

windscript

The Magazine of High School Writing Vol. 39, 2023



featuring

Paris Belisle
Kierah Boison
Emma A. Elliot
Ava Farkas
Hargun Kaur
Daria Krol
Felix Liu
Megan Mineau

Grace Murphy
Simran Ramkalawan
Nevin Runnalls
Obii Udemgba
Vaishu Venkata
Stevie Weisgerber
Allister White
Callisto Wieler
Amy Zhang

Windscript has been publishing the best of Saskatchewan high school students' literature since 1983. Created by Victor Jerrett Enns, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild (SWG) from 1982 to 1988, *Windscript* is produced by the SWG with support from SaskLotteries and SaskCulture.

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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 nêhiyawak (Cree), Anihšīnāpēk (Saulteaux), Dakota, Lakota, Nakota, and Dené Nations, and the Homeland of the Métis Nation.

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Jacklyn Morken

MANAGING/PROSE EDITOR

As I sit down to write my Editor's Note to *Windscrip*t 39, I find myself at a loss. How can I summarize my awe at the talent featured in this issue? The skillful use of form and genre? The exploration of vulnerability and fear and joy and love in all their forms? But of course, that's what writers do: we find the words.

All I can say is that the young writers of Saskatchewan have found their words. Words of frustration, dread, heartbreak, and grief. But also words of resilience, determination, defiance, and hope. These writers show a profound understanding and awareness of the world we live in, and the dreams and anxieties so many of us feel—from the weight of an uncertain future to the beauty of perseverance.

Writing takes courage. Dedication. And a healthy dose of faith in oneself. I am so grateful to these writers for trusting me with their words—and now we entrust them to you. In these twenty-four pieces, you will find incredible imagery, thrilling mysteries, contemplative nonfiction, exciting experimentation with rhyme, structure, and point of view—and much more. May they captivate and delight you as they captivated and delighted us!

I am honoured to present *Windscrip*t 39!



Dash Reimer

POETRY EDITOR

Everyone longs for relationship and community, but few write about that longing with as much straightforwardness as young adults can. One of the core themes of the poetry in this volume of *Windscrip*t has been the longing to be embraced and healthily cared for by our communities, our families and our friendships. Unfortunately, the pain that comes from broken community can often become the fuel for a poem.

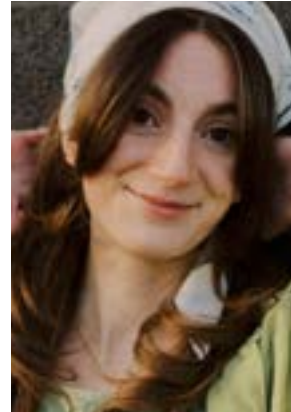


It was my privilege to get to edit these poems alongside their brilliant writers. I was so struck by the student's abilities to not just poke at what hurts with their writing, but to embrace and move towards what is healthy and healing, usually with language, wit and verbiage that is far past what I had at their age. Oftentimes high school poetry is lazily passed off as angst-ridden and overwrought but I think these pieces so beautifully capture a depth of craft that wonderfully compliments and honors the deep and intimate feelings that young adults across the world share. It was my privilege to be one of the first to take a peek at these pieces and hear the author's intention behind them. I hope you take the time to savor each line just as the authors have!

Lauren Klassen

2023 YOUTH POET LAUREATE

Writer and civil rights activist Audre Lorde stated, "I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood." As a poet, I believe the essential ingredient to poetry is vulnerability. Poetry requires you to give yourself to your art, to reveal the raw fragments of your being. Vulnerability is the knife that peels back the layers. Above all, poetry is about connection. As writer Ocean Vuong once said, "writing, if nothing else, is a bridge between two people."



As Youth Poet Laureate, I hold the firm belief that everyone has a poem inside them. Saskatchewan youth are a testament to that belief. As my term crescendos to an end, I find myself assured that your poetry can change the world. Serving as an ambassador for poetry, I have been able to connect with over 300 youth in this province, through over a dozen poetry workshops in Saskatchewan classrooms and beyond. With every workshop, came more students than before sharing their poetry with conviction, even when their voices trembled.

Our prairie province is brimming with young writers like you who are the next generation of linguists, storytellers, teachers, and leaders. It is my hope that you will not give up on your dreams. Writing is not just a profession, but a calling. A poem can transform the hearts of those who wish to hear and hold it. So take up the pen. It is never too late for radical change.



Jerrett Enns Awards

This award recognizes a high school student for excellence in poetry and prose writing. It is named in honour of Victor Jerrett Enns who was Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild from 1982 to 1988.

POETRY WINNER

Daria Krol - "Tongue"

HONOURABLE MENTION

Amy Zhang - "Fantasia for a Fallen Fish"

PROSE WINNER

Felix Liu - "Maps"

HONOURABLE MENTION

Hargun Kaur - "Petrichor"

Currie-Hyland Poetry Award

The Currie-Hyland Award for Poetry is awarded for excellence in poetry to a high school student living outside Regina or Saskatoon. This award was established in 1992 by the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild and the literary community of Moose Jaw as a tribute to Robert Currie and Gary Hyland.

WINNER

Nevin Runnalls - "Ripe"

HONOURABLE MENTION

Allister White - "The Thaw"

Metathesiophobia

by Ava Farkas

Metathesiophobia: a fear that causes people to avoid changing their circumstances due to being afraid of the unknown.

I am already longing for the comfort of the moments I am living right now
Even though I haven't left them yet
I am already mourning the losses that only affect future me

How is it that instead of fully-living I am jealous of the past me who still has the moment ahead of her?
How is it that instead of being in the moment, I am worried about what I will forget?

A flood of memories, then the thought of never being able to relive them
To feel the exact things over again

Do I cherish too much?
Am I too easily pleased?

"Was I the happiest I'll ever be at that moment? With that person? In that location?"

Do I find comfort in my past or in regularities?
Both?

Do I fear the idea that I'm the one who is changing?
Morphing?
That I could go places that have stayed the same but have changed myself?
That I won't be able to take in beauty as I have before?

I fear being comfortable with drifting away
Knowing I can't share another laugh with someone
That I'm not who I used to be, and not who I'll always be

I don't think it's foreign experiences or circumstances that I am afraid of
Maybe it's that I don't know who I am becoming, and who I've yet to become

Tongue

by Daria Krol

I let go of my tongue when I'm with you
And it's honey, the malice I'll say
Drips from lips and you can't stop it

In the heat of the moment I mean every syllable
And I like the pain that presses your lips
Though I know it will undo me later

But when that moment has grown stale and cold
And you've gone, away from where I can hurt you
I grow good again, and pure, and sweet

I'll be by again, I'll be begging again,
I'll say everything right and you will believe it
And perhaps I will believe it too

I will cry at your feet and grasp your hands of God
And you will laugh, and that sound will fill my soul
I can be whole if I try a little harder this time

In that split second, I will remember how it feels to love you
And forget how it feels to be angry
I will swear to never feel it again

Knuckles become bones of a sainthood cage
I don't mind the burn of the blood
If only I can grow closer to you

You prick your finger and put the blood in my mouth and say
"I am crafted from your heart, and I will not be swayed
by a girl who has lost her own tongue."

The Thaw

by Allister White

There are three types of fear:
the ones we are born with,
(the static in her brain that she feels empty without),
the ones we construct for ourselves,
(prisoners building their own cells and shackles),
and the ones that are taught to us
(the howling despair within her heart that covers her aspirations in deep
primal soils)*

*This delicate undertaking is called the freeze.
It is a calm birthing of doubts
so despair-inducing they become concrete and paralyzing
(she cannot think because the thoughts might be truths
and fear is lies
lies? they are comfort)

The body carved of wonder and bone has lain beneath crumbling rock and despondency for as
long as the river has been flowing.
Does this not mean it is time for the thaw?
For the kiss of sunshine on snow-white skin?
For fire to slice through that vast, expansive darkness?
(it is time for the haunting words of cruel beasts to leave her tormented mind)

Snowfall turns to rain and viscid sap flows over mossy bark
like the slow-flowing tears of uplifting relief
(the despair she holds herself captive with is leaving with the snow
joy slowly begins coaxing warmth into the air where fear once reigned)

Air warmed, the smoke curls up from a fire built on damp ground
it meets steam curling up in tendrils from the water
(where she finds joy she finds wonder also
bird-like laughs
warmth near indistinguishable from embers of the fire
smoldering just faintly
but no longer holding the power to burn)

Light pervades the dark, perched atop every dip and valley of the land.
Creeks unfurl from the lake, spreading across the ground*
(there's a stairway in the motel
fluorescent lights
an incessantly humming ice-machine
eyes meet in room after room of alabaster
air warm despite the electric whisper of the not yet forgotten freeze)

*vainly, they begin to fight against another freeze
(neither can read the answers in the off-white walls
or the ones behind their hairpin triggers and live-wires
instead of answers
they leave with a truce
they are still too weak to allow this to be their great war)

The chills reach bone; no force on earth could stop this imposition on paradise.

(strange beasts hunt the warmth
they ridicule and terrorize
the world calls them 'man'
the women who have stormed
first out of the fear-ridden graves and then from the hallway and into the world
are not sure)

(the beast screams at them both
the words are vindictive and cruel
the pair cannot survive the great war they feel coming
yet there is fight imbued in their eyes
the hungry beasts see it and consume)

There is no pain like watching the beasts make her freeze
no pain like watching salt be pushed deeper and deeper
into open bloodied wounds during battle after battle.

So she draws up a treaty.

Words will be stolen from behind her lips by this icy pain
and stored away in the depths of a deep
violent universe.

Her body will delve once more below primal soil and crumbling rock
doomed to be nothing more than a cold carcass for the beasts that roam the earth.*

*The disgusting animals make a point of picking her eyes out first.

Merry

by *Obii Udemgha*

November is my favorite month because it is the beginning of the end. The chorus before the bridge. First snowfall, season's greetings, high spirits with low temperatures. It is the time that I feel the least anxious—and I mean, how could I? Christmas is right around the corner! I couldn't be upset, even if I tried. However, after the year is done, and December ends, there seems to be nothing left to look forward to—no celebration to seek comfort in. Therein lies a problem. One that cannot be solved by presents and festivities. How do I live through periods of life lacking that feeling of anticipation?

The winter months between January and March never measure up to September through December. The snow that once created a White Christmas is now muddy brown slush. The decorative pine trees no longer mask the sight of the lifeless deciduous ones that line the sidewalk. Feelings of dread rise for the unpleasant transitional period from winter to spring, filled with ghastly weather and grimy streets, inevitably overcoming the excitement that I experience from the first few months of school.

My mother says that it is about perspective; choosing to see good in even the mundane. I suppose that is one way to deal with disappointment, but that doesn't always work. Sometimes, there is no right way to flip things, because they simply are. I don't want to discredit my emotions by attempting to repurpose them. There are reasons that I feel upset, and I trust myself to understand why I may feel that way. At least, that is the way that I prefer to see things. I won't pretend that I am not sad that Christmas is over, or that I enjoy trudging through the snow to get to school, without the glamour of holiday lights lining the streets. I wish that I did not have to wait all year to dress up for Halloween again, but as I get older, the more I realize that these feelings of dissatisfaction are universal. They are human. I try to keep this in mind.

As I grow up, realizing that everybody else shares certain human experiences such as disappointment and worry has been a comfort to me. Human beings past and present have lived through the mundane when the Christmas lights were dim and season's greetings were long gone. I'm not sure what they did to live through these periods without anticipation, but they did, living through the mundane, and eventually experiencing moments worth living for. I find comfort in that, and it gives me hope. I know there will be more to look forward to, as I take things one day at a time.

How to Explain it?

by Paris Belisle

I don't know
What's the point
To hell with it

Right now
I don't know

In three minutes
We are still going to argue
the same thing

All I want is to
Fix everything
That I haven't

This, the twitch in my shoulder,
and pain in my jaw

Too much
That I cannot fix.

(be)longing

by Nevin Runnalls

Through
Hazy windows
Like a record of
A different room

I stand
Backlit
With stars and streetlights
Looking in





The Odds Against Me

by Trace Murphy

I do not know what I am to others. My heartbeat is a metronome. I walk with confidence. I exude pride. But my feelings are hurt. Am I acting too loud, too smart, too outgoing? Am I too sensitive, too emotional, too visceral? I cut my hair when I get bored. Do boys like short hair? Does my ability to take up a room offend you? What if I am the room? And am I too cocky, raising my hand in class? Assuming I have the right answer. I drown in the silence of unreceptive students.

I break the silence.

Do they find me annoying when I like *their music, their games, their colors*? Why can't I be loved for the things I love? What am I missing? Where has it become blurred? I have always carried on my stories "a little too long." I have always spoken at a volume of unawareness. But am I just too loud for you? Too much?

Too me?

How can I take up too much space if I am not given room? How come when they are working hard, I am hardly working? Do they know that I remember everything? They should be more careful with their words. How can everything I do be too much and just not enough? How can they look past everything I am? How come the glass ceilings that I shatter are only perceived as popcorn? I hate that I wonder; that I care. I love myself in the mirror on my bedroom wall. But, "she's pretty until she knows she's pretty." Do they despise my ambition? My strength? My confidence? My arsenal of abilities? What can I do to make *you* take me seriously? How can you stay threatened when the odds are in your favor? When you created the odds.

I ought to change the odds. Beat the odds. Reinvent the odds.

I am the odds.

The odds against me.

It's Raining and it Feels Like You

by Trace Murphy

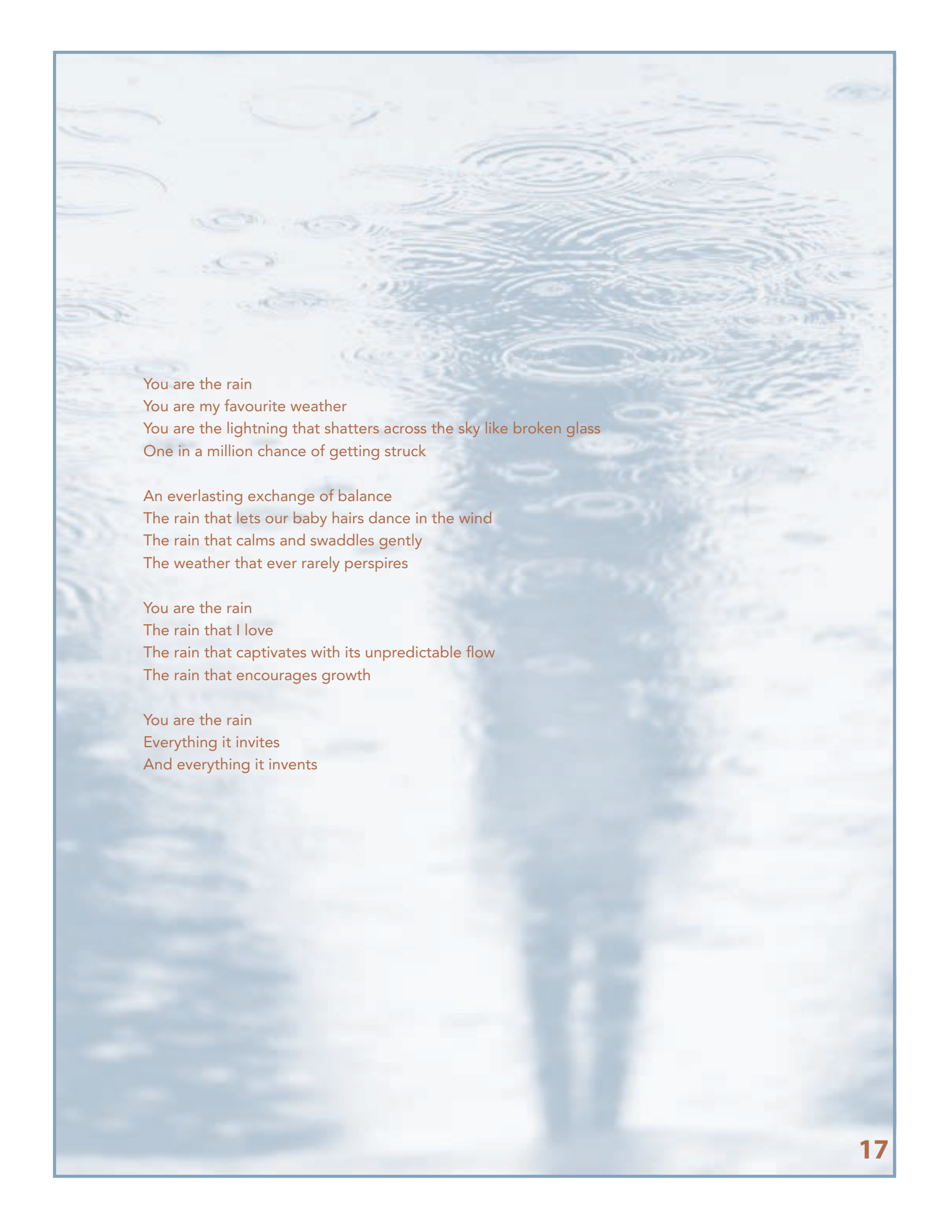
It's raining and it feels like you
But not the 'look out the car window sulking' rain
The rain that reinvents
The rain that politely mingles with the sun

And even though yesterday was as luminescent as can be
This day of rain is all I need
This day of grey is all I see
And you are the rain

You are the rain that brings life
The rain that patters atop houses rhythmically, drumming to an unscripted pace
The rain that pours, drizzles, and sprinkles
You are the smell in the streets as the sky starts to bruise

The magic of cool drops on bare skin
The look of low light and gloom
The embodiment of a storm
The transformation to come

Because after the clouds barricade the sun
Everything seems to reset
The world bustling with vibrant shades of green
The sky painted in a semi-circle of multicolored streaks



You are the rain
You are my favourite weather
You are the lightning that shatters across the sky like broken glass
One in a million chance of getting struck

An everlasting exchange of balance
The rain that lets our baby hairs dance in the wind
The rain that calms and swaddles gently
The weather that ever rarely perspires

You are the rain
The rain that I love
The rain that captivates with its unpredictable flow
The rain that encourages growth

You are the rain
Everything it invites
And everything it invents

Petrichor

by Hargun Kaur

They say love is blind, that it can happen anytime and anywhere.

I do not know what it feels like to have loved someone. I thought I found it in you, for I constantly found myself eager for your arrival, walking up to you without a thought. I was lost amidst the gentle caresses of you on my skin.

The steady pitter-patter of your pulse against mine drowned out all rational thoughts. Because your eyes were the stormiest of greys, they hypnotized me. My fingers stayed tangled in your thunder-streaked hair, gliding down a neck as cold as a January night. Your pulse thrumming perfectly in sync with your heart of ice. Every little moment caused a ripple, a shift, and distorted my field of vision. In the blink of an eye, you materialized, yet you would disappear just as quickly. These little stolen moments are the only memories I have left.

Because when you were gone, I stumbled about as if a parched man in the desert, desperately hoping for a sip of water. I yearned for your pit-pats against the roof, and the splashes on my clothes. I craved your sweet petrichor scent and the way your mood changed within a minute. Sometimes, you would arrive and unleash your torrents upon me, as harsh as the words escaping your lips. Like an onslaught of hail they stormed down, embedding deep inside my skin and leaving scars too miniscule to be seen. I would await your arrival in hopes of soothing them. Hoping you would instead greet me with a gentle breeze and an angelic smile.

Those were my most cherished moments. When we were amongst a field of dancing flowers, a rainbow visible on the horizon. When you held my hand in yours and parted ways with a kiss on the cheek, a lingering touch staying with me throughout the day.

Those were the times that made me believe in this illusion of love, but it fluttered away as quick as it came. For I realized, I was never truly in love with you. I realized that love morphed into fear as quickly as snow bled to water. It muddied the streets, converting an ocean of beauty into murky nothingness. Our tranquility was evanescent. It thawed to puddles, puddles that caused ripples, and ripples that distorted our reality.

My tears formed swollen rivers, swift and unforgiving. A tsunami wave that swallowed all within its reach. Thunder and lightning made a constant appearance, trailing broken shutters and shattered windows behind them. However, these calamities were much preferred to the unnerving calm that settled in their aftermath. For the truth was as clear as the river reflecting the scorching, ever-present sun. The rain had passed. It had left me alone.

Maps

by Felix Liu

The Wikipedia article for the November 2021 Pacific Northwest floods begins rather bluntly: “The 2021 Pacific Northwest floods comprise a series of floods that affected British Columbia, Canada, and parts of neighbouring Washington state.” As you scroll, things get progressively worse. Accompanied by major route blockages and infrastructure-wrecking mudslides, the floods are “the costliest natural disaster in British Columbia history.” On a larger scale, the nation was cut into two—if only for a moment.

Back at the top of the page, next to the first paragraph, there is a little info box that contains a summary of the disaster: several billions in damages, at least five killed. From November 14th to December 17th. The cause? A type of atmospheric river that triggered successive weather systems, bringing torrents of rain in its wake.

At the top of this little info box, there is a map.

There’s this feeling that I tend to get whenever I look at a map—I am unsure if anyone else feels it, but it is an experience that could best be described as an uncanny mix of awe, dejection, and revelatory optimism. It’s a feeling that straddles the boundaries between childlike glee and hopeless romanticism—a sort of limbo between love and existential dread. When I look at a map, I of course see the places, routes, topographies, and seas that define its fundamental utility. After all, why would we make them otherwise? Yet, at the same time, their arcane symbols and coloured lines stand out to me as something more than just mere marks. The map feeling is one I find particularly difficult to describe, perhaps most importantly because of just how vast it is—like the maps that tend to evoke it.

I think that a good place to start is in familiarity.

Looking at a map, whenever I come across my home of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, or even just Canada, there’s this sense of oneness that permeates every aspect of my being. It’s the kind of feeling that you get when you know something that others don’t. For me, seeing familiar places on a map brings me back to summer evenings spent bickering with childhood friends in basketball courts and neighbourhood parks. They bring me back to the autumns spent coasting on gravel roads, watching the marvels of rural Saskatchewan pass me by. They bring me back to the winters spent on prairie trails and in airports from coast to coast. They bring me back to the springs spent in school, learning about home and what maps really mean.

And I think that this sense of familiarity is one of those qualities that gives maps their meaning. When we know something special, and we know it with the entirety of our being, we associate what we know with what it is that we know. For places, this means that the stories we experience—the memories that we have lived through, laughed through, and cried through—become a part of that place’s DNA. Home is where the heart is, and nowhere is this truer than on a map.

Maps, for me at least, also meticulously capture the human condition in a way that few other mediums can. That is, if maps tell *our* stories, then they also tell our story. Their markings—whether of metropolises or railroads, highways or trails—lay out a sort of wonder that aptly summarises thousands of years of human ingenuity. It takes a lot of restraint not to marvel at the cleverness of mankind, and the ways that we have managed to shape the world to our benefit. Cities, supply chains, freight rails, interstates, and canals weave into each other, forming a living, breathing blanket that shelters our civilization and nourishes us with abundance.

Of course, this modern world is, unsurprisingly, quite young. New York is only about four hundred years old. Saskatoon was only founded in 1882. Humanity has done plenty in the last thousand years. You can see it most plainly when you look at a map.

It's a feeling that you really can't avoid.

But maps are not all prestige and innocence. Maps are a mix of both arts and recordkeeping, and, like all arts and records, they have been acutely stained by the wicked behaviours of history. One of the great vices of maps is their ability to divide. They provide a place for the pack mentalities of our ancestors to fester, where borders draw lines that separate humans from each other. With maps, you can begin to see the false allure of nationalism take form.

We are not the same, our maps whisper to us. We are all different, and what is different is dangerous.

Inequities, too, hide snugly between the lines. If geography is destiny, then it can be said that so too is cartography. The gap between the developed and developing world is oftentimes all too obvious on our maps, where the prosperity of a nation can all too often be linked with the prevalence of its infrastructure.

There are other divides too, like those that we can see in rural areas, in class inequalities, and in the lingering scars of segregation and colonialism.

After all, maps are a distinctly human invention, and so maps are fundamentally human. Their pages drip with the ink of humanity's mistakes and cruelties.

Of course, there is warmth in humanity also, and in the stories that we imbue into our maps. Zoom out on the world, and you'll soon realise we all share this planet together. And even though it feels like we are all irrevocably far apart, we are also all irrevocably close, because we all live on Earth. When you realise that, it seems ridiculous to subscribe to nationalism and all manner of other tribal ideologies. After all, we are all here. We are all together. We are all human.

Yet, at the same time, the map's portrayal of the world resonates with the sweeping undercurrent of nature. You can see it in the mountain ranges and continents, canyons and oceans, that have been carved out here before us and that will remain here even when we're gone.

And so, nature influences us—geography makes nations and biomes birth farmlands. In a way, maps are humanity's way of coming to grips with itself and with the Earth—with the incomprehensible impermanence of our little existence. With due time, nature will reclaim what was rightfully hers. It's a startling thought, really. Our criss-crossing cities and lane-separated interstates are like mega-sized anthills, their structures subtly driven by the design of a world we had no say in creating. We bicker, we fight, we laugh, we care.

But we are mere pests in the gigantic backyard that is the universe.

The November 2021 Pacific Northwest floods were largely due to human-driven climate change. They are one of the many consequences of living in an era where humanity has not yet learned how to wield its ever-increasing power. And yet, the story of the November 2021 Pacific Northwest floods is also the story of our maps. Our maps show us the ability of humanity to shape the world. The story of a species that builds metropolises and interstates that it depends upon to drive economies and ship iPhones. They also reveal to us our vices; highways so powerful they can convince the climate to destroy them, built along haphazard lines meant to separate us from ourselves. And the climate, in the end, is that topological survey that defines the immutable background of every map. The story is global. National. Personal.

For millennia, humanity has catalogued the world before us. But our era is different. For the first time in history, humanity can change the world just as much as it can put it onto paper. So far, we have changed it for the worse, but I believe that we can do better. After all, we must, because the planet will survive regardless of us.

That's why I get that feeling when I look at a map.

It's the feeling of realising that even though the mountain ranges and continents, canyons and oceans, have been here forever before us and will remain here forever after we're gone, we choose to make our mark anyways.

And I think there's something that is deeply and profoundly beautiful about that.

Work Cited

"November 2021 Pacific Northwest Floods." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 27 Jan. 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/November_2021_Pacific_Northwest_floods.





Method Acting

by Mevin Runnalls

There is a soft-cornered room
Beckoning life with white-walled teeth

Surrealist's paint
Spotlighting razor blades
Spread like dead lilies
Across your canvas

Truly,
An award-winning
Performance.

The Moon I Never Thought About

by Stevie Weisgerber

I've stared at the same moon my whole life, and I'll continue to stare at the same moon for the rest of it. How many hours have I spent gazing at the moon? How many times have my eyes laid on the same spot? How many new spots have appeared since my eyes began gazing? How many of my secrets does the moon know? And how many moments of mine has the moon gazed upon, like I gaze upon it? I've got a million questions I would ask the moon if only I could talk to it.

I've got a million emotions I would share with the moon if only I could look into its eyes. I've got a million things I would say to it, if only I could muster up the courage to face something that's seen me in all my darkest times.

Does the moon feel pity for me? I wish I knew.

Does the moon look upon me with disdain and sorrow-filled eyes? Maybe its eyes are not filled with sorrow but rather with pride, with joy, with love. Maybe the moon is simply indifferent. Indifferent to me. Could it be possible, I wonder, that the moon simply spins around our earth with its head up in space? Could it be that the moon does not know me like I know it? For maybe the conclusion is that my companion in the dark does not feel the light of my eyes and my soul on its face. My love up in space doesn't even know it's so dark down here.

All the questions I will never know. All the questions I can never ask.

I'll never be able to touch the moon. I will never be an astronaut up in space, able to hold the light that filled all my dark spaces, able to capture it and hug it like it hugged me.

Does the moon need a hug? I wonder. It's cold up there, I know. I've been so selfish to worry about my darkness, my cold, to take the light and warmth of the moon when all along it was spinning up there, dark, cold, and alone.

How selfish I was, to not think of it like it thought of me. What a desolate life the moon lives up there. How selfish of me. How selfish I was to not worry about the moon. How foolish I was to believe it was strong without asking.

I've thought about the moon so much. I've thought about the moon every time that I've looked up at it, every time that I've cried tears of joy or of sorrow with its light shining on my face. I thought of the moon as hope, as light, as a caring figure. I thought the moon knew what it was doing. I always supposed the moon was happy, hanging up there in the sky. Now, I worry the moon might be sad. I fear I might have filled it with too many of my burdens; it might have witnessed too many of my pains. I worry that the moon and I might both be in the dark, that there might be no light to shine on either of us, no light to scare away our shadows. For if one day I look up in the sky and see no moon, not even a sliver of its beautiful light, I will fear that it was my burden that killed its beauty. That it was me that rid the stars of their companion. That it was me that rid the sky of the moon.



Tolden Children

by Megan Mineau

I fell in love in July
when the foreign sun burned in the open sky
before the whispering cold came and the autumn leaves died.
You played the ukulele, singing a dulcet song of your own creation;
I trailed behind you, a besotted dog begging for attention.

I loved you from that first day:
your sugar-blond hair,
your sweetness, strength, and care
I wished for promises that I could not say.
I loved you, and I hated myself for it.

Our love had no happy ending,
but I knew there would not even be a beginning.
You were harsh strokes of black and white,
and I was tenderly painted in a rainbow of lines.

I went back home and redonned my mask,
the village's golden child delight
but in reality, I was the hidden blight
and that village is the horror I dream of at night.

Every day, on my knees I prayed:
"Take me away, let me leave,
I'm sick of bowing at their feet,
a knife at my throat forcing my silence.
I'm done hiding in the hayloft, please
I want to love, to breathe,
to live, to be
me."

Tomb

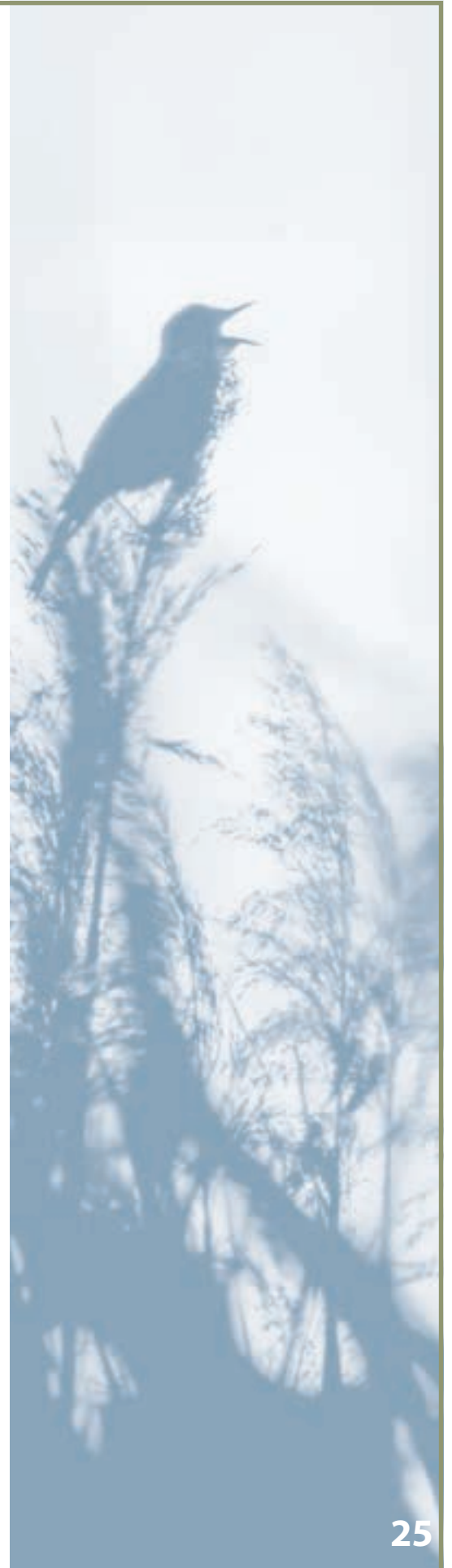
by Daria Krol

After the foxes chew on my flesh
and leave my crooked skeleton hanging behind
I trust she will still find me there,
moss consuming the hands
that once consumed all
dappled in sunlight and spider silk
bluebells of my tongue,
dandelions of my breasts

She places her hands in my rotten jaw
and takes a tooth – it comes out easily
she wears it around her neck, over her heart
though my hope lessens as her earthy hands
reach for my ribcage and crack off a shard –
it falls to her palms, dry and yellowed,
and she grins with a froth of brutality

Rubbing it in her dirty thumbs
she holds it like a prize, pressing it
to her own ribs, feeling the sameness
then breaking the skin with the jagged edge
in the master bathroom, bent over the sink,
spit tasting of bile, wicked mouth stained
the colour of blood and with a cry
the black sludge spills

There is a bird in the next meadow
who sings with human lungs
perhaps those are mine, too;
when she comes back to visit
with her twin bones
she will embrace me and
our ribs will entwine
like desperate fingers
again



And so, I Confess

by Trace Murphy

I have gathered all the sporadic sticky notes.
The jotted bullets.
The journal entries.
The dreams.

And so, I confess in the only way I know how:

I like how you do not care
But you are so sincere
And your eyes are marbles
Your dimples are craters upon the moon

And I am only seventeen
My bedroom walls splayed
with cherished doodles
Album covers
Notes

I like it when you smile
When your eyes bunch up
Your dimples flash
I like it when you look at just me
And I want to feel this way forever
This sickly sticky feeling
The twang in my core
The magnet of my gaze

We are so close I can taste it
It is hot in my cheeks
And I like to sing and dance
And you are tall with your hands in your pockets

I see everything you are
Because your eyes have not changed
Every time I look at you
Something sparks

I love our well kindled conversations
We flicker like the shadow of candle flame; so illicit, so us
The red lighter you could not leave alone lays next to my bed
The ukulele I tuned, and you played, mourns your hands

I almost forgot to tell you I dreamed about you last night

Tell me you dreamed about me too

Ripe

by Nexin Runnalls

I had a dream about apples.
Really good apples.
I couldn't separate them from
Bliss.

Except they didn't have your face.
You laughed at that.
I said I'd become a
Biologist

To spend more time with these apples.
You stared at me.
Your eyes were big, red, apples.

You still won't speak with me.
Besides
A competent biologist studies
Untouched
Apples.



Shiny Buttons

by Kierah Boison

I gazed over the land, shielding my eyes from the blistering sun. The gleaming wheatfield around me danced in the soft wind. I reached down to pick up a fallen grain and rubbed it between my hands, noting the lack of moisture. The sweet smell assaulted my nose as the tiny ridges lightly pricked my calloused fingers.

Almost ready for harvest. I thought, excitement brewing in my chest. Then it hit me. *You'll be gone by the time it's ready.*

As if the temperature had suddenly dropped below zero, shivers flew up and down my body. This was no longer my home.

I lifted my eyes from the golden grain in my hand and studied the faded red farmhouse. Even from this distance I recognized the little things. The 'L-shaped' dent on the lowest weather board from the first time my eldest son ever used a saw, to the missing shingles on the roof from the worst hail storm we ever had. Even if I couldn't see it, I knew it was there.

The first time I had brought Sarah here it was just one dark room. A table, two chairs, a stove and dainty bed. The years faded away and suddenly it was no longer a dark, one-room house. The furniture multiplied and so did our family. Yet through the good times and the bad, Sarah never complained. Sarah was what made a house a home. My beloved wife Sarah.

The memory of just-out-of-the-oven muffins wafting through the air brought tears to my eyes. The aroma, a warm hug, something I missed dearly these days.

A train whistle blew in the distance and the shrill sound brought me to think of my children. The memory of their shrieks enveloped me, bringing me into a world of joy and pain.

The joyous squeals soon went away and we entered the stage when they no longer talked. When they no longer laughed and played as children do. Then more years went by and we entered the "goodbye" stage.

They no longer lived at home.

They no longer called it home.

They had families of their own and no longer came by to visit.

I went through it with each of my children, all six of them, and with each one I hoped that they would be different than the last. That they wouldn't forget who raised them. That they would still call this home. Yet they grew up and so did their children. Instead of the loud, boisterous atmosphere the farm had gotten used to, it was quiet and serene. Just Sarah and I. Truth be told, I thought that it wouldn't be that bad.

We started with some small changes, enjoying little bits of the free time we had. Sharing the events of our day, which were as routine as ever. We moved our rockers to the front porch and would sometimes just sit there for hours, listening to the birds chirping and the rustling of the fields. Watching the river trickle down the rocks and the vibrant trees sway gently in the wind. Yet there was something eerie about the silence, about the peace. Two years went by and it was no longer Sarah and I.

I was alone.

The sound of a car motor bumping up the dirt road brought me back to the present. It was almost time. A man got out of the car, his suit jacket buttons reflecting the sun's rays. I took my hat off and lifted it in greeting, mustering as much enthusiasm as I possibly could. He started towards me, his strides quick and powerful, reminding me of my younger self. His face was pale as if it had only known the brightness of a computer screen in a dimly lit room.

"John, I believe we spoke on the phone," he said, his voice stiff and proper.

"Yes," I replied. He went on, oblivious to the sadness in my voice.

"Everything is set up. It just needs to be finalized with your signature."

He shoved an open binder in my face: they were legal documents. I sighed and took the pen out of his other outstretched hand, signing on the dotted line. He closed the binder with a thunderous clap, and strode away without another word. His steps faltered as he found uneven ground between the plough lines. A few seconds later, the crunch of gravel under wheels invaded my senses. I looked over my land once more, pride shining in my eyes, my determination set in deep.

This world can take my crops, my animals, my house and my land. It can take my wife and my kids. But it will never take my memories.

Fantasia for a Fallen Fish

by Amy Zhang

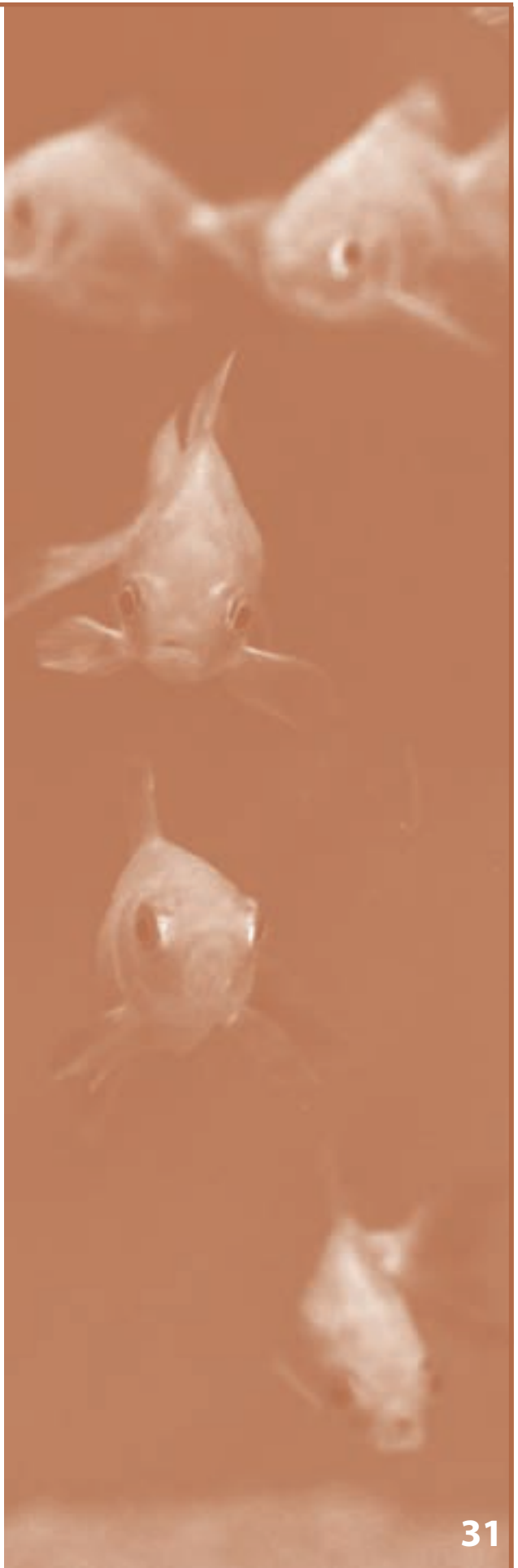
She sees the fish in the store
It splashes gently through the water
Oblivious to the chemicals
No complaints, no objections
Only the *drip-drip* of the tank
And the swishing of other fish
Fish do not speak, nor socialize.
Do fish even think?

She takes the fish home
It floats silently in tank water
Bubbling, swimming, idling
Exploring each corner of its new home
Timeless wandering around and around
With the filter's *whirr-whirr* as its companion
Fish do not go to school, nor extracurriculars.
Do fish even enjoy life?

She leaves the tank out in the sun
Ultraviolet radiance and vehement heat
Choking, strangling, parching, killing
The fish's life drains away
Like water slipping through a sink
Its empty corpse floats up to the surface
Fish do not levitate, nor hover.
So, are dead fishes not fish?

She runs into the arms of Grief
Grief gives a huge empty hug
Empty, just like dead fish
"It's just a fish." "I'm sorry."
"I feel bad for you." "Are you okay?"
"I'm sorry." I'm sorry.
Dead fish do not apologize.
Do dead fishes deserve apologies?

She contemplates to herself
Words surround us like bubbles
They have meaning when they are made
But most of the time
When they are said
They are empty
Like thousands of dead fish floating around
In a sea of humans.



Moon-Powered Soul

by Callisto Weller

I hold such a love for space
That I named myself after it.
Yet, I'm still clueless about that great expanse.

I obsess over the stars,
I make myself dizzy staring straight up,
It fills me with a silent sense of dread.

I never know when to speak,
If I were a radio broadcast,
I would be an antique number station,

Repeating my programs to no one.
My favourite colour is abruptly blue,
In reality, it changes every day.

My mood swings like a pendulum,
A pulley dragging everyone down with me,
And I don't let go of people as soon as I should.

I become clingy when I'm sad,
And distant when I'm angry,
I hold everyone at arm's length.

But I clutch pillows and stuffed animals in my sleep,
Fawn over small animals and cartoons,
And I mourn my childhood more and more each day.

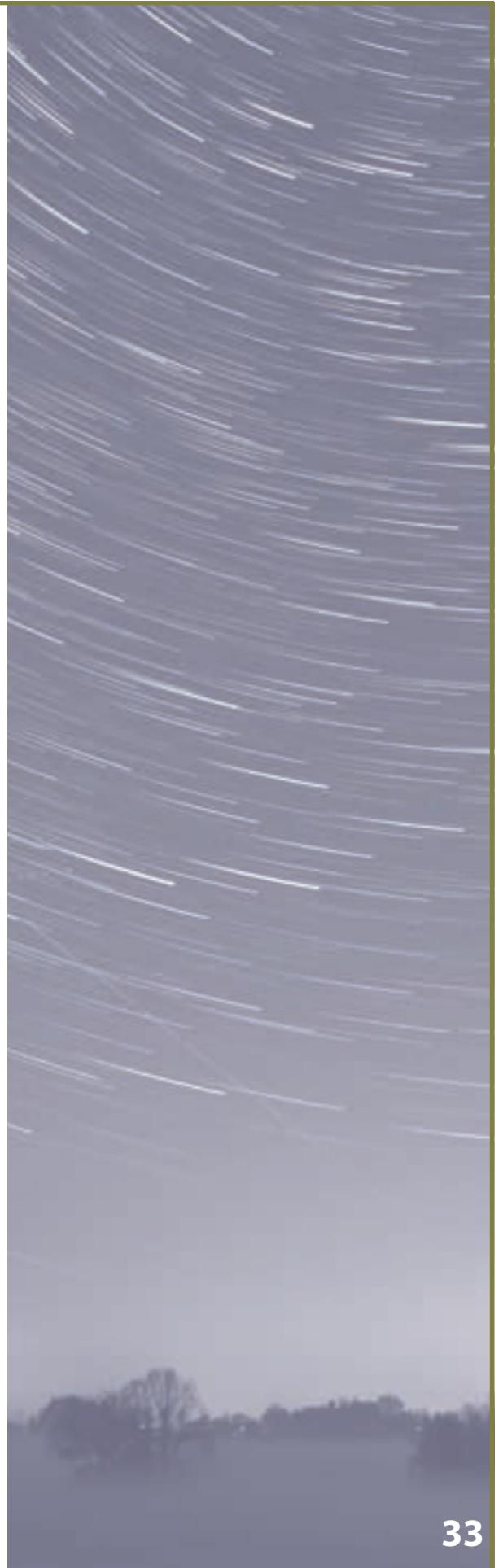
Wearing all black, my smile is nocturnal,
My laugh showered in stardust,
Moon-powered soul.

I'm an Aquarius,
But I'm deathly afraid of water,
Drowning is such a horrible way to go.

I'm not afraid of death,
I'm afraid of fear,
Of panicking out of my control.

Of my cycle of life continuing,
Of being free,

But alone in space.



Ends of the Earth

by Felix Liu

The sun rose on a decimated skyline. Once-towering monoliths of glass and steel sat silently along the horizon. Beneath them, amid the darkness, a grid of asphalt extended out towards the ends of the Earth, their black surfaces layered with rugged cracks and islands of faded stripes. On top of these curious constructions sat blobs of colour, scattered motionlessly across the charcoal-grey abyss. Their alloy bodies reflected the fog-diffused rays of dawn—delicate finishes with a pristine smoothness unlike anything else in the undergrowth.

A couple hundred miles away, the clouds exploded open with a deafening roar. A furious swirl of movement swept a perilous gust of dust through the shrivelled land. Creatures scuttled away into the wilted fields. Torn paperbacks whisked about in the sudden breeze. Up above, a flash of light gave entrance to a majestic disk-like shape. It appeared to be a ship, its flattened curves bearing a striking resemblance to the wings of birds. The rising sun lit its rim with a halo, like a ring of gold descending towards the Earth.

Nearing the ground, the ship revealed a set of retractable legs. It landed with a gentle thud, barring the mechanical whirring of the systems inside. A portion of the curved wall, previously flush with the ship, rotated vertically to form a slope into a black void. A harrowing silence ensued. Then, a curious face peeked out; its likeness was elongated, unlike any other organism which had graced the planet's surface. The pale blueness of its oval head gave way to a smooth, snake-like body. It bobbed in an exaggerated manner, as if breathing—if it breathed—was a difficult task. Observing its new environment, the creature bumbled down the incline and onto the earth below.

The alien creature, cautious in its movement, took a careful gander at the bleak landscape. Its ship had landed in the middle of what would have been a flourishing cornfield, once. Next to it, a faded highway stretched perpendicular to the horizon, its face interspersed with the cracks and weeds of negligence. A hollow metal sign sat beside the asphalt line, its badge-like head serving as the home of a formerly bold 25. The alien recorded all of this on a tablet-like device. Meanwhile, the alien's otherworldly attire, which could most closely be described as a trench coat, snapped in the wind.

The alien also noticed an odd, gleaming object stationed further down the road. With a strange grunt, the alien slithered cautiously towards it. The object was a beaten automobile, its windshield shattered and overgrown with vines. The insides had been looted long ago, leaving it a barren shell with only two empty headlights staring mindlessly into the distance. But the alien did not realise this, instead recognizing the car as a potential threat, maybe sleeping in the morning sun. Too paranoid to inspect further, the alien wiggled around the metallic heap. Suddenly, the wind came alive. Plastic debris and newspapers from years past swirled about in the air. Uneasy, the alien quickened its pace. Then, in a whiplash, the alien was blinded. It peeled an obstacle off its face to discover some sort of paperback manuscript, its images long faded. Deeply shaken, the alien slipped the tome into its pocket and hurried swiftly on its way.

Raindrops began to drip from the clouds above, the colour of which had changed so quickly from the clearness of the morning to deep, menacing darkness. Soon, the rain

was pouring. A flash of lightning signalled the start of a terrible storm. It was the storm of a century, although there was no one left to keep track of such frivolous records. The alien, amid observing more of those mysterious metal objects, was forced into a mad streak back to its ship. The wind rose into a frenzy, as if invoked by the fury of some long-forgotten god. Bone-chilling howls reverberated across the crazed landscape. The alien, terror-stricken, howled as well. The piercing whistles of the air became overwhelming.

Then, as if the forces of nature decided to take revenge, the invisible swirls of air turned the motor vehicle into a crude monoplane. It rose suddenly through the dusty sky, becoming a shooting star of the mortal realm. Gravity, fighting back, pulled back the car into its own hands. The automobile splintered into the tense dirt. A combustion engine, catalytic converter. Radio coils about the exhaust pipes. Windshield wipers clinging to the few metal plates that were still holding together. A splattering of all sorts of century-old fluids mingling with the downpour. The alien, however, was long gone.

As the ship soared away from the havoc below, the alien inputted into its tablet what could roughly be translated into the following:

Earth, the third planet of the Solaris system, demonstrates further evidence that simple carbon-based lifeforms exist on other planets. It is home to both botanical and non-botanical organisms. It also appears that Earth was home to an intelligent species of metal-based lifeforms. For some unknown reason, it seems that they were all petrified long ago.

Looking up, the alien suddenly caught sight of the book that it had found. The alien creased its brow, as if deep in thought, pondering its observations. Then, under the section for metal-based lifeforms, it added one final line to the log.

It appears that they called themselves—

The alien painstakingly copied the strange symbols from the cover.

"Humans."

Thalassophobia

by Emma A. Elliot

Based off of The Magnus Archives written by Jonathan Sims, produced by Alexander J. Newall, and distributed by Rusty Quill on YouTube.

Account of: Brooklynn (Brooke) Brenna.

Regarding: Aquaphobia

Date: 2/11/2022

Patient's account:

"I know you'll think I'm lying. I mean, I'm hospitalized for not drinking water—but please believe me, this actually happened to me! And... I don't know what to say but the truth. Let me start at the beginning.

"I've always liked swimming. The ocean. Water in general. My mother always joked that I wasn't born with legs but fins. That always made me laugh. I wish it still did. I loved the water. I was even a lifeguard for my first job, and I volunteered several times for ocean and lake clean up. But now, I can't even see water without—I'm getting ahead of myself. The point is, I loved the water, especially swimming.

"I think my favorite part of swimming was being submerged, yes that was it! I know, I know it seems impossible given my... condition... but it's true. I loved just sinking beneath the waves, knowing I could swim up at any time. It just felt so comforting. Like I was being hugged or encased in something soothing. I enjoyed it.

"I guess that's why I felt so... sad all these years. I worked—apologies, *used* to work for a company that had nothing to do with water. It was not what I wanted or enjoyed, but it paid the bills. I eventually got a break from my work, and was going to go for a walk along the shore, but then... I thought to rekindle my love of the water, so I got changed into a scuba suit and put on an oxygen tank. Then I waded into the water.

"It was a bright day, a little bit of wind but not bad. Perfect for swimming, or rather, sinking. I swam for a few minutes, but then I flexed my body to float on my back. I breathed deeply and calmly. It was peaceful, just drifting softly, surrounded by water. Slowly being lowered into it. It was nice. I stayed like that for 45 minutes or so, until noticed something, A tight weight on my chest... nothing much but odd, I figured I was getting too deep and when I checked my oxygen, I was right: I was getting low. I tried to swim up but then...

I couldn't move. Not that I was paralyzed, no. More like I was being held down—pulled down. I figured it was just a muscle cramp, but no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't right myself.

I could not move. I was just sinking, and it wasn't peaceful anymore. This felt... wrong. Very, very wrong.

"I felt like I was in danger, not of drowning—well, not just drowning. I felt like there was something else with me. Another presence. Not a human presence... or even an animal. It felt... older. Ancient, primordial, cosmic. Far older and, compared to us humans, indescribable. But somehow, I knew it wasn't something *in* the water: it *was* the water. Even now I don't have the words for it. The ocean was pulling me down to the deepest darkest depths of itself.

"I floated downward, though now the heaviness was, well, heavier. Heavier, and darker. I was in the Twilight zone. I checked my oxygen. I was almost out. I began to hold my breath to preserve oxygen. But after a while, I began to see black spots in my eyes, and feel a tingling on my now cold and water-wrinkled skin. I could barely see the light of the surface, of the sun. Of warmth.

Things were moving at the corner of my eyes. Sharks, whales, orcas, dolphins, and other sea creatures but... there was more. More than just the normal species of sea fauna. There were creatures that looked like human-fish abominations! Covered in scaly rot, with shiny, pale, rotting needle-like teeth! Lots of Them. They—they were monsters! I don't think I could even describe what they were even if I tried... It's too hard to describe them beyond that.

"Seeing those creatures... then the unbelievable cold, the black shadows of the midnight zone. The immense pressure. The freezing water, chilling me down to my very soul. The dark of the water, the creatures moving towards me with outstretched clawing hands blackened the corners of my eyes. My oxygen was so low I couldn't breathe. The thing... the ocean was pulling me lower, lower, and lower. The water now was crushing me and digging into me. I... I could feel it trying to slide into my eyes, mouth, nose, ears, even the pores of my face. Trying to... become me... somehow. It felt like glue was being poured down my throat, clogging my eyes, sticking to every orifice... it was...

"Sorry. Eventually my oxygen was pulled away from me, out of my mouth. The ocean still trying to make its way inside me, and the creatures lurking in the dark were getting closer, though... now they were wailing and crying like dying Cetacea's, like whales or dolphins. I struggled again, trying to find any source of oxygen. My bones still being crushed by the pressure of the... the thing trying to kill me! The slimy, heavy water now filled my lungs as I entered the abyss, that's where it all goes dark.

"When I woke up, I was in the hospital. A doctor told me that I had been missing for almost 2 weeks, that I was dehydrated, suffering sea salt poisoning, and had an unknown substance in my lungs. He said I was lucky to be alive, but I don't think so... I'd rather be dead. If

I knew this was how it would be from here on out, I would've crashed that ambulance on the way here. You see, there's a reason I can't drink water, why I'm here...

"Every time I... touch water, it's like I'm right back in that watery hell, being pulled under by the heavy, slimy, monster-filled ocean... I even feel it in the cup. I see things in it... well... I don't, but it's like I can. It's like if you're in a dark room with someone else, someone wishing you harm. You can't see, hear, or feel them, but you know someone's there just beyond your senses. It's kind of the same for me. I can't see or feel the water and what was in it, but I can sense it.

"At first, I just ignored it and stopped drinking water. Then it spread to other liquids, and then the shower and baths. I can't even go to the bathroom without a nurse needing to sedate me! Please, please believe me! I don't want to die! I know that if I drink any fluids I'll die! I'd rather die of thirst than be back in that hell! Please! I'm telling the truth..."

Doctor's notes:

Patient is clearly suffering from Aquaphobia, fear of water. While I do think that the 'monsters' and 'the heavy slimy sea' are all likely the brain's way of dealing with the trauma, there is some truth to the patient's claims—mostly their record of employment and residence. However, the patient is missing several things from their account. For one, they were not found two weeks later, but rather three. They were also found unconscious in the water, saved by a fishing boat off the shore of California. Also, once regaining consciousness, they began to ramble in an odd language and doodle strange symbols of no known origin on the walls. The patient attempted to drown themselves several times until the proper authorities were contacted and Brooke taken out of the water. We will do a follow up with Brooklyn Brenna.

Addendum:

A follow-up is in fact impossible. Earlier this month, the patient was discharged from the hospital after being rehydrated and drinking normally, and that same day was reported missing. Their last known location was the ocean, where witnesses say that they were simply walking in, and never came back up.

Dr. Janace A. Mayflower.

The Opponent

by Vaishu Venkata

You reach the starting line and tighten your shoes. You stare straight ahead at your target. Your target is bigger than you. Fiercer than you. Colder. Meaner. Mightier. To defeat your opponent, you'll need all the courage and strength inside you.

"No one said conquering you would be easy," you grimace.

Your jacket blows and flaps as chilly winds yank at the fabric. Your opposer looms over you, growing more threatening by the minute.

"You. Are. Going. Down," you whisper, as vicious as if you were yelling.

You thrust your boots into the enemy, grabbing hold of his lower body and climbing upward. He kicks you this way and that but you cling on. Further and further up, you grip and claw. Your opponent's fury grows, and he screams in a thunderous roar. He lunges at you, throwing you to the ground. You cry and squirm under his mass. He is crushing your lungs, your passageways shrivelling. You gasp, but take in no air.

I can do this, you think, hanging onto that last string of hope. You kick out, shoving your bemused challenger to the side. Even with no air left in you, you stand. You continue to fight. You pound into your opponent, rising faster and more vehemently with each strike, hurling your opponent down again and again.

Smiling cruelly, you continue scaling, your opponent barely able to keep up. It seems like eons have passed. The enemy has tried everything. Shaking you till you get sick, and dropping blow after rock-like blow, upon you. His jaws open so wide, it looks like his cavernous vortex could swallow you whole. Yet nothing has worked. You had everything prepared. So much equipment that it shocked your opponent. You know the journey isn't over, the fight is still incomplete, but you are exhausted. You drink some water and rub your gloved hands together. You take a deep breath of nothing but pure ice and tension and take the final step forward. One last hit and—THUD!

Your foe crashes to the ground before you. You stomp your feet on the ground in the face of your enemy. Grinning down at all the trees, lowly hills and colourful specks representing defeated forerunners below, you pat the snowy, frozen base below you. Taking a small flag out of your pocket, you plant it into the permafrosted soil.

"Hey. Sorry for being so harsh," you apologize to your challenger half-heartedly and pat the base again, as if in a hug of consolation.

You gaze at the misty clouds swirling past and pass your hand through one. Caressing a handful of snow from the top of the mountain, you blow it into the air. The wind flies it back into your face affectionately, as cool, fluffy mist.

"I knew you would forgive me." You sit and look down at the steepness and magnificence of the sheer cliff below.

You've reached the finish line. You retighten your shoes.



The Young Lady's Plight

by Simran Ramkalawan

i hold your hands—bound with rope at the wrists,
with mine, sheathed in the gold and silver you left me centuries ago.
i wear your face, and your children's faces,
and their children's faces,
but as my youth chases liberty my heart flies back in time
to you and your beloved.
sweetest of all mothers, the perfect lady i never can be,
even with a life spent trying.
i wonder, if the world will ever beat the clumsiness from my bones,
if your grace would touch my toes if i set foot onto your grave,
would my dreams ever shrink if i slept upon the songs of my own beratement,
will my mouth shut forever if i drank their disdain like red wine.
i wonder if your wish for me
is what i wish for my weary spirit.

A Dead Mother's Prayer

by Simran Ramkalawan

With my bound hands I encase yours
And hope to be the only thing you will ever be tethered to,
If only by freedom.
You naively run, your henna-stained feet pounding
On whatever you've found to ground you.
You run headfirst into everything
as if you were bigger than life itself.
That boyish lust for liberty,
Lending a hand to the leaps into the dark you so love to take,
Impulses guided by the freedom you know I never had,
A voice dripping with the slightest arrogance of youth,
That drawl gone now as you ask of me my wish for you,
Dear child,

All I ask is that you live a life fuller than my ever
Outpouring heart,
Let your intellect be your altar and grace be your
Treasure, your sweetest surprise,
Kindness and courage, your powers.
And wrap my tether around your heart, tie it
In a bow and delicately unravel it as you age.
For you will live a century and in that
Hundredth year, go with a heart lighter than what
You came with.

Contributor Bios

Allister White is currently a senior high school student. After graduating, Allister plans to realize a lifelong love of telling others' stories by studying Journalism at the University of Regina. Allister enjoys literature that introduces social criticisms in unorthodox ways, with favourites including *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Tender Is The Flesh*.

Amy Zhang is a grade ten student at Walter Murray Collegiate, as well as a pianist, figure skater, artist, and spur-of-the-moment writer. When she is not being chauffeured off to extra-curriculars or doing homework, Amy enjoys writing stories without endings and spending time with family and friends.

Ava Farkas is a grade ten SAGE student at Bedford Road Collegiate. She is almost always practicing whatever sport she decides to join next, but in her free time, she likes reading, writing, listening to music, bribing her cat to like her, and hanging out with her friends.

Callisto Wieler is a grade 12 student at Saskatoon's Evan Hardy Collegiate and an emotionally-devastating poetry enthusiast. Writing has always been a way through the terrifying realities that life has in store for them and they hope that their writing helps put words to any personal struggle their audience has.

Daria Krol is a writer from Saskatoon, SK. She spends most of her time reading and sleeping. She lives with her parents and her dog, Lucy. Her favourite season is autumn, and she owns more knit sweaters than she'd care to count.

Her name is **Emma Elliot**, she's currently 16 years of age and her dream is to run her own comic and animation/movie studio. She was chaotically born prematurely on March 30. She likes writing and drawing. She is working on a novel called *Statue and Plague: The Blood Bound Books*.

Grace Murphy is a grade 12 student at École St. Mary High School. Grace can be found reading, writing, listening to music, or with her friends. Grace hopes to pursue a career in education and in law, while also continuing her passion of writing in as many forms as she can.

Felix Liu is a grade 11 student from Evan Hardy Collegiate who enjoys binging essay collections and penning philosophical musings. When he's not reading or writing, he likes to make video games and listen to overly melancholic pop songs. You can find more of his work at felixrl.me.

Hargun Kaur is currently attending grade 11 in Evan Hardy Collegiate. She loves to read fiction and dystopian novels, her current favourite being the *A Court of Thorns and Roses* series. Her navy coloured walls are her sanctum, and where she spends most of her time cooped up.

Kierah Boison is a grade nine student from Flex Ed. She loves to read and write in her spare time. She hopes to be a well-known writer one day. She enjoys playing and watching basketball, tea, the color blue, and playing with her new puppy. This is her first publication.

Megan Mineau is an 18-year-old student of Flex ED. She loves expressing creativity in all its forms, including piano, art, and of course: writing. She loves learning about history and languages, reading, puns, playing piano, listening to her massive Spotify playlists, and drinking peppermint tea.

Nevin Runnalls is a 16-year-old kid who loves to write. He lives in Caronport, Saskatchewan, an empty place where a blank page is the best entertainment for flat kilometers. Nevin also loves music, especially when he can just pick up an instrument and keep his family awake at 5:00 in the morning. Thankfully, they have forgiven him.

Obii Udemgba is a grade 11 student, avid writing enthusiast, and mixed-media artist currently attending Walter Murray Collegiate. In her spare time, she loves to study architecture, listen to a variety of music genres, and practice acrobatic dance. Her favourite classes are Math and English. This is her first publication.

Paris Belisle is a witty teenager with a fierce sense of humour, who happens to be good with words. He is in grade 11 with hopes of becoming a published poet. Admittedly he is often the *odd man*. Yet isn't uniqueness a quality of remembrance?

Simran Ramkalawan is an Indo-Caribbean author residing in Saskatchewan. Her experiences growing up, and of the those around her, inspire her expression of the written word. She's an avid reader and piano player who spends time with her dog, Venus. She also loves tea.

Stevie Weisgerber is a grade 11 student from small town Vibank, Saskatchewan. Along with music, writing is one of her favourite things to do. It's how she expresses her emotions and understands herself. She uses writing as a way of exploring the world around her and the world inside her head.

Vaishu Venkata is a grade 10 student from Swift Current Comprehensive High School, who loves to play piano, sing, write, read, craft, and paint. She is a science enthusiast and in the future, she aspires to become a doctor and publish a novel.

Thank you to
these schools
for participating
in this issue of
Windscript.

Bedford Road Collegiate

Flex ED School

Walter Murray Collegiate

Centennial Collegiate

Rosetown Central High School

Evan Hardy Collegiate

A.E. Peacock Collegiate

Vibank Regional School

École St. Mary High School

Swift Current Comprehensive High School

Bishop James Mahoney High School

Windscript 2024 Submission Guidelines

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 14, 2023

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 two (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 and be prepared to work collaboratively 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. Editor(s) will communicate with students by email; timely and attentive communication is crucial to the process so students should check their email often.

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:

- All work must be original from start to finish. 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 six poems and two prose pieces (which do not exceed 1500 words each)
- *Windscrip*t does not accept pieces with multiple authors or images.

Guidelines:

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


Email your cover letter and submission as attachments to windscrip magazine@gmail.com with “Windscrip Submission” in the subject line:

What you need to know about your cover letter

- Download and complete the *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form from our website (www.skwriter.com) 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 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.
- Your *Windscrip* Cover Letter Form should be named “First Name Last Name – cover letter”

What you need to know about your submission

- 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 PDF's 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.



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