

windscript

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Windscript is produced by the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild (SWG). The SWG is a not-for-profit membership-driven organization that strives to sustain and enhance an environment in Saskatchewan where writers and all forms of writing flourish; to promote the well-being of all writers; and to advocate on their behalf.

The SWG serves a membership spanning the entire province of Saskatchewan in Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10, which encompasses the unceded territories of the nēhiyawak (Cree), Anihšīnāpēk (Saulteaux), Dakota, Lakota, Nakota, and Dené Nations, and the Homeland of the Métis Nation.





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Managing & Poetry Editor

EUNICE-GRACE DOMINGO

Warmest of welcomes, dear Reader, to *Windscrip* 42! I, along with the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild and all the emerging writers who were carefully selected for this volume, extend our utmost gratitude for your continued support and readership.

Overseeing this collection—watching it grow, polishing around the rough edges, and chipping away at the cracks to reveal the hidden beauty beneath each piece—has been the highest honour. In a world that has seen the rise of genAI technology and the automated commercialization of art, it was truly a privilege to collaborate with real talent and potential, especially from such young minds and imaginations. It is very easy to fall into despair and take for granted the natural creativity that has always been allotted to us human beings, hence mentoring future generations and providing spaces where their art may flourish has become more crucial than ever before. *Windscrip* is one such refuge, like a lighthouse that dares to keep blazing.

I steadfastly invite readers to notice some of the recurring themes and motifs in the works we've chosen: Displaced liminality, along with the loneliness and vulnerability that comes with being outcast from the norm; unprecedented discord mixed in with moments of vibrant familiarity, like accidentally tripping down steps you've walked on a hundred times; childhood contemplation on heartbreak and hope, which—more often than not—turn out to be two sides of the same bittersweet coin. In this collection, you shall see both the troubles and triumphs of love. You shall see discomfort and awkwardness met with stunning clarity in the unlikeliest of places. You shall see trauma, loss, and injustice, but also catch glimpses of the silver lining that makes up even the darkest of storm clouds. Though we, as editors, did not begin this collection with a specific common thread in mind, we're delighted to display the vast tapestry of talent and creative range that the young minds in our province have to offer. To our sixteen contributors, congratulations—not only on getting published, but also for all the hard work you've put into getting this far. To all the writers who submitted, I commend you for entering, and for



having the courage to try, and try, and try. I wish you luck and kindness on your writing journeys, and also the tenacious stubbornness to keep putting yourself out there in spite of all the rejection and doubt. Remember that even the best waltzes require taking a few steps back before moving forward, so embrace the risks and do your best!

Of course, an enormous thank you to the Guild for encouraging me to take on this role, even though I was hesitant to accept it at first. Thank you also to my Associate Prose Editor Tomilola Ojo for your insight, support, and friendship—not to mention the late-night group calls and sporadically planned meetings that had to happen in order to make everything, naturally, happen. Our meticulous Publications Coordinator Jamie Zirk is responsible for the beautiful layout and design. Thank you to our contributors' family, friends, and teachers. And, last but not least, a grand applause to our Program Manager, Cat Abenstein, who was infinitely patient, communicative, and benevolently wise.

Now, onwards, to *Windscrip* 42! Happy reading!

Associate Prose Editor

TOMILOLA OJO

The magic of this magazine comes from months of work, endless dedication, and the creative force of an entire village. Thank you to all the writers, and to the friends, family, teachers, and support systems who held them up along the way. A special salute to the young writers who entered but didn't quite make the cut; the decision was not easy, and the race was tight, but please know your work was moving. The talent, life, and emotions we encountered were both humbling and inspiring. Never stop creating.

Knowing that creativity is boundless and actually practicing it are two different things. Young writers, you have so much life ahead of you. You have so much to look forward to; so much to be excited about, to be nervous about. Looking back a few steps down the road, I want you to know the world holds so much—of love, experiences, and, yes, of disappointments, too—there are plenty; and there is room for it all. You can handle it. Just as the cursor blinks at you when you go to write, to create, so does this life. You have a lot more agency than you might feel.



You are admired by passing strangers more than you know. This talent of yours can take you further and move people more deeply than you might yet believe. Again, I implore you, never stop creating. The liminal feeling of floating through life carries uncertainty, yes, but also potential. Its presence as a theme in these submissions is also proof that you are not alone. The world feels nebulous and confusing, but now is the time to champion your relationships, your connections, and your ability to transmute the bad to love. So, read with anticipation. You're on your way.

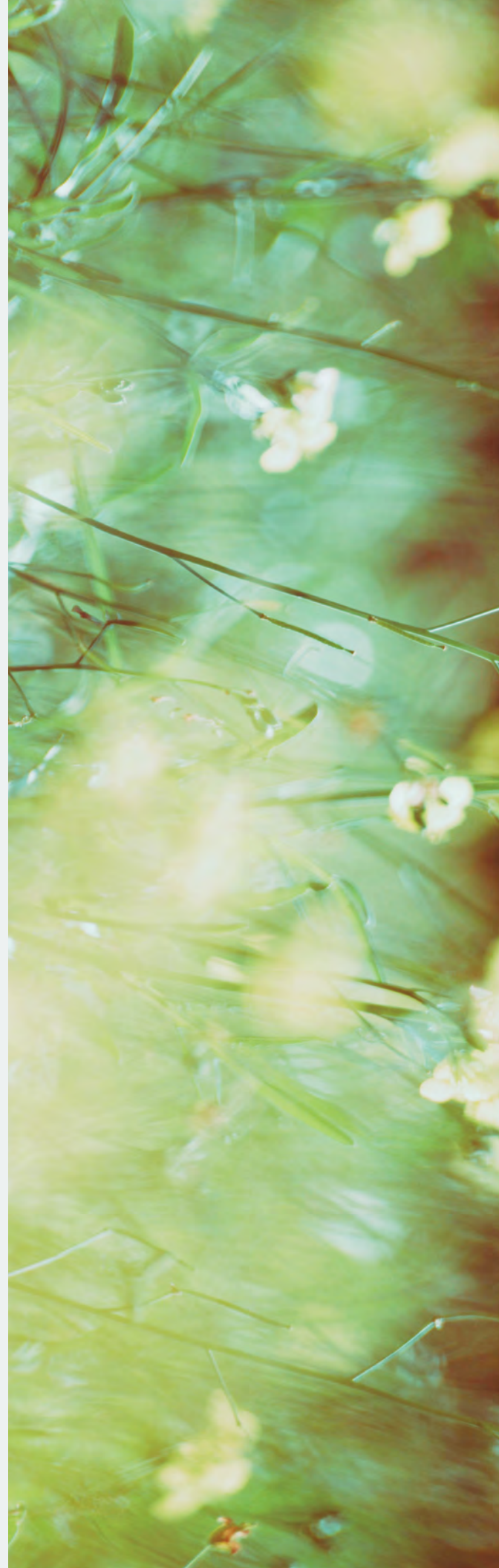
Thank you to our Managing/Poetry Editor, the ever-steadying and effusively witty Eunice-Grace Domingo. It was a pleasure to meet you, and I hope we find ourselves working together again on increasingly extravagant—and perhaps slightly absurd—projects. Thank you to our Program Manager, Cat Abenstein, whose warmth and ability to hold space for creative freedom made this experience a joy. And thank you to our Publications Coordinator, Jamie Zirk: Your quiet work allows the writers' voices to truly sing, and you are deeply appreciated. Finally, thank you to the Guild for this opportunity to give back in a way that feels far more like a gift than a duty.

Saskatchewan Youth Poet Laureate

TAI REIGN



As writers and creatives, we are always questioning our own ability. In the pursuit of greatness or perfection we gain skills that can help us share our thoughts and ideas; but it can also create barriers for ourselves. Within this past year I've been finding the boundaries of my own abilities and capacities. Some have been tough, but others have brought an amazing sense of relief and understanding. The work you put into your craft is what makes you an artist. Although if you are unable to step back and bask in the beauty of what you've created, what is it all for? For me, writing and creation is a way to connect with myself and my community. Finding the shared human experiences is what brings us together and what brings me joy within art. Allowing myself to make mistakes and be silly with my craft is what keeps me creative. The search for knowledge and collaborating with other artists is what keeps me sharp. Listening to bold, audacious and hopeful young writers is what keeps me inspired. Never stop reading, never stop writing, never stop listening. We are our community. I congratulate the young writers for the courage to submit your pieces, and I am looking forward to reading more of your work in the future!





Award Winners and Honourable Mentions

JERRETT ENNS AWARDS

Poetry Winner:

Zaid Bin Rehan – “For I Swear I’m Happy”

Honourable Mention:

Noor Ul Nisa – “Beyond the Veils of Hushed Cries”

Prose Winner:

Boyuan Huang – “Field of Wheat Stalks”

Honourable Mention:

Crystal Dayo-Oke – “The Sound of the Sun”

CURRIE-HYLAND POETRY AWARD

Winner:

Elizabete Sirante – “Caecus”

Honourable Mention:

Emma LaCroix – “Man in Between”



*Jerrett Enns Poetry
Award Winner*

For I Swear I'm Happy

BY ZAID BIN REHAN

I swear on the silenced night and fragrance of fantasies untold
—hues of beauty and gloom; beguiled by you,
opulence showers on me, doubt me not the slightest
for my contentment oversees the shore, screaming, “Land ho!”
My waves of tears frolic amidst only for joy; that I promise.

I swear once again, do not be distraught,
on the chirps of crickets that pervade the night,
among the serrated weeds and yawning soil,
they croon for love and a partner to hold,
which, dear, I promise they'll find.

I swear on the mighty mountains and flowers aflow
with peaks that penetrate the hoisted sky aloft.
I plough on thy pulchritude like the tractor collecting cloves
—enthralled and happy, I promise, I will rise above.
A feeling that drives me up; higher than Icarus can ever go
for, my dear, life is full of glamour: a promise I hold.

I swear on my blissful belief of the world's beauty.
They say I see the world in black and white
—but, my dear, there's grey, taupe, brown, and more,
for I swear I'm happy ... life is but a painting to adore.

I swear on every second that drifts by;
tick, tick, tick—a melody that extracts a heavy toll.
A dimension, did I mention, for the wondrous and daring
that have chosen to paint a masterpiece,
for I swear, my painting is to the likes of Van Gogh.

I swear on the “Starry Night” that gleams above,
on the dead that wander among you and I,
*with strange, blackened tongues, tears undried—
scarring wounds from which blood drips one by one,
rippling to a cold puddle of soulless regret and life forlorn.*

I swear on the *shattered* mirror in which I now stare,
Swear on the heavy drop that falls from my crestfallen eyes,
Swear on the fact that it was out of joy, not despair,
yet I gazed closer ...
... nothing but nothing in there.

I gaze at the mirror once again, this time the last,
“I swear”
no matter the stride one takes, the deed one does,
I can’t help but notice it with a dilapidated soul—
my nose now longer than Pinocchio’s ever was.





Part the Ocean

BY JAME ANTHONY

There's a story before the book begins.
You'll spend the rest of the tale looking for context,
Looking for why.
That summer, I opened our book,
Parted pages, made my way into a new people's lives

Part the ocean part the ocean part the ocean

It was a simple request. I quickly agreed
Everyone would see three pink teens around a TV
They wouldn't see the splatter-paint joy and pain.
The first time my name was spoken, salt fell silently from my face,
Like standing under a sea with a hole in it

Part the ocean part the ocean part the ocean

What you told us isn't mine to share, but I feel like I'm a part of the agony.
If I were you, I would've long left my promise,
But you're still here and can recall each trauma
When we lie in the dark
You seem familiar,
Like an amplified version of myself,
A rippling puddle

Part the ocean part the ocean part the ocean

You stay silent,
Simply absorbing.
I'm as curious as the rest, but feel the guilt keeping me from asking
Because you reassure and treasure:
Passive-aggressive in a caring way.
You bickered in an attempt to keep each other eating,
Holding a fridge door open, letting the cold become moisture

Part the ocean part the ocean part the ocean

It's still dark, with warm light leading us.
It's in the AM's already and we walk in a breeze,
The swings are tempting, and we heed the call.
After dozens of pumps, they leave in favor of something new,
But I stay
I make no noise for once,
Push back tears that have bullied me,
Try to breathe as I reflect on it all:
Their birthday with no confetti, only broken glass,
Insecurities that find their way into dreams
My own darkest hours
And the self the best-kept secret.
Told not to hold hands down that street.
The radio smells like gunpowder.
Knowing the letters you write
To try and explain your soul
Will be passed around then forgotten.
But I wish they could take one moment for us
One task
It doesn't have to be big—
No. We deserve it. We've been through it
We need it
And I'll continue to beg
That for once only
They would

Part the ocean part the ocean part the ocean



Jorge's Magic Book

BY DAWSYN USSELMAN

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Jorge. Now, the thing about Jorge is that he *loved* books. He had bookshelves and bookshelves of all sorts of different stories. That was until, one day, Jorge's mom forced him to clean out his bookshelf because the number of books that he had was getting out of hand. Although he didn't want to say goodbye to his collection, Jorge agreed.

While he was cleaning out his bookshelf, he stumbled upon a mysterious book covered in dust that he had never seen before, and as he pulled it out from behind the bookshelf, he could feel something calling him. At first he was skeptical, but eventually he gave in to the book's power. As he opened it, he could feel something pulling him in—literally—and before he knew it, he had been sucked into the magic book.

Suddenly, Jorge found himself being yelled at by his mom to go and bring a basket of goodies to his sick grandma. So, without wasting any time, he ventured off. Before he left, his mother told him two things: always stay on the path, and never talk to the wolf. But Jorge wasn't listening, for he was trying to figure out how to get out of there.

It took some dodging, but it wasn't long before Jorge was able to escape his mother's nagging and set off on his journey. As time passed, he began to hear someone following him. He whirled around to find a big, scraggly wolf looking at him with a pleased expression. The wolf asked Jorge what he was doing out here all alone. Jorge explained that he needed to bring his grandmother some goodies. So, the wolf suggested that he pick some flowers for his grandma, and Jorge did as the wolf said, and wandered a little off the path to pick some flowers. Before he knew it, almost an hour had passed and he still hadn't gotten the goodies to grandma. Worried about his mother's

wrath, he ran as fast as he could to his grandmother's house. But as soon as he stepped through the door, something felt ... off. His grandma looked less like a grandma and more like a wolf. But before he could even say anything, the wolf swallowed him whole.

The next thing Jorge knew, he had fallen onto a patch of grass. In the distance, he spotted a house. Because he was tired and exhausted, he decided to knock on the door. There was no answer, so Jorge just assumed that this was an abandoned house and let himself in. Inside, there were three bowls of porridge on the kitchen table. Since he was really hungry, he decided to help himself. But the first bowl was way too hot. The second was way too cold. But when he tried the third bowl, it was just right. But he still needed somewhere to sit. He looked around and saw three chairs. The first chair was way too hard. The second chair was way too soft. But when he sat in the third chair, it was just right. By this time, Jorge had become extra sleepy. So, he decided to go and lay down for a bit. In looking for a place to lay down, he stumbled across three beds. The first bed's head was way too high. The second bed's feet were way too high. But when he tried the third bed, it was just right, so he laid right down to take a quick nap before returning on his way.

He was deep in sleep when suddenly, he was woken up by three different screaming voices complaining of eaten porridge and sat-on chairs. Once he heard footsteps coming up the stairs, he knew he had to get out of there, and quickly. Without thinking, he jumped out the window, started to run as fast as he could into the forest, and never looked back.

After what felt like hours of running, Jorge finally burst through the forest. In the distance, he spotted three different houses: One made of straw, one made of sticks and one made of bricks. He went up to the

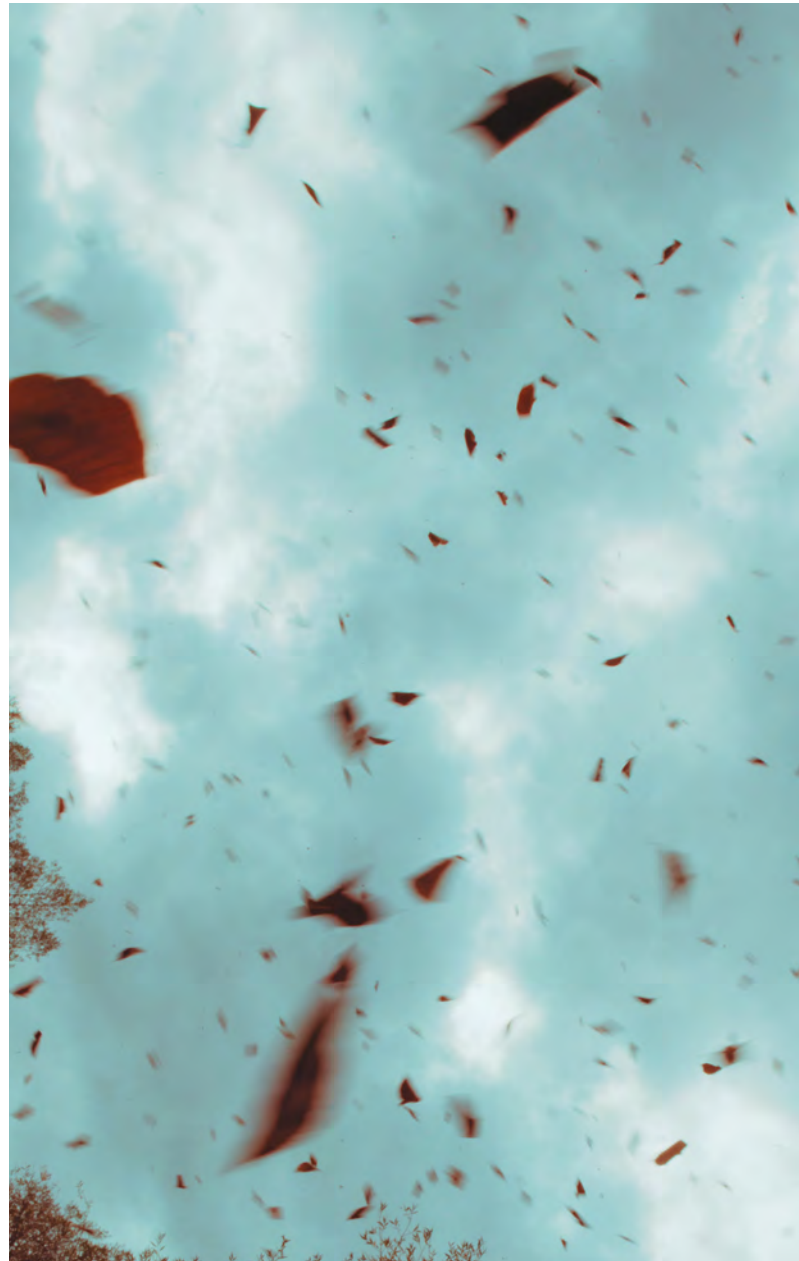
first house, desperately seeking shelter, and asked to come in. A pig came to greet him at the door, and invited him inside.

They were both talking and chatting until they heard a knock on the door. It was a wolf, threatening to blow down the pig's home if he wasn't let inside. The pig took one look at the wolf and said no, no, he wouldn't let him in and he stood firmly on his word. Left with no other option, the wolf huffed, and he puffed, and he blew the house down. Jorge and the pig had to run into the second pig's home just to avoid getting blown over! This house was made of sticks, and the wolf followed them and made the same threat; that he'd blow the house if he wasn't let inside. The second pig was even more adamant that he wasn't going to let him in. So the wolf huffed, and he puffed, and he blew the house down. Now all three of them had to run, and ran straight to the third house.

The third pig, who had been watching everything through his front window, wasn't so inviting and slammed the door right in Jorge's face. Left with nowhere to run, hearing the wolf's steps closing in, he decided to take cover on the side of the brick house. The wolf made his threat a third time, but he still wasn't let inside. So the wolf huffed, and he puffed, and he blew as hard as he could. Though the house didn't move, the force of the blow was so strong that Jorge was sent flying.

Jorge flew across corn fields, through cotton clouds, and over mountains before, as suddenly as he had fallen in, he found himself toppled out of the magic book and sitting on the floor of his room. The whole experience was frightening for Jorge, so he made a vow to never touch a book again in his entire life.

The very next day, he picked up another book to read.



Smile for Me

BY JAN DeVINK

I looked into his sapphire eyes and suddenly the sea behind him looked grey.

It is the last day that I will ever see Lyle and it is soon over. I have my temple resting on his shoulder, all the weight of my thoughts and tears pooling over onto him. I always find his shoulders so inviting, like lighthouses guiding me to his side.

We are waiting. Waiting for the boat to crash into the harbour, just as it will into our lives. So far only small pontoons and trawlers line the blinding horizon, the sun no more than a few paces into its orbiting stroll. As we sit on the sidewalk bench facing the ocean, the world feels gentle. A warm city like this is always the most peaceful at this time, nothing but splashing waves and glowing skies.

Freckles splash across his caramel skin like the flat rocks speckled around the beach just over the side of the street. My gaze hurts as I push my eyes up to look at his face. I don't have the desire to move my head; the discomfort to the back of my eyes is too weak against the warmth of his side. Lyle's face beckons beauty in the sun: The shade of his face melding with the orange light to cast a golden glow. He really does look similar to an angel, and it feels as if he is leaving this world.

The Olympic-class ocean liner was finally growing in the distance. Chimney stacks slowly breaking out the silhouette of the hull and coal smoke. I finally chisel myself away from his shoulder, and it's only now that I feel how wet I left his shirt from crying. I straighten my back and look towards his eyes. It seems it isn't just me who is sad to part. I'm glad, in a way, knowing that someone else, especially Lyle, is



feeling the same thing as I am. As we wait in silence for the inevitable sequence to come, a rake-like shadow casts upon us as a tight-nimble man places a ladder beside our bench. He climbs it with a swift temper and begins to close the two gas streetlights. The shift barely changes the glow on Lyle's hair and flannel.

The sun has now risen to a yolk, and the hustle and bustle of the seaside street starts to pick up. For a stone road on the ocean edge of the city, it tends to have a lot of traffic: Fishermen in from their morning trawl and factory workers on their way to catch the streetcar further up the city. It's quite simple for them at this point in the day, just follow the ocean side to your stop and get off at work. There are also the odd business men in three-piece suits going the opposite way, too posh to be dirtied by the public vehicles, so they choose to walk instead. They have wives and children waiting for them this evening, a home where hugs and smiles are never doubted, but abundant. Most of them don't even notice Lyle and I, and the ones who do will just assume we're friends talking before a school day or line at work. Nothing complicated. No one is seeing our tears.

So far we haven't said a word since we sat down, and it seems that Lyle has no intention to break this understanding silence. But part of me is screaming. I want him to say something, anything, to just acknowledge that in a few hours we will have our last kiss. In a few hours we will breathe the same breath one final time. I will see his face and have to keep it only in my memories. We stand up slowly and begin the few steps towards the docks.

"Why aren't you sad?" I weep, as the first sounding

of the foghorn rings out across the buildings behind me—the first signal to Lyle's departure. "Why don't you care that you're leaving?" We stop at the stairway to his boarding vessel.

I will never forget these words.

"Because I don't want your last memory of me not to be smiling,"

Lyle said it with such calm and restraint. I knew then that he did feel what I felt, just inside, hidden like a king's treasury. "Can you smile for me, please?" I laughed dryly at his words. I guess he didn't want to remember me as sad either.

The second horn blasted through our heads, as we were much closer this time. We stood in silence once again; but instead now we were both looking at each other, smiles being broken by tears. My tears would count our last minutes as they slowly dried up.

We sighed together, and, with that, the third horn sounded, and finally he dropped into the darkness inside the ship. I stood there alone, unmoving. I waited as it began to slowly, like a trickle, trudge down the dock. I just waited. I kept standing there until the boat began to wade onto the horizon, finally disappearing from where it had come earlier this morning.

"Can you smile for me, please?" It's ringing in my head; I don't think it ever won't. His sapphire eyes pierced my soul as he said those words.

It was in that last shared breath that I understood—I will find you in the silence between my thoughts, and the space after each word. I will smile for you always.

Watchful Rock

BY WASEEM LOUKILI

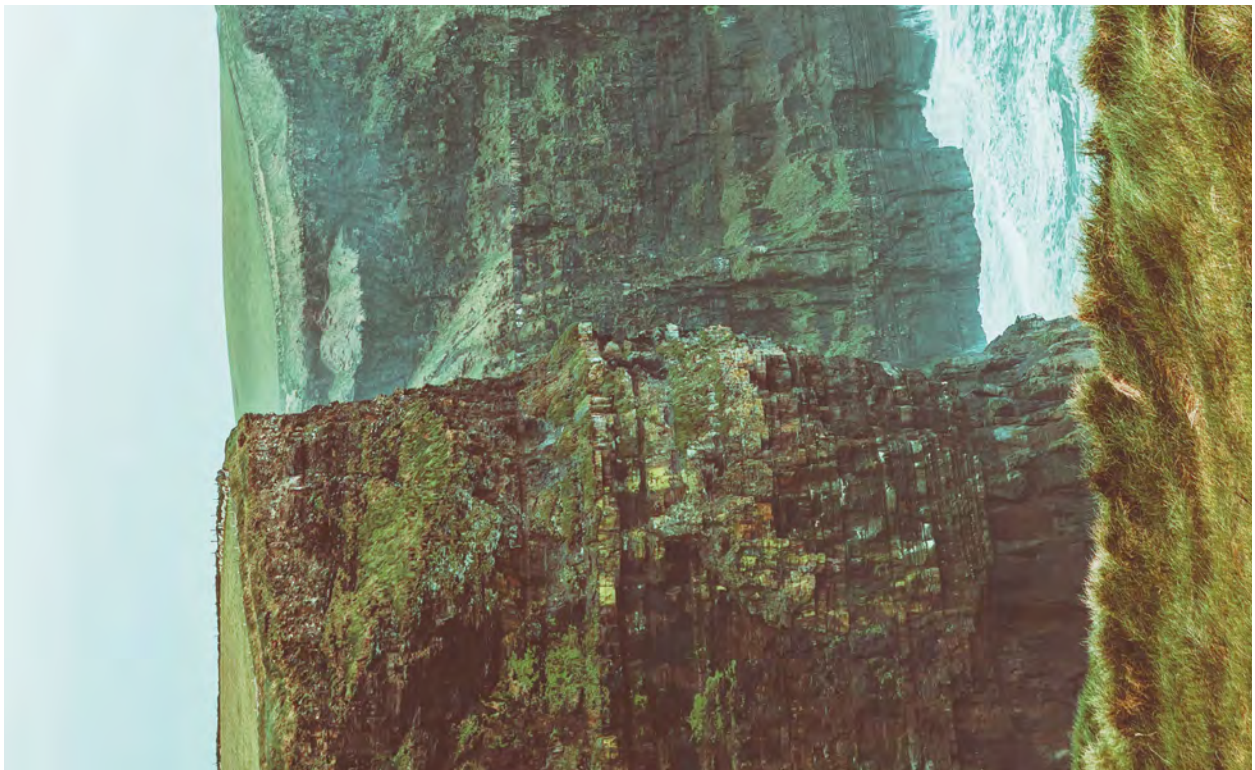
Five long nights ago, I sat,
Head resting on my knees,
Eyes staring blankly forward,
Rocking forth and back in my room.

Outside, I counted four sparrows pass,
Three times I heard laughter bubble from
Children gleefully playing, and twice was I
Serenaded by the aromas of summer barbeques.

Once I had spent my day in casual sway,
Alive, but disconnected.
I felt within how rocks must feel,
When lively travellers pass,

I felt the way the clouds must feel,
As rain comes and goes.
Life waits for none, least of all those,
Who sit and rock in their rooms.

Though once I had spent my day in casual sway,
Apart from all the world,
I felt the peace that rocks must feel,
When hasty travellers pass.



Thunderstorms

BY JADE FROESS

I don't know why I love thunderstorms so much—
Maybe it's the way the lightning dances fiercely in the sky.
Or the sound of the rain on the rooftop as it runs down the window.
I run outside and stand on my deck, watching the flashing clouds in the distance,
And when it's raining I sit on my steps under my eavestroughs as I watch.
The sky cries out in loud booms and cracks—
It's as if the gods are fighting a war above, hidden behind the clouds in a sea of deep blue,
like the world is splitting in two.
I think it's rather extraordinary:
You see the storm brewing in the distance as it overtakes the skies,
The day becomes dark and the night pitch-black—
My Mom used to say that when it rained, God was crying, and when it stormed he was
angry.
I thought if God's wrath is this dark, this terrifying.
How beautiful his love must feel:
Out of darkness comes light
Out of fear comes hope
Out of thunder comes lightning—
It strikes
It is strong, it is quick, it is lethal, it is blinding, it is heavenly,
And the flashes in the clouds banish the night and the darkness.
For less than a second, the world is illuminated by a soft shade of purple:
Its alluring, almost divine—
Thunder rolls, lightning strikes, the world darkens, God cries out in anger.
But who's to say something scary can't be just as beautiful?
I'll watch the storm late into the night,
While everyone is fast asleep, tucked in their beds
I'll watch the clouds pass, even from far away.
I'll watch the lightning dance,
As Gods fight wars above, irradiating the earth below,
Until the storm leaves, the sky clears, the sun shines high, the moon shines bright—

Earth will come alive again and the sky will be blue, the stars will glow,
The only traces it will leave behind are puddles and wet ground that the sun will soon dry
out,
Dripping leaves and heavy branches that will dissipate under the moon in the cool night air.
It will be as if the sky never changed,
As if the storm was never here.
This is why I love thunderstorms so much.



Lost in the Colours

BY CATHERINE OKOLITA

Nostalgia doesn't return to me as stories, the way it did for my grandma and papa, when I would sit on their lap as they told me stories of the *good old days*. Instead, it arrives as colours. Slowly at first, then all at once, flooding my senses. When I think of my childhood, I don't remember exact dates or names or what I said, but I remember the colours. I remember the way they settled into me and refused to leave, permanent reminders of my youth. My memories of the prairies aren't arranged like chapters in a book. They weave themselves together, hues mingling to create a painting of my life. Preserved forever.

Yellow comes the most. I see it all the time.

August yellow; the kind that spills over my face and burns my eyes, even when I close them. It was an uncomplicated colour, present in every part of my life. My hair, long and shimmery gold when brushed, is usually tangled and untamed. The dust in the air when the light caught it at just the right angle. The rippling golden sea of wheat fields behind our house that stretched so far, it blurred into the sky.

When I played outside, the sun sat heavy on my shoulders, feeling so close I could've touched it. It watched me go from adventure to adventure, sweat running down my face, chubby cheeks dimpled with joy.

Then, my mother would call me into the house, handing me a cool glass of lemonade. The bright liquid soothing my parched lips, ice cubes clinking in the glass like tiny chimes as I gulped down the last, sweet sip.

When I think about it now, yellow meant ease. It meant possibility and motion. It meant the feeling of having all the time in the world, expansive and luminous. It was bright and beautiful.

Then I see the red, its colour sharper, but not dangerous.

Red seeped into the edges of childhood the way rust crept up the swing set frame at the school playground. I used to push myself so high on that swing that I convinced myself I was flying. The scarlet leaves above me flicked in and out of view, matching the rhythm of the squeaking chains.

The ground beneath that swing was packed hard from years of dragging feet, a dusty orange-red that stained every scraped knee I earned. And there were many. The prairie summers don't go easy on you. Every fall and tumble taught me something about pain, but also about getting back up. Red wasn't gentle like yellow. It carried more of a weight; a dull ache. I think then, red was how the world told me it could hurt me.

But then, I looked at the ruby-streaked sky, and I believed nothing could ever go wrong in this beautiful world.

White came with winter, most of the time. I never thought of white as harsh, it was softer and quieter. It muted the world with frost-covered windows and cozy blankets. I loved the mornings when the air tasted clean, and the snow held no footprints yet, sparkling under a pale sky.

In the spring, sometimes, I would lie on my back in the patch of daisies that grew by the barn. Their white petals trembled around me as the breeze swept through. The world felt weightless and perfect, like time was standing still for me.

And, even though my father told me not to, I would pick dandelions and blow the seeds off of them. The fluff drifted away, carrying the tiny wishes and dreams I never dared say aloud.

I didn't have the words for it then, but I think that white was contentment for me. It was the colour that gave me time to think and reflect. The colour that let me hear myself.

When memory dips into blue, I'm standing at the pond again, toes curled into cool mud as the sapphire water laps against my shins. The surface was a mirror; it always looked like there were two skies and I was sandwiched between them. I remember the shock of the cold climbing up my legs once I got the nerve to wade in. My surprised squeal, goosebumps crawling across my body, my blue tinged fingertips. I loved how everything finally went quiet when I put my head under the water and opened my eyes to look for fish. I never found any, but that didn't stop me from searching.

Rainstorms were blue too. I loved how I could watch the rain stream down my window, betting on which drop would make it to the bottom first. I loved listening to the steady drumming sound on the roof, and how, when I would open the door, all I could smell was the wet earth. Sometimes, rain would make me feel sad, though I could never understand why.

Blue was when I first learned that I could feel many things at once.

Green was the grass between my toes, lush with morning dew. The green of the first shoots pushing up through garden soil, small but determined. The eerie green tinge in the sky before the summer storm cracked it open, lightning exploding downwards. Green was change and growth mixed together, restless and shifting.

Green was uncomfortable in a way, because, while it was new and special, it gave me a different kind of awareness. It was anticipation.

Black is the colour that has stayed with me the longest. Not black as in fear, though. No, I was never afraid of the dark. Black was my dog's eyes, endless and glossy. Watching me as if it understood the things I didn't. I remember the black of the prairie sky on clear nights, scattered with so many stars that I thought if I wished hard enough, surely God would give me one.

The black of my bedroom when the lights went out, leaving me in the company of my thoughts that wandered in many directions.

My mother never wore black, because she said it was a sad colour. I didn't know why. I thought all colours were lovely in their own way.

But now ...

Colours don't fill me up with the same feelings as they used to.

Yellow is no longer August freedom; it's the colour of the cab I tried to hail but won't stop. I'm late for work and my boss threatens my job. Yellow is no longer everlasting time.

Red means stop signs, warnings, and failure. I know I am not good enough. Red is the lipstick I smear on my mouth before wiping it off and deciding I'll never be pretty no matter what I do. I wish I could recognize that little girl in me who looked up to the sky and believed the world would never hurt her.

White is the colour of the wedding dresses I see on brides who are nothing like me. I brace myself against the waves of loneliness; for mine is not a love story.

White is the colour of the vase that shattered when it was thrown at my head. That day, I learned that words can be repaid by violence.

Sometimes, when I think back to those white dandelion seeds I blew into the breeze, I realize that still, I just keep wishing. I wait for the wind to make my dreams come true instead of trying to achieve them myself.

Blue has a chill to it now. Colder, even, than the pond at the end of fall. And when I walk through the rain, I no longer twirl with joy. I don't know where the rain ends and my own sadness begins. I drown in the depths of blue thoughts and feelings.

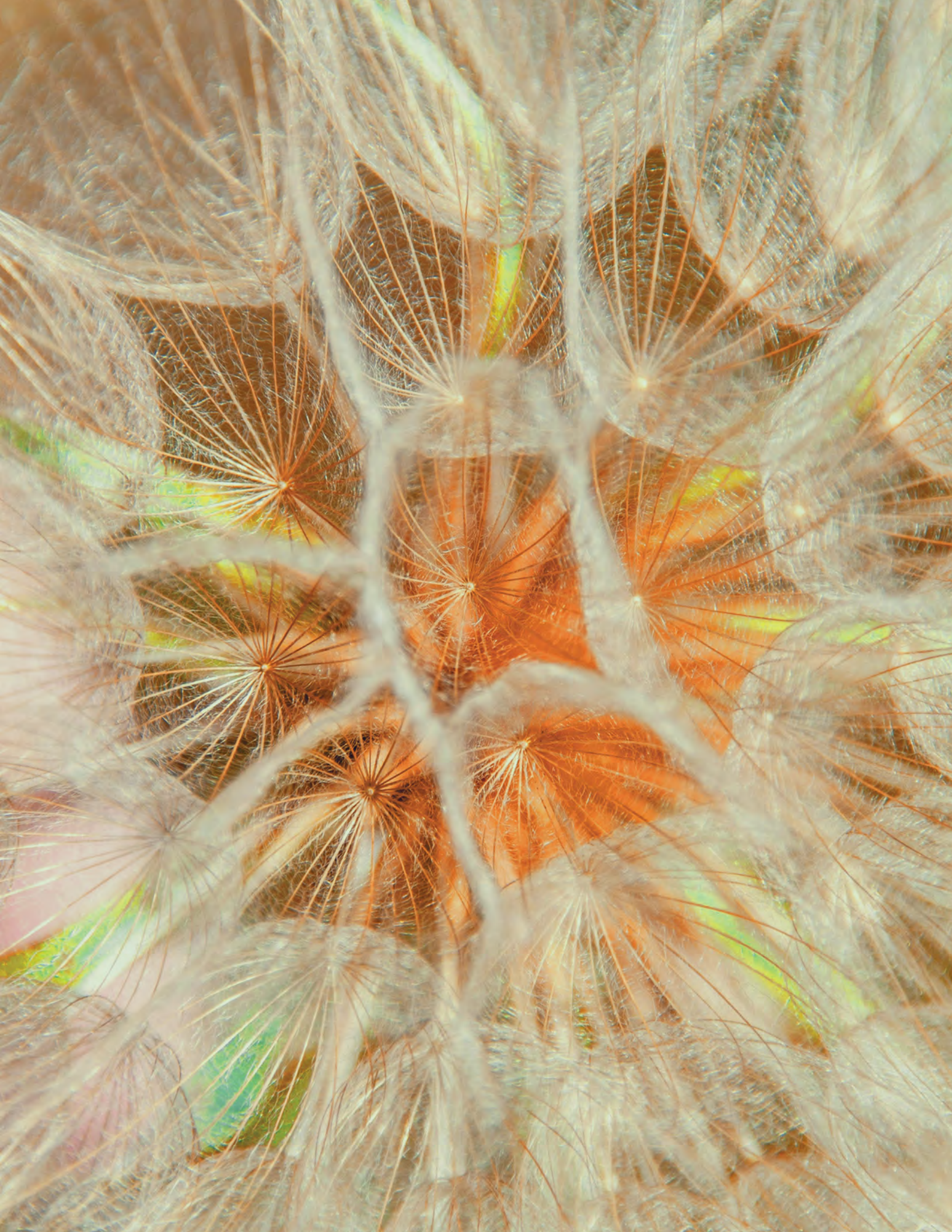
Green used to be growth, but now it's the colour of fear, lies, and betrayal. The colour of the handkerchief that stifled my cries before he hurt me. The shade of bruises that bloom like watercolour paint along my legs and arms. The colour of broken trust.

Black was once a star-filled sky and wise eyes. But now it's goodbyes and the colour of clothes worn at commemorations of lives passed. I finally know why my mother hated black; it's sadness and grief. Maybe I should let the darkness take me, let the empty void swallow my body. I'm nothing but a fragment of my past self; a hollowed-out shell filled with despair.

So, I let my mind wander back to the prairies, to the colours that built me. It's not that I long to live in the past, it's that I need to remember the girl I once was. Full of hope and life, dreams and courage.

I love to get lost in the colours of the past, because the colours around me are no longer as bright as they once were. I close my eyes and I'm transported back in time. I wish I could stay there longer.

It's my only peace.



Becoming and Unbecoming

BY YASHASVI PUROHIT

It's strange,
how growing up feels like walking through a house
you've lived in forever,
but noticing the walls are closer,
the ceilings taller.

The streets still hum their familiar tune,
yet my steps no longer follow their rhythm.
The wind carries whispers of what once was,
and I walk, half a stranger, through places I once called mine.

I find fragments of who I was
pressed between the pages of forgotten notebooks,
in melodies that no longer sound the same,
in echoes once believed eternal.

At times, I long to reach through the hush of years,
to touch that younger self,
to tell her that her dreams still breathe,
only softer now,
shaped by the quiet mercy of change.

Perhaps that is what it means to grow,
to gather the ghosts of your becoming,
to hold them not with grief, but grace,
and walk onward anyway,
becoming and unbecoming,
endlessly,
and gently.



The Sound of the Sun

BY CRYSTAL DAYO-OKE

I used to think the sun made no sound. Teachers said that in space, everything was silent, and I believed them the way kids believe most things said with enough confidence. But last summer, I learned they were wrong, not because I heard the sun, but because I learned how something can be loud even when it makes no noise at all.

It started the morning my mother told me she was selling the house. She said it quietly, like a fact as small as the weather. Cloudy today. Chance of thunderstorms. We're leaving the only place you've ever known. She didn't add the last part out loud, but I heard it anyway.

I was sitting at the kitchen table, eating the last of the cereal dust because my brother had poured himself a mountain and left me the crumbs. The bowl smelled vaguely like cardboard and the burnt sugar at the bottom of toasters. When she spoke, the spoon froze in my hand, and the dust turned to glue in my throat.

"But ... why?" I asked, though part of me already knew.

Mom's face folded in on itself, like the letters in her expression had been rearranged into something unfamiliar. "The bank called again," she said. "Your dad won't be sending anything for a while. I can't keep up with everything. It's time for a change."

That word *change* was doing a lot of work.

My brother Liam didn't look up from his phone. He already knew, probably. He was fourteen and made of angles and apathy, but sometimes, when he thought no one was watching, I saw the worry slide out of him like smoke.

We listed the house a week later.

The "For Sale" sign hammered into our front lawn looked like an eviction notice written in cheerful colors. Every time I passed it, my stomach curled.

Mom tried to make the whole thing seem like an adventure, but she wasn't very good at pretending. When she came home from work, her shoulders

slumped like grocery bags filled with too much weight, and she'd sit at the kitchen table, our kitchen table, the one carved with years of homework scratches and burnt-ring circles, and flip through rental listings like they were job applications she didn't want.

But at night, when the house slept, I went outside.

Not far though, just to the roof, which I had climbed so often it felt like a second bedroom. I'd swing my legs over the gutter, lie back on the shingles, and watch the sky drip with stars. The air at night carried everything differently, the cricket static, the distant hum of the highway, the slow breathing of the house behind me. And somewhere above all that, the silent roar of the sun, burning and burning and burning, too far to hear but too powerful to ignore.

I started counting the nights I had left with it.

When the first family came to view the house, I hid on the stairs and watched.

The mother kept saying the word "charming" the way people say "interesting" when they're being polite. The father opened and closed every cupboard door like he was inspecting a patient. Their toddler crawled across the living room floor, leaving sticky fingerprints on everything.

"This would be a lovely place to grow," the mother said.

"This *is* a place where people grew," I muttered under my breath.

But they didn't buy it. The next family didn't either. Or the next.

Every showing felt like someone else trying on my life's clothes.

One evening, while Mom scrubbed the bathroom tiles harder than necessary, I asked, "What if nobody buys it?"

She paused, sat back on her heels, and looked up at me. "Then we keep going," she said. "We always keep going."

But her voice was thin, stretched like the rubber bands she used to tie up our leftover textbooks at the

end of every school year.

The offer came in mid-July.

Mom read the email three times before speaking. Liam pretended not to care, but his foot jittered nonstop under the table.

“They want the house,” she said. “And their conditions are reasonable.”

The word *reasonable* felt like a stone in my stomach.

“When do we have to leave?” I asked.

“End of August,”

Six weeks. Forty-two days. Just over a thousand hours. I started counting immediately, unable to stop.

That summer became a series of small, last things: The last time I walked through the living room barefoot and felt the groove in the wood plank where I’d once dropped a hammer while “helping” Dad fix a shelf.

The last time Liam and I chased each other around the backyard until we tripped over the garden hose.

The last time Mom made her overcooked spaghetti that we all pretended tasted better than it did.

The last time I sat on the roof and watched the sun melt behind the line of trees at the end of the block.

The sun didn’t make a sound, but it felt louder then, like it was burning through the edges of my life.

One night, Liam climbed up to the roof with me. He never came up there unless something was wrong.

“You’re gonna miss this place more than me,” he said, leaning back on his elbows.

“You’re gonna pretend you won’t miss it,” I said.

He didn’t deny it.

For a while we lay there in silence. The shingles radiated the leftover heat of the day, warming my back.

“You think it’ll be better?” he asked suddenly. “The new place?”

I considered lying, but the stars were too honest for that.

“I think it’ll be different,” I said. “Better isn’t a promise. Different is.”

He hummed a low note in agreement. It was the closest thing to a conversation we’d had in weeks.

The last week before moving day, the house turned into a maze of cardboard boxes. Every room looked like a heart mid-transplant, full of organs that no longer belonged to it.

I had a box labeled “KEEP” and another labeled “MAYBE” and a third labeled “DONATE.” The “MAYBE” box grew the fastest.

On the final night, long after Mom and Liam had gone to bed, I climbed the roof one more time.

The sky was clear, sharp enough that every star felt like a pinhole stabbed through a black curtain.

I thought about all the pieces of myself trapped in this place, the height marks carved into the doorframe, the comic-strip wallpaper in the closet, the scratches on the banister from when Liam slid down it too fast. Houses don’t hold memories; people do. But houses hold the echoes of them.

And tomorrow, someone else would move through those echoes.

I closed my eyes and listened. Not with my ears, but with something deeper.

And that’s when I realized: The sun did make a sound. Not a sound you could capture or measure. It was the sound of consistency, the background roar of something that kept burning even while everything in my life kept shifting.

I didn’t know how long I stayed there, maybe a minute, maybe an hour, but eventually footsteps creaked below me.

Mom’s head popped over the edge of the roof.

“I figured you’d be up here,” she said softly.

“Last time,” I whispered.

She climbed up, slower than I did, and sat beside me. Her body smelled like fabric softener and exhaustion.

“I’m sorry,” she said, not about the roof, but about everything else.

I didn’t want her to apologize. I wanted the impossible: To rewind life like a movie. But the world wasn’t built for rewinding.

“I know,” I said instead. And after a moment: “Wherever we go ... will you let me find somewhere high up? Somewhere I can see the sky?”

She smiled, a small, tired smile. “I think we can manage that.”

We sat together in the warm, humming silence.

Tomorrow we would leave. The house would become someone else’s story. But the sun would rise in the same place, speaking in its invisible voice, telling me that some things don’t vanish, they just follow you in different shapes.

When the horizon softened to early blue, Mom squeezed my hand.

“Ready?”

No.

But also ... yes.

I climbed down the roof for the last time, listening to the quiet roar inside me. The sound the sun makes.



*Currie-Hyland Poetry
Award Winner*

Caecus

BY ELIZABETE SIRANTE

The blind leading the blinder, don't wander!
Keep your eyes up, avert your gaze forward.
Your silence is a trophy—don't squander.
Prejudice surely ensures you skyward.

The wolf takes the lamb when its teeth meet flesh.
Love is only weakness; names your hate holy.
You suckled this poison, babe in a creche:
Reject thy neighbor, twist the word slowly.

I harbour no respect for foolish men.
Ignorance will kill you before love will.
Listen! Hold your tongue, your sour amen:
“I confess, Father, to a dark that fills.”

Eternal life doesn't grant an excuse,
For all the venom you choose to produce.

Death by Odds

BY CAMDEN HUSBAND

We were trapped, with enough resources only to sustain one of us. Alexander and I knew our fate. Either we would both die sharing our ever-dwindling resources, or one of us would have to die, in effect saving the other. Neither of us murderers, we looked at each other to consider what to do.

“Only one of us can live,” I said, stating the obvious. “Or we could both die together.”

He snarled, clearly disliking my suggestion.

“What is the point of both of us dying when one of us can survive? One of us needs to die, but not by the other’s hand. We will let randomness decide.” He pulled out a revolver. It was well-used in the war. The barrel was dirty, as were the handle and chamber, yet the trigger gleamed like it was brand new. “Let’s play Russian roulette, but spin the chamber every time. Then the outcome is completely unknown, and one man’s misfortune is not another’s luck.”

I was completely out of any other ideas to solve this problem, and with such a fair proposal, I had to oblige. We spun the revolver at our feet, and whoever the barrel pointed to would have to go first. It pointed at Alexander. He grabbed it and, with little hesitation, spun the chamber, pointed the revolver at his temple, and squeezed the trigger.

Nothing. He passed me the revolver.

“Aren’t you scared?” I asked.

He paused for a moment, in thought. “Yes. But what other choice do I have?”

His words did not comfort me. I was hardly the brave type. As I held the gun and felt its weight, I thought of everything: I thought of my parents, my child, and my wife. I desperately did not want to die. I put the revolver to my temple. The barrel was cold and hurt my skin. As I fiddled with the trigger, I ran out of bravery.

“Alexander, hold my hand, I don’t want to die alone!” I cried.

I saw his struggle. He did not say anything. Alexander just looked at the ground sheepishly, his eyes desperately wanting to focus on something else. He did not want to feel my blood run cold. I hardly blamed him.

With no other man to save me, I looked up to the sky.

“Christ, my Lord and Saviour, save me, and if not take me into your kingdom!” I squeezed the trigger. Nothing. Relieved, I passed the revolver to Alexander, who, even faster than before, spun the chamber, put the barrel to his temple and pulled the trigger. Nothing. I was angered at this display of mockery, and the pace at which he seemingly wanted my last moments.

“How can you pull that trigger so quickly, knowing your whole life could end with the pull of it?” I shouted at him.

“It’s a one-in-six chance.”

“Your whole life could end! Does that not alarm you? Do you not want your life to end differently?”

“Yes. I do. It does alarm me. But I have no control. And neither do you.”

“God, please don’t let me die. Oh, please God!”

“God won’t save you here! Do you really think He lies up in heaven looking down at us playing and thinks, ‘On the seventh shot, whoever shoots shall die’? No! Why would benevolent God drag us to this fate where one of us must die to save the other? Why would He let this dreaded war start in which I see men die constantly! If He is watching, He must be laughing.”

Alexander passed me the revolver. I thought about dying. This couldn’t be it. I looked at the revolver. It smiled back at me. Its ordinary posture and position seemed to be mocking me. Nothing about this situation was ordinary. I looked up at the sky again. Somebody must have been watching. With this hope in my heart, I took a deep breath, put the gun to my temple, and squeezed the trigger. Nothing. I passed the revolver to Alexander.

“Would you feel guilty if I were to die?” I asked him, half to gain time before my next turn, half to inquire about his morals.

“No,”

“Why?”

“Because your death would be a suicide,”

“No, it wouldn’t. I don’t want to die,”

“It would still be a suicide,”

With that, he put the gun back to his head and pulled the trigger. Nothing. He passed the gun back to me. I spun the chamber around; however, this time when the chamber aligned with the barrel, there was a click. This had not happened to either of us yet. At that click, I accepted that I had lost. Alexander had won this brutal contest, and for a brief second, I saw him smile. I put the barrel to my temple. My heart raced. My brain burst with thoughts and prayers. God, I thought, do not forget my original prayer. God, please save me from this cruel world, where two men must die for something as simple as food. God, please save me. Please.

I pulled the trigger. Nothing. I got on my knees and cried, I thanked God and blessed Him for letting me live, even if it was only for a few more minutes.

“Give me the revolver,” Alexander barked. I passed him his revolver.

He grabbed it, spun the chamber, placed the gun on his temple, then squeezed the trigger.

It was a grotesque sight. Alexander no longer had a face. Blood had spilled everywhere. His skull shattered. I wanted to turn away from the horrid sight but couldn't.

I crouched down to look at him. Despite the gore in front of me, I could not believe Alexander was dead. Timidly, I reached out my hand to where his head once had been. Blood stained my hand. The realization crashed down on me. Alexander was gone. A pull from the pistol, and the single bullet had done it. The gun was still smoking. With morbid curiosity I opened the hand of Alexander's corpse and grabbed the gun. His hands were already cold. I hesitated for a moment, but then opened the chamber.

God wasn't there. Six empty slots appeared before me.





*Jerrett Enns Poetry Award
Honourable Mention*

Beyond the Veils of Hushed Cries

BY NOOR UL NISA

I search my fathers poetry—
the tales never shared,
the ones never spoke.

The words on the stained paper weren't written with a pen;
his calloused hands wrote them with smoke.

He sold his marrow for my bones.
You think it doesn't hurt me to see,
attached to his stomach, the stones?

While the ones out there—
the ones within the glass walls,
with their orange faces, plastered in every hall—
sit, and eat, alongside each and every one of their little dolls.

I search the sky that held my mother,
looking for the star that burned the dark.
I used to ask her why it is that we are so

Selfish?

Hateful?

Temporary?

She would tell me, *oh my little flame*,
we come from dust, to dust we go.
Her words echoed truth,
For all around me, death was more **friend** than foe.

I stand there as the school doors close on my face.
They **taunt**.
They **tease**.
They **chase** me **away**.
But the rips in my clothes are testimonies of my **existence**,
for who would actually know my **name, my pain, my resistance?**

My name is not poverty.
My name is not pain.

أنا ابن فلسطين (I am the child of Palestine)

Ɛ yän gat thudän. (I am the child of Sudan)

أنا ابن اليمن (I am the child of Yemen)

Waxaan ahay ilma somalia. (I am the child of Somalia)

Zanak'i Madagasikara aho. (I am the child of Madagascar)

So I search my fathers poetry—
The one that helped me write my name.

My name is Hope.

So I will not kneel on this floor,
Or be just **another** voice locked outside another door.



Field of Wheat Stalks

BY BOYUAN HUANG

“Li, my hands are cold.”

“Wrap them in the blanket, Ma.”

“I’m cold, Li. Can we stop marching?”

“Ma, the soldiers won’t let us stop. When the sun falls like a raindrop over the hills and they sleep, we’ll have fires to keep us warm.”

I dragged the cart like an ox. My feet were burned and rotted from weeks of walking over jagged mountains and trudging through evil swamps. Mother was curled like a baby, and tucked between the sacks of grain like a little shrew. She held close the tattered blanket we shared. Her skin clung on to tiny bones in transparent flaps.

Mother’s eyelids were swollen and drooped over her eyes. Her head swayed with each movement of the cart; it was only supported by a flat shoe she had furnished as a pillow.

Ahead of me for miles were thousands upon thousands of peasants dragging along the supply chain. Soldiers draped in Cao Cao’s red rode on horses and carried whips that burned like lightning. When a man fell they were trampled and left to the peasants past the point of starvation.

“Ma, remember what you told me about heaven?” I waited. “Ma, you said once that heaven is somewhere far away, somewhere with warm rolling fields of wheat stalks. Ba will find us there, and my older brothers, and little Xu, and the puppy we raised in our hometown, and we’ll live in a giant house with a giant fire and we’ll never be hungry or cold again. Do you remember, Ma?”

My mother’s chest began heaving. Suddenly I felt like I needed to say something.

“Ma, your son has never been as studied as his brothers, nor has he worked as hard as them. But my head has been trying to figure something out. Laugh if you can, Ma. Your son has never been smart. But, I don’t understand why people like us never have enough food. You and Ba always taught me that good people will always receive from the world. We’re good people, right? I’ve never done anything wrong in my life, but I’ve been cold and hungry for my whole life. I just don’t understand, Ma.”

“Li, thinking about these things doesn’t suit you.” She spoke in a whisper. “You’re a simple boy, and that is good. It made you happier. I’m sorry, Li. I’m so sorry for everything. Please, just remember, someday you’ll go to heaven because you have only been good.”

The supply line ahead of me shattered. A hundred riders on horseback, slicing with halberds and long spears, broke out of the woods. They wore green. Cao Cao’s soldiers screamed and slammed into the ambush. A thousand peasants, their sky suddenly fallen, scattered and ran without thought. They were caught by the soldiers on horseback and speared to death.

I held onto my cart with my life, and charged. My arms and legs died in resignation, but I refused. I pulled. Ma was in the cart, and she couldn’t walk.

A horse without a rider toppled the cart. I slid underneath the cart and sacks of grains fell through and crushed me.

Ma flew like a straw doll and landed on the road. “Ma! Stay still!”

I dragged my disobedient body out from under the cart and crawled to her. She was sleeping peacefully.

Her head was in her lap, but I did not see. I tucked the blanket over her shoulder, and whispered to her.

“I’ll come back in a working cart, and we’ll go away. Just stay here, alright?”

I stumbled back into the destroyed supply line. The red and green soldiers were engaged in a sloppy confrontation. Rows of green archers peeked out from the trees.

“Nock!”

I looked back at where Ma slept. She looked happier than I remembered. I walked, and I found myself closer to the green soldiers. The splintered carts parted around me, until it was just a grassy field. It was cold.

“Draw!”

The red soldiers dissolved and rode past me. A rider whistled right past my head, inches away from trampling me. I shivered from the wind. My teeth chattered. An ancient heartbeat echoed in my head. Suddenly I saw the grass, and the trees, and the sun and the skies and I felt my feet planted on the Earth and my face turned towards the universe and everything else in the world.

“Loose!”

Then, the sun was blotted out. There was a field of wheat stalks swaying in the sky. Rows upon rows of golden stalks, coming closer slowly. I felt very warm all of a sudden. I won’t have to starve ever again. I heard my little sister’s laughter, and my brothers, and my mother and my father. They were all here, waiting for me.

“Look, Ma, I’m right here! I’m coming to heaven to see you all again.”



*Currie-Hyland Poetry Award
Honourable Mention*

Man in Between

BY EMMA LaCROIX

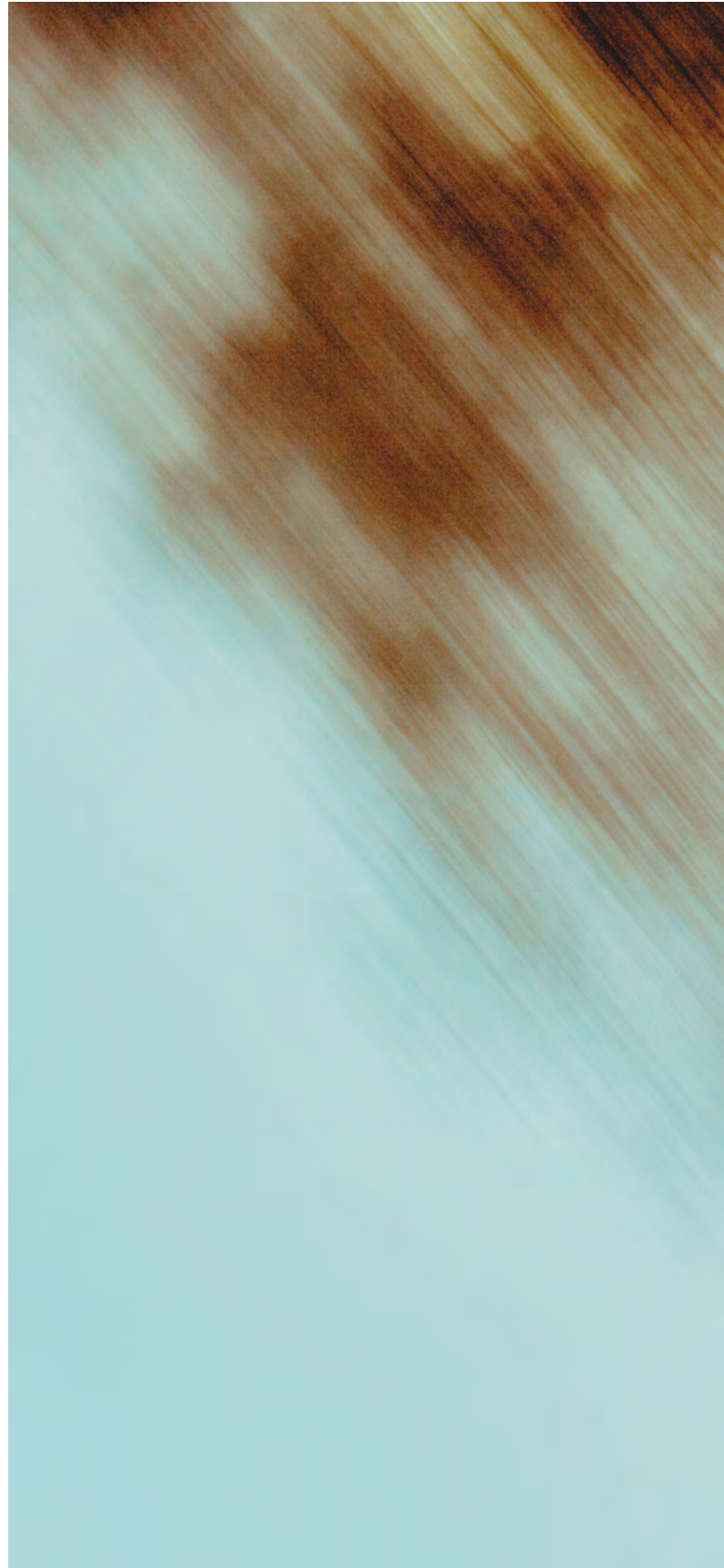
I fought for a land,
That won't let me see,
And lost the one place,
That once carried me.

I marched for a country,
That won't let me in.
Saluted their flag,
Now where do I begin?

I came back to home,
The center of my youth,
But the earth grew silent,
Said I'd forgotten the truth.

So I rest on the side,
Where road meets grass,
Half of me the future,
Half of me the past.

Between two lives,
I fade into dreams,
A soldier forgotten,
A man in between.





The Fall

BY BRAELYN CAMPBELL

I once sat in that room,
Gilded with gold, upholstered with satin,
My seat level with those others
Bejeweled more than mine.

I lay in that field
Of grasses and reeds,
A palm outstretched to the sky,
The other behind my head.

I felt the clouds,
A soft bed of the Earth's tears:
A place to be in solitude
And dream.

Most of all,
I saw those smiles:
Soft whispers melt my heart
And taint my sleep.

Now I feel the wind,
And I see the sky,
And I touch the clouds,
As I fall.
Those hands that held me
In comfort and reverence,
Those eyes that watched me
With love and admiration,

Gone.
Cast out.

Those words that filled my rest
Now seep into those of my nightmares,
Oozing in every corner.

My pitiful wings battered beneath me,
Like those melted ones of Icarus
Who almost had it all,
But failed.

I see the blue approach me,
And I curl around myself like a child
As I hit those cold blue depths,
And I am gone.

Better Men

BY OTTO LIYI YANG

I saw you the other day. Came round to the produce aisle and you were there, picking out a head of broccoli. Your hair is shorter, you got a tan, you got your other ear pierced.

You have a ring on your finger.

I'd like to say I didn't know how to feel, but I'm not stupid anymore. I was gutted, as if that ring was jammed into my solar plexus and I was vomiting up my memories of you. That time I won a bet and pierced your ear with a needle and an ice cube. That time I hid a cardboard cutout in your room and convinced you that Satan had come for your soul. That time you dragged me out to the woods and I thought for sure we were gonna bury a body.

I tried to push my cart past you before you noticed me, because I'm a goddamn coward and always have been. If my wife asks me why I didn't get lemons like I was supposed to, I'll tell her that our daughter took a wicked dump and I forgot the diaper bag in the car.

I just about jumped out of my skin when I heard your voice behind me.

"Hey! Sir! You dropped something."

You were holding a plastic figurine, my daughter's toy.

I know how I must look. I'm fatter, I'm tired, I'm wearing a shirt that probably still has baby puke on it. A far cry from the boy you knew me as.

You didn't recognize me.

I wanted to sob right then and there in front of the red cabbages. You still don't know what you do to me, you beautiful, wonderful, perfect bastard you.

I want to take you on a hike with one sleeping bag. I want to push you into the lake after saying there's a cool bug in the water. I want to shriek like a kettle when you sneak a spider into my backpack. I have always wanted that, a desire that won't go away even when I have a daughter, and a wife waiting for me at home.

You don't know how badly I wanted you to call me out when I said I'm not a ... Y'know. All you had to do was take my hand, call me a damn idiot, kiss me. I broke my own heart in that moment when I walked away at the same time as I broke yours.

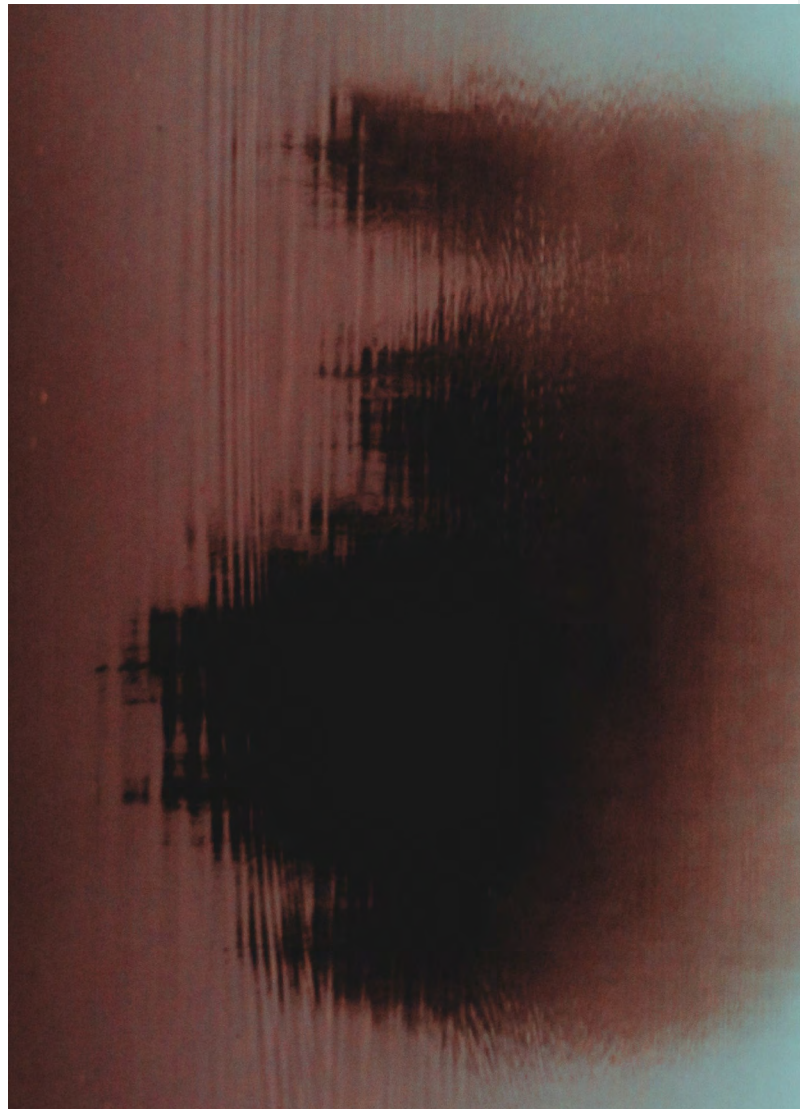
My heart is still shattered when I take the toy, say, "Thanks, man."

I'm happy for you. I'm happy for your husband. You've always deserved good things out of life, things I'm too much of a coward to give you.

I'm sorry I lied.

I love you.

Goddamn it all, I love you.



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Contributor Bios

JAME ANTHONY is an aspiring writer and avid reader. They started writing in an attempt to figure out how to put to use the many stories floating around in their mind at any given moment. Jame writes poetry, short stories, and even wrote a one-act play for their school's Drama club.

ZAID BIN REHAN is a chronically curious human who chases life, deep-sky nebulae, and the perfect sentence (yes, in that order). Born in Saudi Arabia, he is a part-time stargazer, full-time Abdullah, and occasional philosopher of things that do not exist. Logic-driven. Born in 2008. Lover of mocha lattes. A believer, Alhamdulillah.

BRAELYN CAMPBELL is a young writer from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. She first found her passion for writing at the age of ten, and has enjoyed it ever since. Outside of writing, she enjoys dance, drawing, sculpture, and playing the piano. In the future, she hopes to continue to write and publish after she graduates.

CRYSTAL DAYO-OKE is a student at St. Joseph High School who is passionate about reading and writing. She demonstrates dedication through her work. Currently, Crystal plays basketball and, outside of school, enjoys relaxing and hanging out with friends, which reflects her outgoing and fun personality.

JAN DeVINK is a loud person, often too loud, but in his writing he brings themes much quieter compared to his outgoing personality. He regularly enjoys spending his day performing and listening to concerts, as well as copious amounts of chemistry work.

JADE FROESS is a young writer who loves to spend time by herself. She loves nature, writing, reading, drawing, animals, cards, and notebooks. She has a really nice family and friends who support her in her writing journey. She grew up in a small town in the prairies and has big dreams for her future.

BOYUAN HUANG is currently a high school student attending Walter Murray Collegiate who has found joy in storytelling since childhood. He also enjoys delicious food, reading manga, and spending time with his two cats.

CAMDEN HUSBAND is a Grade 12 student at Weyburn Comprehensive High School. He has always had a passion for stories and storytelling, and has been writing as early as he can remember. In his spare time, it is not uncommon to see him out playing sports or on the stage performing.

EMMA LaCROIX is a Métis student from small-town Saskatchewan. She has enjoyed writing for as long as she can remember, and has always gotten high marks on her writing assignments. Growing up in a small town has given her many opportunities to grow her skills locally, as well as learn about the knowledge her elders keep. She hopes to share that knowledge with the world through her writing—specifically the struggles and triumphs of Indigenous peoples in Canadian history.

OTTO LIYI YANG is a writer from the middle of nowhere. His hobbies outside of writing include baking, gawking at history, and trying (and failing) to get cat fur off his black clothes. He writes mainly fiction, but has a fondness for satirical essays that cross the line into absurdity.

WASEEM LOUKILI is a high school junior from Walter Murray Collegiate who is passionate about reading, writing, researching, and any combination of the three. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with family and friends or writing poetry on the floor of his bedroom.

CATHERINE OKOLITA is a Grade 12 student with a love for reading and writing. She is a dedicated student, athlete, mentor, coach, and philanthropist. Catherine has always enjoyed literature and strives to write things that people can connect with. She hopes to publish several novels in the future.

YASHASVI PUROHIT, known to many as Yace, is a high school student at Evan Hardy Collegiate in Saskatoon with a passion for poetry and music. A TEDx speaker, she enjoys sharing ideas, pursuing research, and tackling challenges through calculus and chess. In her free time, she enjoys singing and playing the guitar and drums.

ELIZABETE SIRANTE is a Saskatchewan-raised writer and artist. Born in Latvia, the prairies have been her home for fifteen years. Her writing is heavily inspired by the nature around her and the soul that comes from it. She will forever love the province and the people she's met through her work.

NOOR UL NISA is a Grade 12 IB diploma student who attends Bedford Road Collegiate. She is an exceptional leader and is a key part in many clubs around her school. She aspires to become a doctor and work as a medical humanitarian in the future.

DAWSYN USSELMAN is a Grade 8 student from John Paul II High School in North Battleford. She is 13 years old and enjoys writing various things like poems and stories. When not writing, she dedicates her time to playing her favourite sport: Hockey. She also enjoys listening to different styles of music, including 80's rock and pop.



Windscript Submission Guidelines

Please note that as in all writing competitions, these guidelines are important and **must be followed** in order for a submission to be accepted.

Writers selected for publication will go through an **editing process with the editor(s)** and will receive payment at the standard SWG rates, as well as 2 complimentary copies of *Windscript*.

The editing process consists of revising the content, organization, grammar, and presentation of a piece of writing to enhance the writer's voice. Students should submit their best work but **be prepared to work collaboratively on edits with the editor(s) to take their work to the next level**. For example, the editor(s) may ask you to expand a scene or may suggest word choice changes. Students should consider the editor(s) suggestions respectfully and with an open mind and understand that they can advocate for their writing with the editor(s) – this is what we mean by “work collaboratively”. Work selected for publication is always chosen for its potential and not its perfection. Editor(s) will communicate with students by email; timely and attentive communication is crucial to the process so students should check their email often.

Writers selected for publication will sign a publishing contract that gives **Canadian first serial rights (FCS)** to the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild (SWG) for their work. This means the SWG will have the right to publish the piece first in Canadian markets. After this first publication in Canada, the writer is welcome to publish in other mediums or include the work in a book. The writer still holds first rights for International markets.

CRITERIA:

Those submitting must be:

- Saskatchewan-based high school students. Students can submit creative writing in any and all forms including poetry and prose (fiction and creative nonfiction).
- Students do not have to be members of the SWG.

Submissions must be:

- You must submit your best work, and submissions must be made with integrity. Writers must take accountability for their work. All work must be original and human-generated from start to finish.
 - × We do not accept submissions of any kind that were written, developed, or assisted by AI tools such as ChatGPT. Any attempt to submit AI-aided work may result in being banned from submitting to *Windscript*.
 - × Submissions that are proven to be plagiarised will not be accepted and the submitter will be banned from submitting to *Windscript*.
 - × Plagiarism, whether from the web, from other students, or from published sources (digital or print) is a serious writing offense. Plagiarism is the presentation of words or thoughts of someone else as if they were your own – exceptions are proverbial sayings or common knowledge. Avoid charges of plagiarizing by acknowledging your sources in the submission and be sure that all words and phrases from the source are in quotation marks.
- Writers must submit their own work directly – submissions cannot be made by a third party (such as a parent or teacher).

- You must proofread your manuscript before submission.
- You may submit up to four poems and two prose pieces (which do not exceed 1500 words each).
- You can submit in both prose and poetry, but contributors will only be published in one genre.
- *Windscrip*t does not accept pieces with multiple authors or images.
- *Windscrip*t does not accept work that has been previously published. Published means that the work has been made available to the public in some way, including in physical form (like books or newspapers) or electronic forms (like websites or social media.)

GUIDELINES:

Always keep a copy of your submitted work. Submissions will not be returned.

Please email the following as attachments to **windscrip**magazine@gmail.com with ***Windscrip Submission*** in the subject line:

1. Download and complete the Windscrip Cover Letter Form from our website and attach it to your email along with your poetry and/or prose pieces. Fill it out completely or your submission will not be accepted.
 - Your Windscrip Cover Letter Form can be emailed to us in the following formats: PDF, Word doc, or docx formats. Please do not submit links (like from Google Docs) to your *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form. For security reasons, links will not be clicked on.
 - Your Windscrip Cover Letter Form should be named “First Name Last Name – cover letter”.
2. Each submission properly formatted:
 - Do not put more than one poem or prose piece on a page. Each piece of writing should be its own document. Your file names must be as follows: Windscrip_title_genre (example: Windscrip_The Raven_Poetry).
 - Type each piece in 12 pt. plain text font (such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier), and prose must be double spaced.
 - Number each page.
 - Put the title on each submission and each page of the manuscript.
 - Submit documents in .doc or .docx formats. Please do not submit PDFs or Pages files or links (like from Google Docs) to your work. Download each file and attach it to the email. For security reasons, links will not be clicked on.

QUESTIONS?

Email **swgevents@skwriter.com**

For the most up-to-date submission guidelines, please visit **<https://skwriter.com/programs-and-services/publications/windscrip>**



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