. “Bad idea!” by Girl in Red. “Notion” by The Rare Occasions. I wanted her to think I was as cool as I thought she was.

I made her a playlist with my favorite songs so desperate for her approval. “Everything You Want” by Vertical Horizon. “Ghost on the Dance Floor” by Blink-182. “Wasted and Ready” by Ben Kweller. She liked the music; she had heard most of it already of course.

At the end of the swim season, we drifted apart. We texted occasionally. If I heard a new song that I liked, I would send it to her as an excuse to talk for a few minutes. I would make playlists for her. I would listen to the new songs she had saved on her Spotify account.

A year later we were back on the bus together. “Bus buddies” she called it. We were tied together again by the wire of her earbuds. A wire that was the most direct path from my heart to hers. She had met someone else, a guy my age. She told me about him over new music. It hurt.

One night during that second year together on the bus we found ourselves closer than ever before. Whispering a mere two inches from each other’s faces. I could feel the heat coming off her face. She was wearing her new varsity jacket, and her hair was still wet from the pool. I don’t remember what song played that night; it didn’t matter. I wanted to kiss her, but I couldn’t. She had just told me about this guy she liked, and I felt guilty. I let that moment slip away.

That night I lay in bed, stared at the ceiling, and listened to the entire album of *In the Aeroplane Over the Sea* by Neutral Milk Hotel with my wired earbuds. I listened and I cried. She ended up dating him. A pandemic struck, we shared music when we could, and I graduated.

I spent an entire summer missing her, checking her newly formed playlists. Translating her songs from French to English alone in my room. Haunted by a music-filled night that I wish I could go back to, that night that slipped away. She got sick, in and out of hospitals for the summer. She was diagnosed with Crohn’s disease at the peak of the pandemic.

I left for college on August 17, 2020. I was unsure of who I was. I had spent the last two years trying to be *for* someone and I hadn’t become someone. I had her playlists downloaded on my phone “Killingtune(s),” “pb&jamming,” “Aujourd’hui je me sens tres Simone de Beauvoir.” We did not speak, we did not share, we did not listen.

Over winter break I worked for UPS, delivering Christmas

presents throughout northern New Jersey. I listened to her music as I drove through towns, one ear on her, the other on the road. I texted her to see if she was feeling better. She was, and I hung on her every word. She made me a playlist “bus bud,” the hardest of the friend zones. She was still with the other guy.

That summer I traveled to the University of Kansas on a scholarship through the Department of Defense to learn a critical language. I chose Japanese. I spoke Japanese for ten hours a day, every day, for sixty-two days. I spoke so much Japanese I could not understand English anymore. I would call my parents and I would ask them to repeat themselves again and again or ask them to slow down. I was so lonely.

But I could understand music. She and I slowly reconnected while I was in the Midwest. Spotify had developed a party feature on their app allowing two people to listen to music from far away in sync. We listened and I cried. We began calling and after ten or twenty minutes on the phone I could understand what she was saying. We would fall asleep listening to music together. A time zone apart, seven states, one-thousand-two-hundred and forty-two and a half miles apart. Two hearts connected through a music app.

I told her I loved her over the phone that summer. She did not say it back. I was lonely. Dark thoughts clouded my mind. I did not think I would leave that place and part of me never did.

I flew home August 1, 2021, greeted by my entire family at the Philadelphia airport. My mother cried and my older brother played the song “Mr. Roboto” by Styx on his phone as we stood in the airport. I hugged my mother and father and my siblings danced to the music. She and I did not talk anymore.

Almost a year later, we reconnected. At a party the night of Memorial Day at a lake beach in our town. People drank beer, the fire danced on the wood, music played off of an old speaker, and we sat on a swing set and caught up. This was the first time I had seen her since I was in high school. Over two entire years had passed. She was beautiful. Her voice was music. I resented her and I loved her.

I drove an old friend home that night from the beach. He

swam with us all those years ago. He was there the night she and I did not kiss. She was single now. He told me that she had said she missed me. I told him I hated her. He said I know. I said not really. He said I know. That night I lay in bed, stared at the ceiling, and listened to the entire album of *In the Aeroplane Over the Sea* by Neutral Milk Hotel with my wired earbuds.

She texted me the next morning with a new song. I listened to it. I worked landscaping that summer. I carved flower beds and wacked weeds. During the day I listened to underground rap from my new friends. They spent their smoke breaks with marijuana not nicotine. They were great people. I texted her and asked her if she wanted to go on a date. She said yes. We went to the Warwick Drive-In movie theater, a twenty-minute drive. We took her car, but I drove. She played me new music she had been waiting to share with me.

We saw the new *Jurassic World* movie. I could not tell you anything about the film. We talked the entire night under the stars. She wore a sweater that said Nantucket across the front. We kissed.

We dated the whole summer. We were nine miles apart and we still fell asleep through the Spotify party feature. I loved her.

I spent four years of my life waiting for all this and it was miserable. I realized I hated who I was when I was with her. We had different values on life. I was set to leave, join the Army, fulfill what I deemed purposeful. I was passionate about service and provoking change. She wanted to stay in New York, to be involved in art and to create. Different goals. Different dreams. It is hard to live two lives without compromising one of them. I was prone to compromising for her.

We broke up and I listened to her music, checked her Spotify, and she made new playlists. “Nick and Norah Fantasy,” “Songs to Sway to,” “Summer in Love.” We dated again that winter. I was desperate to make it work with her, but I could not stand the plastic, the façade, the shell of myself. I began compromising my ideals, telling myself what I valued was not as important as what she valued. I thought about giving up on the Army, on service, on change. We just were not meant to be. Our love had ended. We argued. She hit me. I

cried. We broke up.

It has been over a year since we last held hands, said “I love you,” listened to music. She goes to NYU now. Living out her life. I don’t check her Spotify anymore. I don’t hang on her last words to me.

I spent my last summer of college at Ft. Knox, Kentucky and Ft. Cavazos, Texas. Fifty-six days away from home. I did not know a single person at the start of that summer. But I made great friends. I spent thirty-five of those days without my phone. There comes a point where you decide who you want to be. You decide what in your life really matters. I spent fourteen days in the field. I ate meal number fourteen, creamy spinach fettuccine, out of a bag for eight meals straight. For fourteen straight days, I wore the same uniform. I changed my underwear five times, I showered twice, and I was alone. I slept under the stars with a rifle between my legs and spiders the size of grapefruits crawling across my chest. I had a set of orange ear protection, that we in the Army call ear-pro, my prized possession. When I wore my orange ear-pro the world grew so quiet that I could hear my ears ring in silence. I put in my orange ear-pro and pretended that I was listening to music alone in the woods of Kentucky. I sang the only song that I knew by heart, “Auld Lang Syne.”

We’re here because we’re here, because we’re here because we’re here. We’re here because we’re here, because we’re here because we’re here.

It has been six years since we met. I don’t regret the way our love ended. One heart connected to a music app, thankful for what it has given me. I listen to my own music now, because we’re here.

everyone can tell how happy i am!

Brenna Parker

and it feels like confirmation that i must be
'cause i blinked just once and now a foundation's beneath my feet
and it feels so strong it must be made out of the years i spent
facing all the catastrophes i never underwent
and did you know that my smile moves moons?
my mood pulls tides so far there's nothing left but blue
saltwater and sea spray that i'm just taking in
has it always been this easy? breathing?
it makes me feel all giggly and silly inside
to walk around knowing i'm bringing about all this pride
and i always feel it on the days when

The Fisherman

Bethany Belkowski

When asked, I told you I would grow up
to be an artist. You said I'd live wanting
in empty vaults. I've learned
you weren't wrong. To write poetry is evidence
of a lack, my lack. But you
spent erstwhile hours in bib and boots,
and the cool mud of the creek, stringing lines and hooks
to wait. To wade through under the weight
of the want. To catch only to release.
If you could ask, I would tell you I've grown
in my wanting for the words that lure
every lip and tug every tongue. I reel in
low light, casting shadows on the page.
Ink like netting, I am caught,
twined in every word—because you taught me
nothing of quiet desperation.



Vantage Point - *Cecilia Russell*

Popsicle

Zane Price

Gerard grew all that could grow in Berwick. Plopping his stout stature off his and Marta's full-size, he would beat the break of dawn daily to assess tomatoes and strawberries. He squinted through the dark of his living room. He exerted his stubby arms with tact to reach his boots, his pail with a seeming focus to not knock over the kids' blanket fortress or to wake them from their dreams of regality. Once out the front door, Gerard moved about his land with lightness and assurance. The smell of zucchini led him to rows of blueberry bushes and the occasional squish to his step. Gerard played acres of corn to melody. His calloused fingertips strummed the bassline on the husks as his gruff tenor whispered "You Are My Sunshine" to an audience of thousands of ears. In the dead of morning, Gerard gauged ripeness with a squeeze. The plump red fruits tenderly caressed bespoke juiciness but never severed as to drip, to leak. Gerard placed them in his pail with rote craft. Upon laying the last of the vine-ripes on the pile, Gerard plucked a caterpillar from underneath the sepal of a chosen tomato. It's being writhed momentarily before resting on Gerard's right wrist and matching the composed pulse. He placed it down among a burgeoning strawberry plant. He cleansed his hands with soil.

The cockcrow was terse, agitated. The Sun always rose late in Berwick. The farmers, the linen-workers, the millers, the beagle all tarried for hours before its arrival. Berwick folk weighed its tardiness with its omnipotence to their lifestyle; most came to their conclusion in muffled half-swears directed at the damned star. Its radiance, its heat beared down double-fold in response.

Gerard, still in perpetual squint, walked uphill and eastward toward the market. His Sun-bleached overalls wore mud-riddled knees, welding singes at the hems, rudimentary crayon-drawn irises

on the backside. Gerard's five-and-change frame was rock. His thin brown hair rested atop bulwark shoulders. His limestone skin glistened in still youthful sweat. Berwick's young storyteller of those days might have seen Gerard as the basis to sculpt out an athlete, a hero; she was too busy beneath utters to carve the colossus. Though even in his unrefined state, Gerard manifested classic artistry in his rural lifestyle. The human amalgam of Sisyphus and his boulder, Gerard rolled himself and his crops up to the precipice of town, some dozen yards from and twenty feet below the main square.

The white collars colluded with the Sun to blind the farmers gathered around the makeshift market at the base of Heinz and Smucker's trailers. The rural sellers fought the glares of silver cufflinks and of the men wearing them as they tried to sell the suits their lot. In seeming response to the loss of a sense, the green thumbs jabbed their berries to palm jelly, and their crop whispering hardened to desperately loud entreaties. Those intense cries of "Peach!" and "Apricot!" and "Apple!" sounded like earnest hypocorisms of the family members whose livelihood hung in jeopardy. In the fray, Gerard waited. He peered toward the main square where the silhouette of a waving flag eclipsed the Sun. Tears trickled out of Gerard's eyes; their originator dried them with its rays. Under a company visor and five-dollar haircut, a suit approached the stony demeanor of Gerard. Manicured hands used sizers and shade charts on Gerard's morning work. Upon seeing the interest in Gerard's goods, the remaining farmers rung out in agitated bickering. The men punched the air at the looming destitution; when this didn't appease their anguish, they turned those fists toward each other. Even amidst this cathartic tumult, not one laid a hand on Gerard, perhaps all under a kind of parallel wisdom that one should not run oneself into a brick wall.

The joint offer from Heinz and Smucker's was a low-ball, the only in town that day. The last blue-collar at the scene painted with food debris and a smattering of teeth, Gerard signed the sublet contracts with the provided pen. His signature was in the shaky print of a man never taught how to, nor ever found much of a need to, hold a pen. The suits swiftly stuffed their contracts into folders into binders

into briefcases with foxy grins directed at each other. Gerard's demeanor did not change. He stepped a few feet over to the city's bulletin board and felt the paper of the postings. Leaving the flimsy flea market flyers and local day laborer sign-ups, Gerard tore down and stuffed his pail with multiple sheets of corporate cardstock: Luzerne County power plant proposals, presidential campaign pamphlets, Kubrick's ...*Odyssey* "In Theaters Now" marketing. The Sun cascaded Gerard sending his shadow westbound and down. Finishing his collection, the only farmer not told to kick rocks that day descended back down the hill.

Gerard's homestead rested below the main square and above the cabin row of sunshine moonshine drinkers. On the meager front patio of the slim single-story, Marta breastfed infant Andy in one arm and combed the stickers out of the hair of grimacing Julia with the other. Snaggletooth Sophia painted meadows on the slate sidewalk. Her thin fingers bore fresh bruises from using the last nubs of chalk. Her brow crooked over combinations of primary colors that never matched the vibrancy of the botanical pictures in ads. Her plaid play dress took on her various colors as she buzzed from bushel to bushel. Sophia had the habit of hiding the garment inside her pillowcase when Marta would collect the laundry in an effort to "protect its magic pollen." She smelt of her kingdom where weeds acted as hedges, where the azaleas never quite actualized in vibrant magenta. The dirt married her flowing blonde locks.

A returned Gerard stood over Sophia casting nightfall on her gardening. In the eclipse of her father, Sophia looked up with her baby blues. She followed Gerard's gaze over to the side of the house: to Betty, her irritated utters, and the barren bucket next to her hooves. Gerard returned his eyes to his firstborn biting her lip; her overgrown incisors nearly touched her chin. Sophia attempted to meet the gaze back but was met instead with the Sun's blinding beams. After wiping the tears off her cheeks then the chalk dust out of her eyes with her wrists, Sophia looked at her father, pail still in tow, moseying past Betty, behind the house toward the coop. Sophia hurriedly placed her bits of color back in her box. She breathed a

heavy sigh and straightened her trembling lips. A glance to Martha was unreciprocated; Julia let out a cry to a particularly heavy comb. The crown of Sophia's head followed the path of Gerard.

Inside the coop, Gerard laid out the papers he'd collected from his pail on the marooned wood table. A cacophony of clucks froze Sophia in the doorframe. Gerard seized that day's lunch with a swift hand, then returned to his natural pace as he collected the knife off the wall. Gerard stood over the table. Gerard waited. His left hand held the chicken with tenderness. He squinted toward the doorframe, where the silhouette of Sophia backdropped by harsh sunlight shook more than the bird. Gerard waited. Hugging herself, Sophia moped toward the table to meet the rock and the hard place. Raising her tear-riddled eyes upward past that which she couldn't bear to look at, Sophia met Gerard's gaze. His eyes, fully wide for first time that day, were dull aquamarines. Gerard placed hands half his size on the body of the bird. Gerard prepared the angle of the cut, and Sophia stroked feathers.

"I'm sorry."

The cleaver ran clean through the neck. A small pool of blood seeped into the thick papers below, marring the face of Robert Kennedy. Its pattern stained: dozens of nearly imperceptible blots surrounding a foot-by-foot blob. An uncountable amount of patterns from blood, from tears, from sweat, from every bodily and non-bodily fluid stained the universe never to match that exact pattern. Like an incomplete Rorschach test remained the pattern for over half a century.

The blowback from brother Donovan's cannonball splashes nearby Phoebe, bending over beside the pool in chortled laughter. Phoebe dances up her twenty-foot backyard hill. As she packs air and seemingly courage into her lungs, she looks out at the urban oasis. The cerulean of the eighty-two-degree pool complements the caramel of the extensive maze-like, maize-like patio tiles. American flag bunting decorates each segment of the aluminum fencing; nailed to a base post of the hardwood deck is the Declaration of Independence. Second cousins and summer-fling boyfriends, beloved aunts and

wine-drunk sisters, Tommy Hilfiger and the Brooks Brothers buzz in and out of the cool yellow three story by the dozen. The swing set and the trampoline rest on the mowed lines of the verdant green. Accenting every crevice is the vibrance of the flora: the nuanced pastels of the magnolias, the true-to-name marigolds, the select indigo iris in the loam locks of its caretaker. Phoebe spreads her gangly limbs and adjusts the fit of her teal two-piece. The peacock child of Scranton adjusts her chartreuse goggles over her baby blues. She flutters down her hill, flies off the diving board, and firebirds into the sky above; her braces gleam off the pink-white sky until eclipsed by the chlorinated ocean below.

From the OLED-screen of the patio veranda, Ken Jennings wraps up the Double Jeopardy categories with “Mirror Mirror.” Among the frivolity of Twisted Tea drinking teens and Malbec-quenched mother-in-laws, resident boy genius and quiz-cousin Hal fixates on the television.

“Who are Duran Duran?” says Hal.

Girls in their summer clothes pass Phoebe’s father working hard at the grill singing along to “Hungry Heart.” In the moon shaped pool wades brother Donovan saying it’s his favorite place on Earth and third favorite Radiohead album. Bob-cut aunt Julia shares an AirPods with jean-jacketed uncle Andy:

“You said this was boygenius?”

“Yes.”

“This is a woman.”

“It’s actually three.”

Phoebe’s older sisters hold a deck-top conversation on post-grad anxiety, and unknowingly plagiarize Mitski the entire time. In the cloud next to them, the girls’ hash-high himbos pontificate on how *Apocalypse Now* begins with “The End.”

“What is ‘The horror, the horror?’” says Hal.

“How did you know that one?” asks Donovan to the cousin a third his age, a fifth his size, twice as read. To the apathetic shrug of the little boy answers the smirking fat man: “Ok, computer.” Sliding through the doors comes Phoebe’s father with his grilled work in tow.

Swim-suited second cousins emerge from the water like Martin Sheen to quench their carnal appetite. They race toward the smoke of the burgers and dogs which battle with the sky, the flora creating a scene parallel to the work of Nick Ut. The partygoers stomach the meats, burnt to a cinder, by covering them in the strange orange goop that is great-uncle Sam's 'special sauce.' For dessert is Grenadian nutmeg horchatas and Guatemalan banana splits. Resting after his work, Phoebe's father reclines on hand-crafted wicker, lights a Cuban, and straightens the crease of his white Banana Republic. After Marco Polo ran its course, Phoebe's littlest cousins leave the trampoline to play toy soldiers on the patio. Grammy Marta points across the yard before the kids can get out the infantry: "If you want to be like brave cousin Kurt, go play over there." With wet grins, the children run to the swing-set and dive into its sandpit.

"Who is Sirhan Sirhan?" says Hal.

The cocktails, or the date, or the purpling sky brings the politics. Phoebe's father and uncle Andy electioneer from across the patio with the Declaration moderating between them. Their differing remarks on censorship, on immigration, on civil unrest provoke nods of agreement from different members of the earshot crowd in the same way only certain channels are offered by competing television providers. Phoebe's sisters offer their third party take on the discourse: "*The Land is Inhospitable and So Are We.*"

"Honey, what do you think?" says Phoebe's father. Scranton's Gaea turns her attention from picking her great-nieces' ice-cream sandwich wrappers from her azaleas, pristinely magenta. In a rain-bowed summer dress, she strolls to Phoebe's father with still youthful fervor, love. As she settles on the right arm of his chair, Phoebe's father fixes the iris in her hair, a wheaty brown that reveals silver veins when dug through with fingers. The two share a smile of teeth grown into. With lightness and assurance, Phoebe's mother says:

"On either side, there just isn't a real candidate, is there? A truly virtuous option? A Dr. King? A Bobby? Anybody may look at the situation and think 'Well, I don't agree with him, what he stands for, he's abhorrent,' but then what? Vote for the other guy? Just be-

cause he's from here? Both men are beyond ripe, if not senile. I mean you can see that right, Andy? The choice of 'Who gets to be the new oldest president in U.S. history?' is... it's just not what I think anyone would wish for."

The queen's words seem to satiate her colony of listeners, heads bobbing as they drink the Honey Bees which brother Donovan had begun to mix behind the bar.

As the frivolity borders debauchery on the wet patio, Phoebe swims alone in her pool. She murmurs to herself in incoherent play as she tends to the Atlantis of her mind. Taking a break from her ineloquent breaststrokes, she bobs in the shallow end. Spotting her runt in the indigo hue of nightfall, Phoebe's mother turns on the pool light. Phoebe takes off her heavily suctioned goggles to reveal new red ringed frames. The unimpeded eye and the underwater illumination grants Phoebe a prismatic view of the house, the deck, the people.

Pop Gerard, centralized on the patio, comes into Phoebe's view. Woozy women and maudlin men orbit around Gerard as he rests in his deluxe Atlas™ lawn chair, gifted to him by Phoebe's father. His skin bears craters, carcinomas. Withered grays no longer reach now Berlin Walled shoulders, covered by a neon-pink Hawaiian shirt that Marta laid out earlier in the day. His demeanor is stony, or perhaps blank like slate. He stares beyond his surrounding progeny and into the cerulean void and its new sunshine. Contrasting his shrunkeness, wide eyes protrude from him and dazedly dance. The light sparkles his aquamarines, leaping from hue to hue: robin egg to cadet, cornflower to royal. The irises are deep enough to swim in, to drown in. Tears trickle out of Gerard's eyes; their originator does not, or cannot, dry them.

Pop Gerard oozes from his right side. A visibly alarmed Phoebe eases as she stares at its cause. Pop Gerard's right hand holds a popsicle stick. The corn syrup of an entire Original Bomb Pop™ drips, leaks blue, white, and red through his rubble fingers and onto the patio tiles below. Phoebe looks to Pop Gerard's lips: dry, unstained.

Phoebe exits the pool and shakes during a colder night than most in July. Phoebe, hugging herself, holds her gaze on Gerard. Without a call or a motion, Phoebe's mother comes to her hatchling and covers her in a toweled hug. She runs her hands deep into Phoebe's glinting gold hair. Her directed and melodic, "You are my sunshine," does not take Phoebe's eyes from Gerard. She follows the gaze of Phoebe, still shaking. Upon meeting the view, Gerard's daughter spastically pinches Phoebe's neck.

Gerard drops the popsicle stick as tipsy Grammy Marta and Phoebe's mother get his attention. The two ease him out of the Atlas™, creaking after hours of use. The party gives stupored salutes to the farewelling Marta with Gerard in tow before going back to sharing innumerable TikToks. Phoebe's mother holds hands now half her size as she guides him toward the base of the hill; she cleans his right with her dress. Gerard's eyes recede back to a shrunken squint as he leaves the pool, the party, its people. Phoebe follows behind the slow-moving caravan.

"Phoebe, Baby Bird, come keep Pop company while Grammy and I go get the car."

Phoebe stood a little behind her Pop Gerard at the top of the hill. The murmur of mother-daughter conversation faintly echoes from the street. The moon beams down in the life of night. Gerard waits. A gentle eastward breeze, afforded little to city folk, whistles through Gerard's grays. He topples backward. Before the terse cry reaches his lips, Phoebe gently holds him in place. Phoebe's face shows no alarm until meeting the visage of horror on the momentarily shattered face of Gerard. Gerard locks arms, eyes with his granddaughter. He looks into Phoebe's baby blues surrounded by faint red friends and golden rays. In that moment, a transitory look shoots onto Gerard's countenance.

"I love you, Phi."

Then it leaves. Gerard settles back to the demeanor of his life. Phoebe, as one seeing a window turn to a wall, has no response. As Gerard looks out into the street, the two's hands remain interlocked. The rapid pulse of Phoebe calms to that of her grandfather's. On her

grandmother and mother's return and retrieval, Phoebe watches her Pop Gerard go completely over the hill and leave Scranton westward toward Berwick.

The following morning, Phoebe drags her feet in helping the clean-up though she is more helpful than her hungover siblings. She mutters, quarter-swears at her cruddy cousins and her whole fwicking family. Picking pilsners from the pool, Phoebe's mother directs her to fold up the Atlas™. Slogging over to the chair, Phoebe views infestation. Red ants lap up the nearly imperceptible drips of corn syrup while colonies of ants, bumblebees, ladybugs, mosquitos, and flies crawl over each other for sustenance on the fuchsia foot-by-foot fructose blob. A squeamish look washes over Phoebe as she looks away and toward the chair. She spots the popsicle stick on its right arm. Phoebe picks it up and reads through the syrup stains:

What did the Grim Reaper give his granddaughter at the ice cream truck?

Pop's sickle.

Phoebe chuckles, and flits inside to tell it to her Tylenol-chewing siblings. Phoebe's mother does not reprimand her Baby Bird. From the poolside, she takes in a panoramic view: from the hill, to the actualized flora, to the honey castle, to the chair which Phoebe flew from to go have a goof, to the familiar blot and its beneficiaries, to the monarch butterfly eclipsing the rising Sun.



Crown Shyness - *Cecilia Russell*

I could spend a lifetime unwinding our time together

Brenna Parker

You're kicking gravel back into its place
and I'm following, dragging my shoe
across the lot, making a circle, clinging to our space,
in this desperate attempt to keep you in view.
You're taking B-roll of what makes me smile,
and I'm taking portraits of your profile.

And as I settle there, pulling on our tether,
I remember when I used to worry that I'd wander
around the world forever
searching for a placeholder for each phase I endure.

I'm not one person—I don't think I'm anyone.
Maybe a product of all the people who've loved me
for only one lap around the sun.
But when you love me
I think I feel like someone
who's supposed to be loved on purpose.

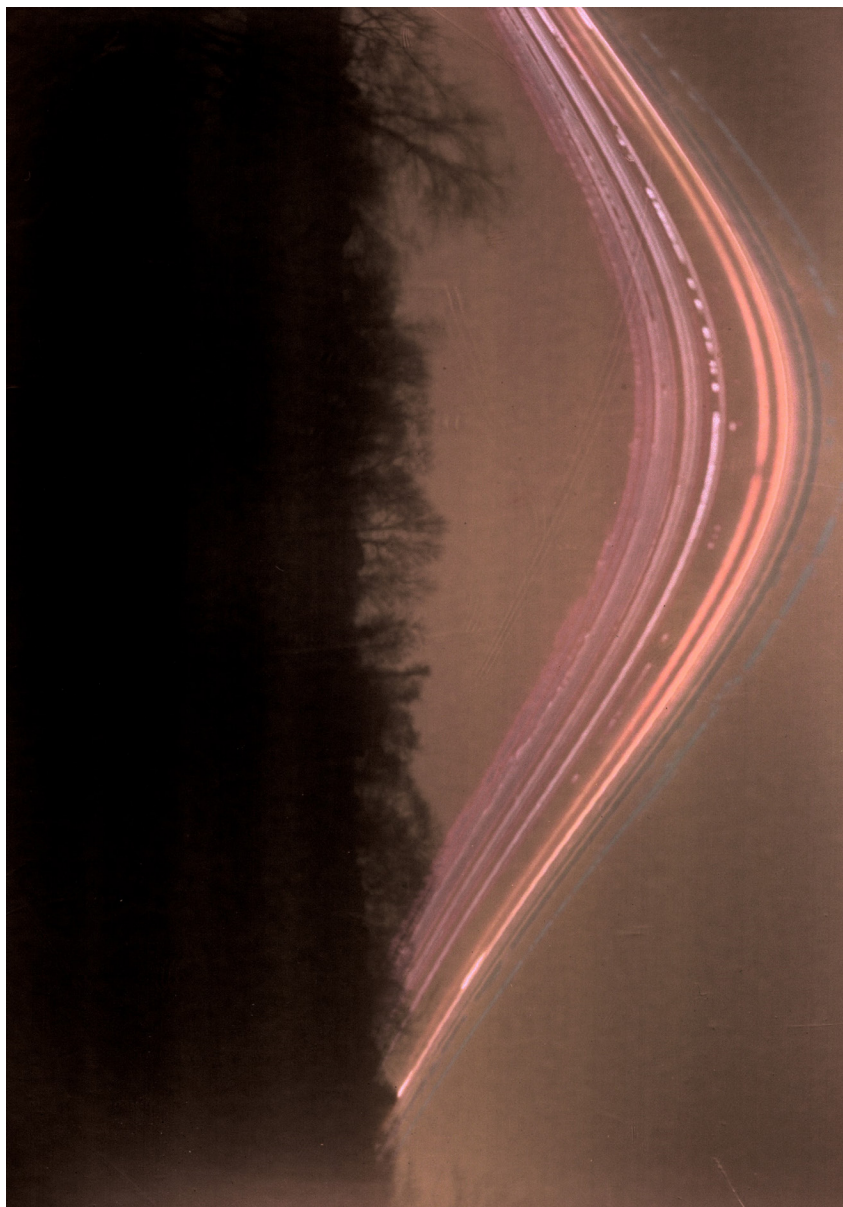
I stand there, frozen in the lot, stuck in
between time—singing the same song.
Have I just been so lucky?
Or was this the plan all along?
Was it God?
Did he have nothing else to do?
A sentient universe choosing us against all odds?
You?

I wasn't searching, neither of us were.
Whoever, whatever it is—it has been so kind.
Yet, I think I was made to forever wonder
Who put me in your way to find?

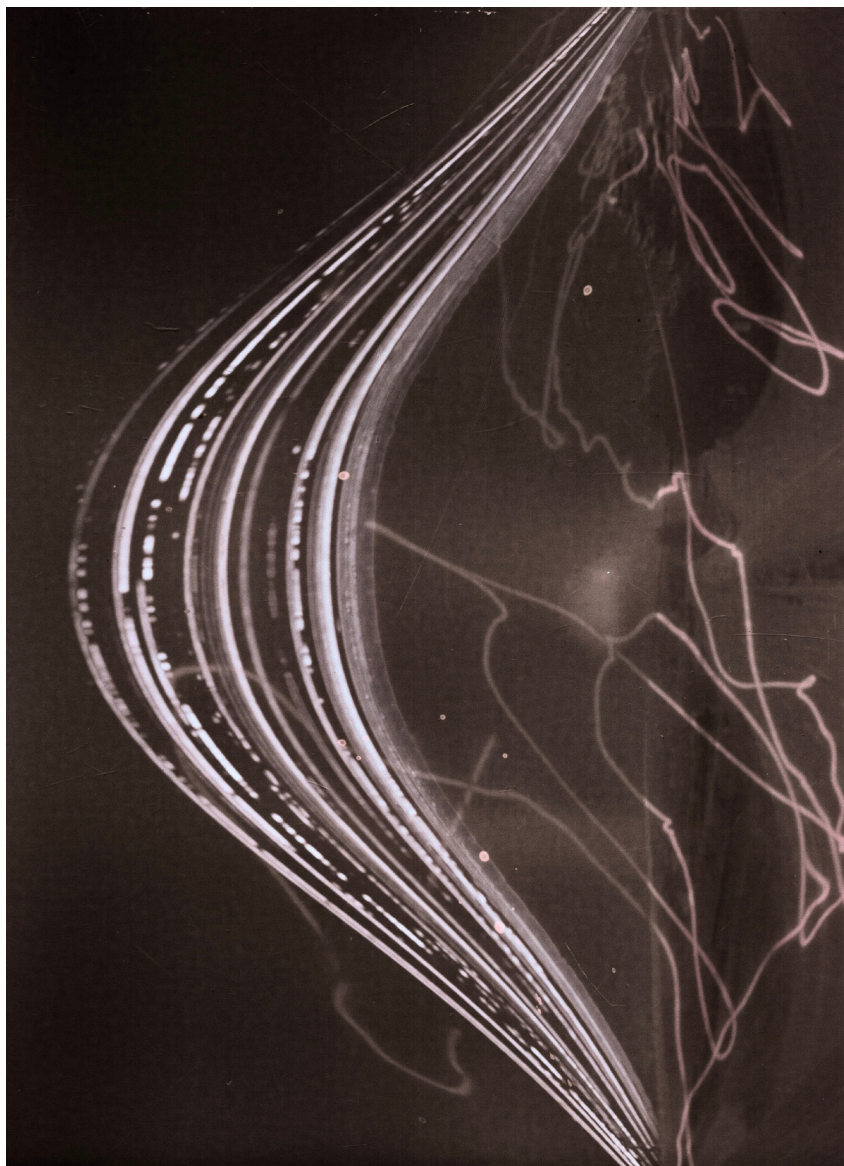
where does the good go?

Faith Montagnino

lace draped over my hands,
pure, thin, delicate sheet of garden.
blooms curl around my fingers, crawl across my palms,
ask “will you keep us safe?”
then lace yellows, fabric disintegrates,
orphaned peony petals weep and hold my knuckles.
i pull another sheet and try again.



Made in Heaven - *Connor Goranson*
-Solargraph: 40-Day Exposure



Solargraph Over Scranton - Connor Goranson
-Solargraph: 49-Day Exposure

Born a Violent Woman

Audrey Phillips

Sweat pours down your back, no pretense of a drip. Freshly dyed hair leaks onto your skin as you wonder if it looks like blood on your forehead. You worry about the possibility of actual blood, while the dangerous pressure of a hundred people packed closely into a small bar envelops your body. The guitarist strums a low, guttural melody. The drums clash, the lead singer rasps in the microphone. His arms catch the spattered light of a disco ball, fragmented glimpses covered in tattoos, hair longer than yours. You initially dance tamely, but alcohol provokes the harmony and dissonance of human nature.

The social order demands you perform at all times, even when shirtless drummers are willfully performing for the audience. It doesn't mandate a direct care about men, but instead a more exhausting care of them perceiving you. You care about how you are standing and whether you take up too much space. You care about whether your dance moves are sexy and cool enough. You hate sexy dance moves. You flail your arms. Toe-heel step. Spread your legs into a quasi-split. Your friends laugh, but you worry about how your jacket looks and wonder if it communicates your eccentricity. Your jacket will never be esoteric enough to communicate that you are a human being with thoughts, feelings, complexities. Men will just see a jacket meant to be taken off, and you would rather feel invisible than objectified.

Applause shakes the room and interrupts your runaway train of thought. Your legs shake the floor and the sweat continues to stick to your forehead. Your friend has lost her mind in the best way possible, screaming, shouting, jumping up and down. Eyes gleaming like a maniac. Music, freedom, anonymity, the same things. You smile. The next song begins, high pitched vibrations, funky, groovy, and you snap out of it. Move with the crowd, without awareness of

how you move. Sometimes you finally learn how to take up space and it feels like freedom. It feels like undisturbed fresh air at 7:30 a.m, or your first experience of your back pushed against leather seats when the plane takes off. The imminent turbulence, a 6 foot man shoves through the crowd, invading your space. His body pushes you roughly against the wall. His friend tries to pull him off, he says something with a laugh, you think it sounds like “on purpose...”

He slams into you with intentionality, rakes his eyes up and down your body, stares through your jacket, stares through you. Sleazily says, “apologies babe.” You freeze. Body tightens, fists clench. You are so sick of men laying their eyes on you in a smug, colonizing, way. The low beginnings of the next set rumble as you glance at your friend who watched it happen. You look at her, look at him, still staring at you smirking. And you start to wind up. You were born a violent woman, but for a long time the world denied you.

The drums thunder. Your friend’s eyes widen, a mix of terror and amusement, the man disbelievingly stares at your rising fist, all in the span of two seconds. The guitar teeters on the edge of eruption, and you slam into the table, knocked over by the mosh pit that erupts. The massive gust of energy. You start laughing at the divine intervention, because *god* you’re so tired of being looked at all the time. The chaos of the mosh, what it feels like to be alive of your own accord, is a relief. You finally feel aware of your body and its possibilities without men placing their possibilities on you. You feel momentarily energized, but you remain fundamentally tired and disproportionately angry. So *goddamn* angry when you grasp for freedom, recognition of your personhood or moments of invisibility, and come up with straws. You want to beat the wall until your fists are bloody and raw, or shave your head so you lose all appeal. You want to hungrily chomp at the inescapable leather collar of being leered at. Look at men with a gleam just unhinged enough that they might fear you the way you were taught to fear them. God, you could kill a man. You could kill a man, but you were born a woman.

Cyber-Psychosis

Owen Stanczak

White-hot wires, willfully wreathed
in fact-frayed fasciae (scripture-soaked sinew)
serenade sleepy synapses with their siren-songs.
Crackling currents impart immediate
images of immanent indulgence
into reliably receptive retinas.
Broken bones bemusedly bulwark
mauled medullas and addled axons,
as engorged engines of effervescent delights
destroy detesters in pursuit of continuing
collection of careless currency.



Evaporation - *Liam Moran*

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Jenny Whittaker

CLP Physical Plant Staff

The Other



***Esprit* Submission Information**

Deadline for Fall 2024: November 1st @ 11:59 p.m.

Esprit, a review of arts and letters, features work by students of The University of Scranton and is published each fall and spring as a co-curricular activity of the English department.

We will consider a maximum of five visual art submissions and five literary submissions (poetry and/or prose) per author/artist. *Esprit* does not accept resubmissions, works currently under consideration elsewhere, previously published works, or works published to social media accounts.

Manuscripts (Electronic Submission)

Original stories, poems, essays, translations, features, sketches, humor, satire, interviews, reviews, and short plays must be typed and saved in Microsoft Word file format (.docx). All manuscripts, except poetry and short plays, must be double-spaced. Every page of the manuscript must list the title and page number in the upper right corner. It is recommended that all manuscripts be submitted in 12-point Times New Roman font. The author's name must NOT appear at any point in the manuscript to ensure that all submissions are judged anonymously. Each submission is to be saved as a separate Word file, and all submissions are to be attached to a single email and sent to espritsubmissions@scranton.edu from the author's University email account.

The body of the email must contain the following information:

Writer's name

Royal ID number

Year in school and enrollment status (full-time or part-time)

Major(s) and honors program(s) (Business Honors, Business Leadership, Honors, Magis, or SJLA)

Genre(s) of submissions emailed (poetry or prose)

Title of each work submitted in the listed genre(s)

If you are submitting a work of translation, please include a copy of the original text along with your translation.

By submitting to *Esprit* you acknowledge that your work is original and your own.

Submissions received late, mislabeled, or emailed without all of the above information will NOT be considered.

Graphics (Electronic Submission)

Black and white/color photographs and pen and ink drawings work best in this format, but pencil drawings, collages, and paintings will be considered. Your name must NOT appear anywhere on the submission(s). Upload your submission(s) to OneDrive through your my.scranton email account in the highest possible quality, and share that OneDrive file in an email to espritsubmissions@scranton.edu.

The body of the email must contain the following information:

Artist's name

Royal ID number

Year in school and enrollment status (full-time or part-time)

Major(s) and honors program(s) (Business Honors, Business Leadership, Honors, Magis, or SJLA)

Title of each work submitted

Medium of each work submitted (photography, painting, charcoal, etc.)

If submitting OneDrive files please add both espritsubmissions@scranton.edu and melissa.eckenrode@scranton.edu to file permissions.

When the work submitted is a study of, or is otherwise dependent upon, another artist's work, please supply the other artist's name and that work's title.

Submissions received late, mislabeled, or without all of the above information will NOT be considered.

By submitting to *Esprit*, you acknowledge that your work is original and your own.

All submissions are reviewed anonymously. All accepted submissions to *Esprit* that are the work of currently enrolled full-time undergraduates at The University of Scranton will be considered, according to genre, for The Berrier Prose Award (\$100), The Berrier Poetry Award (\$100), and The *Esprit* Graphics Award (\$100).

Please do NOT address questions regarding submission policy to espritsubmissions@scranton.edu; this email address is expressly for receiving submissions and will not be accessed until the *Esprit* submission deadline has passed. Questions should instead be addressed to Senior Editor Zane Price (zane.price@scranton.edu)



Esprit Staff Spring 2024



Esprit Production Team Spring 2024





This edition of *Esprit* is dedicated to
Hamish Whittaker ♥

