

PERSPECTIVES

FALL
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FALL 2025 ISSUE

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A literary arts magazine composed of original pieces from
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Gianluca Cacciamani

— *Ill-Defined from Point of View*

The weight in my hand
It shone in my eye.
Flawless, Everchanging
Its burning pressure personally made for me.

The phone in my other palm
I know it from its shape,
Always at the ready
Ever reliable, without failure.
I don't know what else to say
That isn't just a lie
I love my phone so dearly
So very dearly.
I drag my weight
Like my personal mace into battle
Burdensome as is the pain
At least it holds its handlebars out.
It's getting late tonight
In the palace of shapes
It's less a palace, more a store
A Plastic Peace.

Half-Priced Truths are commonly followed.

An ordinary individual approaches from the darkening shadow.
I ignore the approach.
His deep brown eyes glance over at me in malice
His curly black beard bristles in laughter
His sweater with white cords for his hood hides danger from my eyes.

My weight glides into his hand
I give chase to the fiend,
Our steps ripple in the silent pond
I place my hand upon my weight,
He won't let go
He glares at me once more, fate twinkled in his eyes
“It’s either this or the phone,” he said, rather bluntly.
True to his word, the serpent said
My empty hand laid on my side
My mind laid blank; I let him go.
I gave no chase, for I had nothing left to give.
And then there was I and the phone.

When I peered into the glass
It was darker than the night sky
Darker than my Future,
I made my choice.
My burdens are lifted, my back is freed from its chains
I could frolic amok the indistinct road
Or gawk at hazy skies.
Much like the store that had no name
Eternally closed off from the public
no neon signs or bright mascot sights.

I’m tired
Have I been here before?
Where could I sit that isn’t covered in grime
Without my trusty stool.



Sam Casey

— *Midnight Mass*

The pale yellow lights of the church illuminated the snow as it fell in heavy blankets.

One foot in front of the other.

Warm lights filtered through bay windows.

Reds, greens, gold.

He squinted and thought he could see a small face peering out between decorated pine boughs.

Blue eyes flanked by tin soldiers and drummer boys.

Damn, his knee smarted.

She said it was for good this time.

How many more times can you embarrass yourself? Embarrass us?

Wood floors creaked under nervous shoes.

Averted stares.

You can't even hold it together in front of my parents for one night?

A beat.

Well, now what?

One swipe, a couple of shrieks, and he was out the door.

He wondered if they'd do presents.

He spent all that time trying to find those damn batting gloves.

He trudged up the snowy steps.

Green copper Jesus looked down on him from his red brick perch with a serious face.

He chuckled.

Deaths, births, marriages.

He'd probably spent more time at that church than he had at home.

The liquor store was probably closed by now.

He tugged at the ripped knee of his pants.

The warm, familiar feeling of fresh blood tickling at his ankles.

A missed step and he was swapping war stories with a boxwood.

He rolled over on his back, feeling the mysterious warmth of the flakes.

They were those big ones.

The ones kids would make with coffee filters.

A whiff of a memory kicked in the door.

Was it the night they first met?

Something from childhood?

He couldn't recall.

Maybe if he just closed his eyes for a bit.

You alright there, bud?

A black suit with white hair hovered over him.

I'm just trying to close my eyes for a bit, no problem here.

A quizzical look.

Welp, you could freeze out here, you know.

The thought had crossed my mind, I suppose.

A gnarled hand grabbed him by the collar, while another took his hand.

Say, you don't think the liquor store's still open, do you?

The hand guided him to the snow-covered railing.

Tonight? I would assume not.

They held hands as they trudged through the heavy drifts.

A five-year-old guided by a parent.

The car sank as he fell into the front seat.

Doors screeched, and the ignition struggled and fired.

The old wreck must've been as old as his driver.

Maybe he was born in it.

St. Christopher of The Dashboard saluted him as the heat slowly began to filter in.

You know, you're lucky. We just finished up midnight mass.

He stared through the fogged window.

He was a million miles away.

Say, uh, you got someplace I can take you?

He rooted through his pockets for his phone.

Glass fragments jabbed at his fingertips.

He stopped looking.

Maybe we just sit here for a minute.

The car reeked of incense.

In his first year as an altar boy, he worked the Christmas Mass.

Those special red holiday robes.

He was lucky he had the red robe on, cause as soon as the priest started going into it with the wine and the host, his nose started bleeding all over the place.

Well, if you haven't got a place to go, you're welcome with me for tonight anyway.

He nodded absently.

Sure.

He had the kids tomorrow, but they would probably sleep in anyway.

— *Take Me Home*

He stumbled through the door, kicking his shoes across the hall.
She was waiting.

When he still had a job, they'd head down to Sunny's and blow the
whole wad on top-shelf stuff.

Twenties changed into singles.

Explosions of laughter bounced off tired walls, while sad songs blared
from jukeboxes faded yellow with cigarette smoke.

She wasn't fun anymore. He told her as much.

He zoomed through the blackness, punctuated by the odd glow of a
streetlight every so often.

Grabbing a bottle from the passenger seat, he downed what was left
and tossed it.

She'd probably call her sister.

He cursed under his breath and rubbed his throbbing knuckles.

Crisp air cut through the open window, making his eyes watery.

He wiped them with the back of his hand.

Beams flashed through bleary eyes. A scream from behind them
broke the silence.

He yanked the wheel hard.

The car skidded into a muddy culvert and slammed into an old pine.

Voices and lights brought him to.

Hands worked at the mangled door.

“Don't worry Bud, hospital's just down the road.”

The sky had opened, heavy drops loosening the matted blood in his
hair.

“Just take me home.”

Claire Leone

— *Do It Scared*

I don't know what I'm searching for.

I don't know why I bother looking, sometimes.

But I do know—

I want to create,
I want to breathe again.

I want to live.

And what's worse— I want it scared.

I don't care anymore,
I wish I did.

But now I'm just sick.
I'm sick of being
sick and
tired and
weary and
wandering
and ill.

How much longer can I stare up at the sky,
my scars barely holding my head to my body,
stretching me to the point of pain?

I am sick of conforming to other people's standards.
I want to live.

I refuse to go,
not now,
not when I don't know where to go.
But I know it's not here.
not now.

Not when I don't know who to be.

All I hear is the best advice I've ever heard,
chanting in my head,
in an endless echochamber:

do it unassured.
do it unsecured.
do it scared.

If I'll be hurt either way
then hurt good,
hurt well,
hurt,
and love,
and leave,
and ache,
and heal,
and grow,
and bloom,
and flourish

scared.



Shannon Martin

— *Summer of '19*

Remember the time we were alone?
When Mom and Dad were across the pond,
Where green hills roll like lazy waves,
And three old souls back home
Wore the faces of adults.

We would sit outside
In the humid heat of the day,
Conspiring where we would go.
If only the gas tank was full,
Then we might have run away
And left the thick cloud of memories
Looming over our home.

When the sun would set
And our adventures would stop,

We would feed ourselves
Just as Mom showed us how.
Flour first, beat the eggs to a rich yellow,
The chicken flops from one bowl to the next
Until it reaches the oven.

We were such different people.
He would pace the backyard
While you frowned through the window,
Frustrated that despite the three of us,
Only you and I were really there.

We felt so grown with your license
Bringing us around the island,

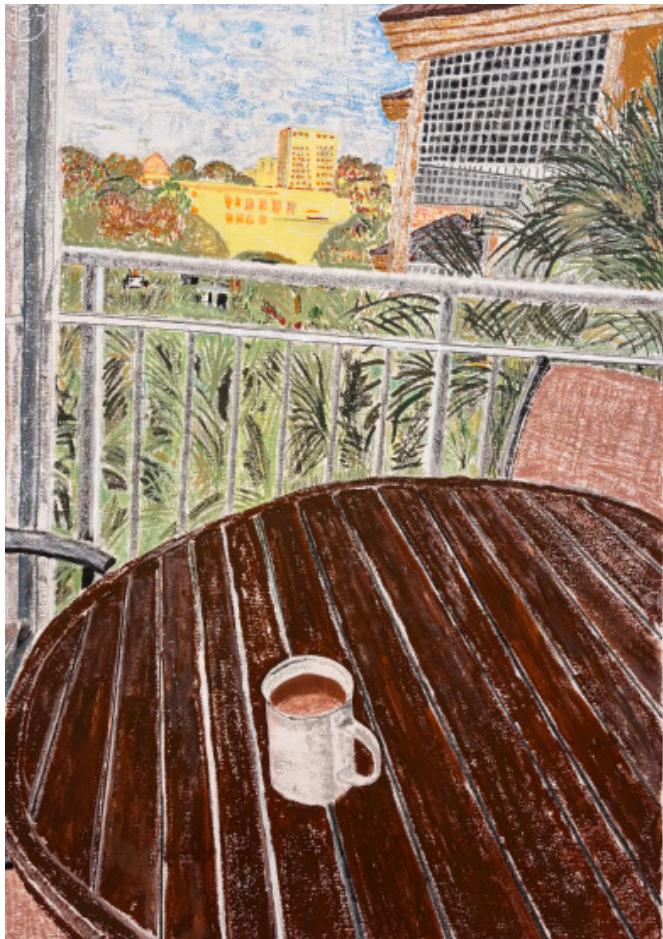
Finding paths already paved but new to us
And our hearts full of excitement.

It's the same island, the same roads.

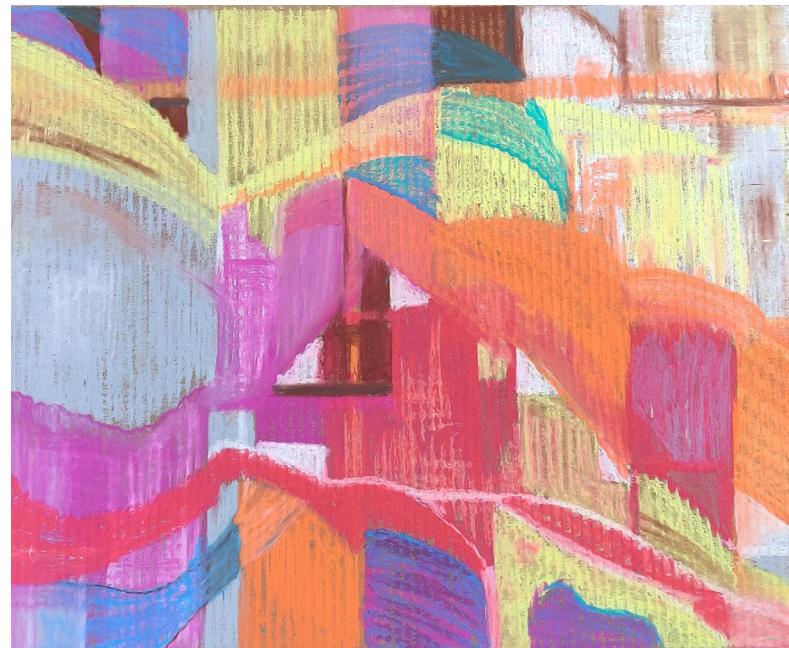
We're still the same people,
But now he's the one I talk to,
He's the one I laugh with.
You're still here, I see you,
But you aren't the same.
She holds your heart in her hands,
Shaking with the same excitement
That you brought me
When you'd ask
"Want to go somewhere?"

Mariam Munawar

— Vacation



— *City Vibes*



— *Sharp*



— *Mystery Object*





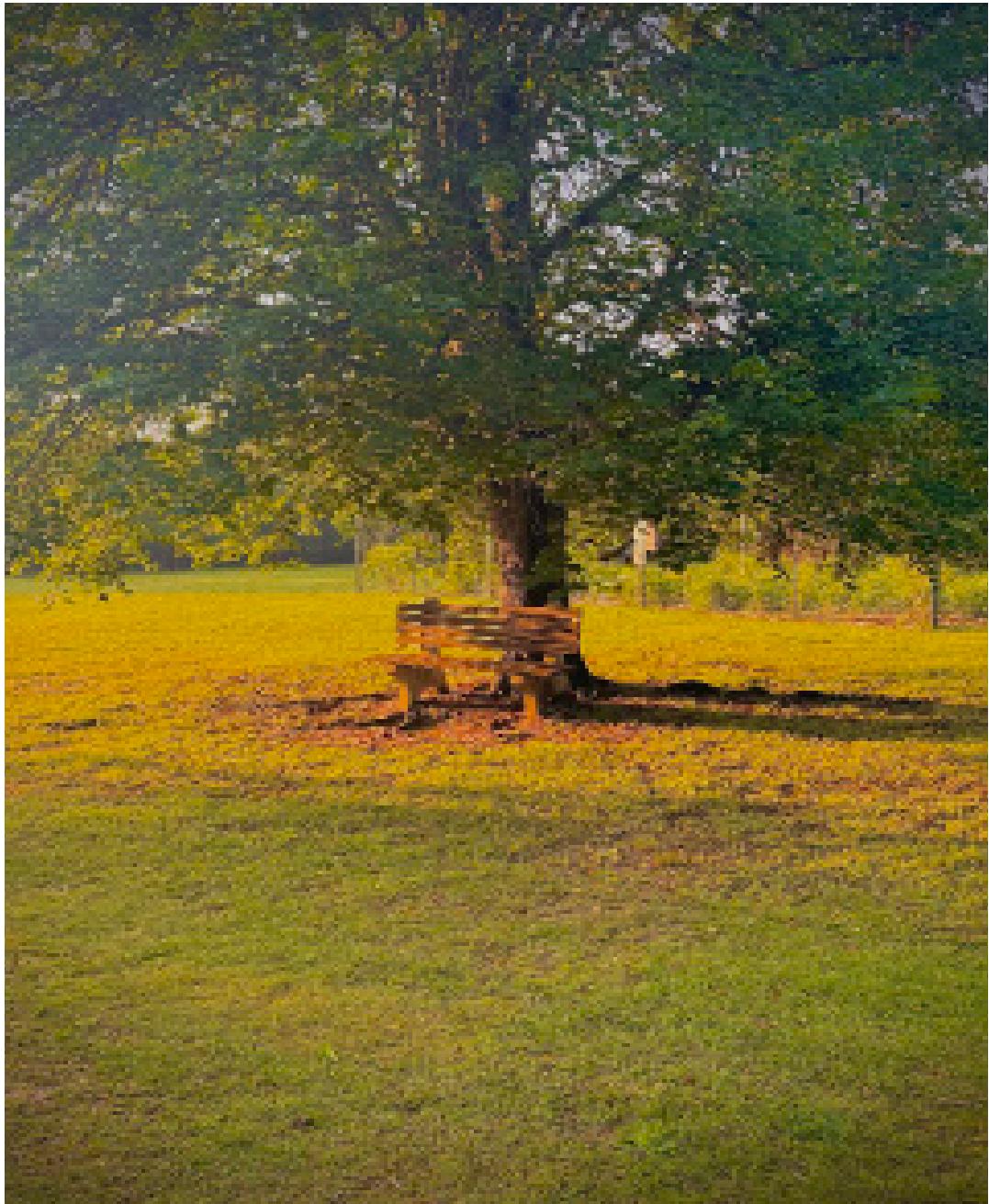
— *RIGHT*

— *ROCKSTAR*

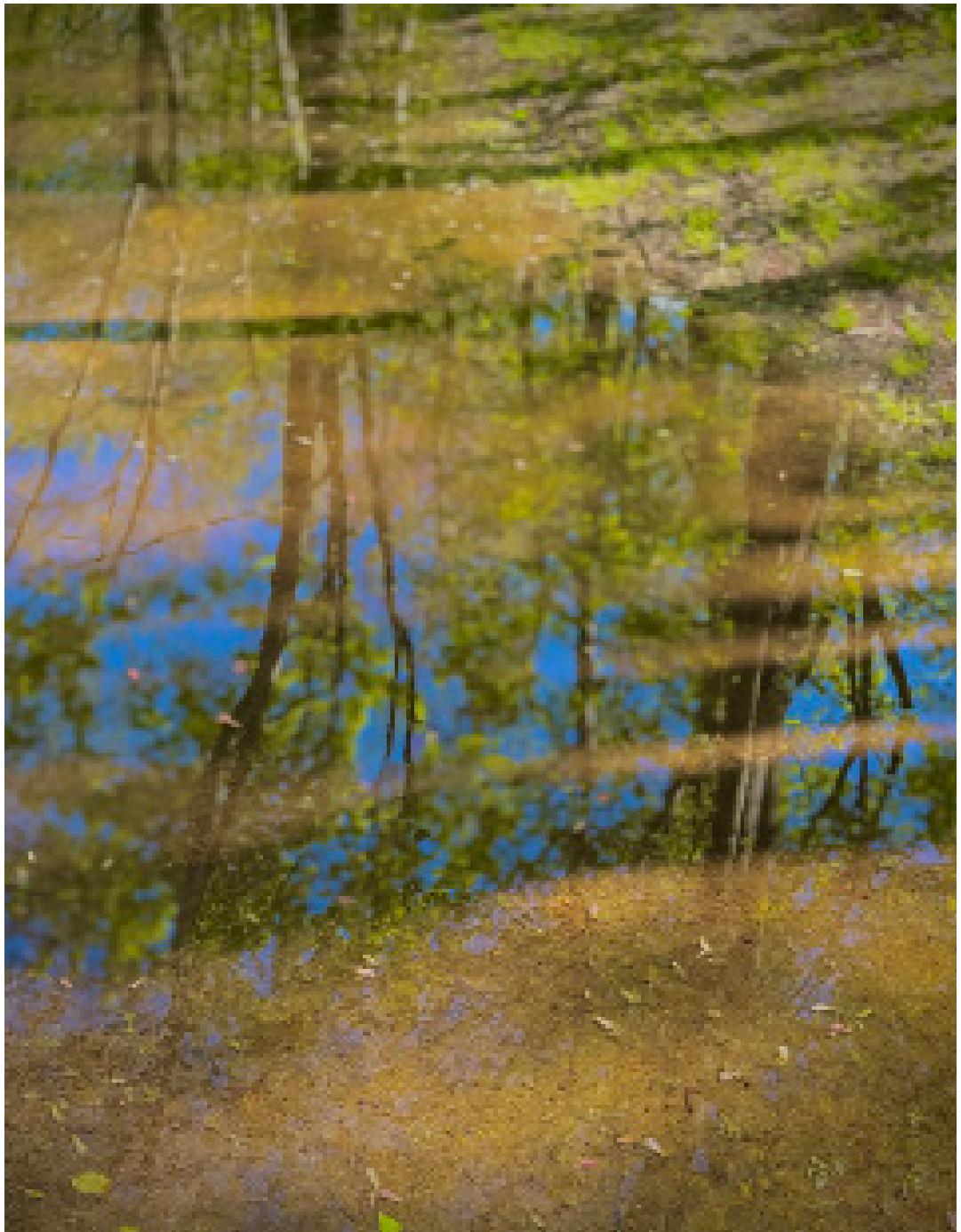


Christopher Orellana

— Lone Bench



— *Reflection*



Jack Parente

—It Don't Mean Nothin': A Vietnam War Poem

Everybody said it. We said it a lot, especially when we were miserable, which was pretty much all of the time we were in the field, which was pretty much all of the time.

We said it when it rained, and when it didn't rain, and when it was hot, and when it was hotter. We said it when we were hunters, and when we were prey. It summed it all up, everything, the shit philosophy of our shit lives. "It don't mean nothin."

We said it because we thought it made us sound tough. We said it to keep from crying. We said it most because we feared it might be true. We said it when we stopped for a break and bloodsucking mosquitoes attacked in swarms, and our faces swelled and our hands swelled, and our lips swelled, and our ears swelled and we thought about getting malaria, and about how good that would be unless you died from it. But the chance of escaping the jungle was worth the risk and we ditch the pills. Why not? It can't get worse, right? What are they gonna do? Send us to 'Nam? It don't mean nothin' man. Nothin'.

We said it when dried sweat left white streaks of salt on our jungle fatigues, the ones we wore until they sent clean ones, maybe eight days, maybe less, maybe more. Last stop for those used shabby hand-me-down faded green GI baggies with some other guy's nametag sewn across the pocket. Torn and ragged after one day in the bush and disintegrating in three. Caked with a mixture of mud, sweat, bug juice, and gun oil, sometimes stained with red-brown blotches from blood-swollen leaches popped red and wet and puffed up with our blood, crushed as we twisted and turned on Hell's rocky ground in our quasi-sleep, but it don't mean nothin'.

We said it the day a 122mm rocket blew up the mess tent and a VC suicide sapper destroyed the firebase command bunker killing the Colonel and his entire staff, blowing them to bits and burying what little remained under tons of steel plates and sandbags. Sucks about the

officers we said, and no chow while the mess tent's burning, but it don't mean nothin', man. Never did. Never will.

— *On Smoking Weed: A Story of Loss*

Echo/Recon 1/7 1stAirCavDiv

Loc: Hill 54/LZ Strike

Lat.11.037599 Long.106.879506

Bien Hoa Province, South Vietnam >0600 03Mar69

I remember carrying our three dead brothers back from the observation post after wrapping them in green GI ponchos to keep their body parts together, and bringing them to the top of the hill to lie with the other eight dead men, and having to go through all of their personal stuff. I found a big bag of primo smoke in Bernie's blood-soaked shirt pocket. He always had weed. I had been too afraid to smoke with him unless we were behind the wire but at that point in our tour Bernie was stoned all the time. I didn't want my best friend to get busted after he was dead so I wiped off the blood and stuffed the weed and his cob pipe into my pocket.

We went through everything, collecting 1st Cav wallets covered in blood and photo albums and plastic bags of letters from home and pictures of girlfriends, Zippo lighters, wrist watches, glasses, wedding rings, cameras, Saint Christopher medals. We took it all and tried to clean it up a little before we packed it into their rucks and backlogged it to Phouc Vinh where our company clerk would ship the personal items to the next of kin.

I remember those vicious black ants – “Death Ants” someone called them – crawling all over our brothers’ faces into their eyes and ears and noses. I remember smoking a lot of Bernie’s weed to make the nightmare stop, but it didn’t stop, so I smoked more weed and it got worse. I remember stumbling through the smoking rubble completely stoned, searching for people who were no longer there. I remember sitting on the blood-soaked top of that fucking hill talking with our brothers until the dust-off choppers came and took them

away. Now they're dead, gone forever.

I remember feeling both very guilty and very relieved it wasn't me lying on the cold metal floor of that Huey wrapped up in a green poncho, but now, seeing my own future, I began to understand that I would never leave Vietnam alive. That was when I gave up hope. Living through the battle of Hill 54 was nothing but dumb-ass luck. Sooner or later the law of averages would catch up and my luck would run out. If it didn't happen tonight, it would happen tomorrow.

I saw that death cancels all fear and I began to understand the true meaning of what we all said over and over. "It don't mean nothin'" Eventually, I came to accept being killed in combat as my unavoidable and inevitable fate. Eventually, it just didn't seem to matter that much. After that, I never smoked weed while we were in the bush. Just that one time.

— *Davis Park Ferry,
Fire Island*



Tayler Bourne

— *Reminder*

ache for you only in temporary
fragmented internally
but only in temporary.
in some weeks time without any warning-
be realigned. stitched up
cut from noose
gathered again. reverse
weight-dropped and tidy.
no pang, but a murmur
a doubted echo
vanished to the depths of me
recalled only shamefully
in weakness of longing
in mourning. humbled
by buzz of our
half-hearted entanglement.

Rue Rafique

— *A Protector's Vow*

"O my sister!

No shadows can claim

Two flames of the morning star

When the world forgets me

And my voice, long silent

I will still shout your name

To the wind

So that the clouds will revere

The one cut from my own rib."

Lisa Anne Reiss

— *Fade*

*Everything fades,
Even the stars.
Their light just takes time
To dim.
It could take thousands,
Millions,
Of years, but we? We fade fast.
Memories,
Lives,
Friendships.
It all sweeps
Past us. In the fast lane
Speeding
By.
Now I can't even tell you
How much you meant to me
Because you're gone.
I can't
Catch
My
Breath.*

*Time moves,
Speeds.
It's fleeting.
Can't it fade like the stars do?
Taking years and years?
I look back.
It hurts to look there.
I can't stay.
I want this to last forever, but
I know it won't.
It's futile to wish for it
Because it's
Fading
Away
Fast.*

Rain Rook

— *eternalsunshine.pdf*

How beautiful is it that birds
SING!!!!

How beautiful is it that the sun
HAS RISEN!!!

PESTICIDE ON THE GRASS TODAY;
PLEASE USE THE SIDEWALK!
HOLY CRUEL PESTICIDE
SAVE US!

DESTROY WHAT IS DEEMED DISGUSTING AND UGLY!

DESTROY WHAT IS DEEMED
UNFAVORABLE AND UNPLEASANT!
RAINBOWS CAN
SURELY EXIST WITHOUT
RAIN;

How beautiful is a butterfly in comparison to a FUCKING SPIDER!!!
How beautiful is joy in comparison
to FUCKING DESPAIR!!!!

a little bug chimes in:
“But how can one appreciate
The absence of suffering
If suffering did not exist
in the first place?”

stomp that fucker to death don’t think about that don’t think about
that we must be happy be happy always always
BE HAPPY! NO BUGS IN THE GRASS TODAY!

“Thank You Pesticide”

organic human experience polluted by a theoretical concept of our
very own a pesticide a nonexistent reality in which we are to sit and
obey and eat and sleep and fuck be happy happy always always always
there is no use for tears now tears are worth as much as the value they
have for us for you for everybody and yet

i look out of my window and i cry for my fellow people
i cry for souls
trapped in a maze
trapped in perfect little geometrical prisons
trapped in the mind
trapped in samsara
trapped in contracts
trapped in binding shoes
trapped in insatiable desire
for more and better and more and better and more and
better and more and better and more and better and
more and better

i cry and i feel the pain that allows joy to exist

i cry and my tears are the rain that creates rainbows

i cry and i know that everything is as it should be

it is an HONOR!

—RJ11

one partly cloudy thursday evening you misdial a number through
human error and the living breathing blinking conscious mass of
flesh of which the ten digits have been assigned to responds,

“hello? who is this?”

who is this?

if you dove deep into your soul and hid, who would find you? what
if you are not meant to be found, perhaps you are, perhaps you must
find yourself, perhaps you mustn’t hide in the first place, why are you
hiding in the first place? what is it that you hide from?

the cruel fault of extancy is that you must battle the self and the collective simultaneously, but surely you are not alone, lonely in a world full of people, does it not seem selfish at all? how could you feel so alone? how could you do this to yourself? how could you forget? how COULD you?

are you alone because not even you can define yourself after all the time you've spent in your own body and soul and mind? are you really "you" or a mirage constructed to present to the masses? are you truly aware of your "real" self beneath the surface? are you a liar to yourself and others? are you living in a facade? are you pretending? are you tired of pretending?

have you forgotten to remember?

what are you? why are you? who are you?

"hello?"

hello.

"is anyone there?"

is there?

"can you hear me?"

can they hear you?

tap click end call dial tone synapse spark oven ding ding ding dinner is ready and you successfully suppress your urge to stick your head in the oven like a good dog

scene 1 scene 2 scene 3 intermission

Anthony Spaeth

— *Mt. Absurdity*

“It hurts, hurts, and hurts... What exactly? I do not know.
Doubtful, but certain. Imprisoned, yet somehow free.
Invisible tears running down my cheeks, weeping only never to be
heard.

All action feels illogical. Always feeling naked...
Sitting in a room made of my thoughts... shivering... Oh, how frigid are
my thoughts!

Slowly awakening, greeted by the sounds of this forsaken world, I slip
back into solitude...
Not the solitude of being alone (for I enjoy great company here), but
the solitude experienced by being around others- isolated.
Infinitely divisible but finite.
Climbing a mountain without any summit to reach.

Oh, the absurd!”

Anthony Taveira

— *Portão*





— *Espigueiro Sagrado*

— *Adoração das Montanhas*





— Adoração de
Ídolos

Asmin Singez

— One Moment

what remains of me in you
might explode.

Not in flame,
but in quiet
in the space where my echo
slept.

But it may not.
What stays
is only my reflection,
not the soul it cast.

You clung to a shape
I once wore
like habit wears skin,
but that was never
truth.

My form is fluid
a traveler that ignores
the patterns
you called home.

The cycle?

It has spilled its karmas
into a sealed box
centuries ago,
from a choice
too old to remember
but still
etching its way
through the skin
of inheritance.

And if a break comes
know this:
it was always part
of the
Trace.

Anthony Taveira

— *Barnacle*

John,

Does the air feel different out West? I've always heard people say that the heat is "dry" over there, but I can't imagine how you would feel the difference. It has to be at least a little similar.

I know you were set on leaving. Can we admit, though, that it was all a bit sudden? You left some of your books at my house— those corny thriller novels you can get at the dollar store— and I have a few of your shirts. I'm not sure if you understand what a wreck you've left behind.

Do you still think about the night we met? I was a mess and trying to hide it, and you were drunk before I showed up. When we took a walk on the pier you asked to hear the ugliest things about me. I didn't understand why you wanted to hear them.

You were never fully here nor there. You stayed in my periphery, begging for my attention until I'd give it to you. Then you wouldn't want it anymore. I know you told me to write, but I think that was selfish. It's easier to sit miles away, red sand spilling into your shoes, and read my thoughts by lamplight. You force me to sit here and ruminate, putting all this intention into a penstroke when you couldn't even look me in the eyes.

I think you always knew what I was going to say and chose to distance yourself from it.

When the job offer came through, you were ecstatic. I'd never seen you so happy, not even that night on the dock when salt ruined your hair and left you looking lazy. You performed regrets about leaving me, but you were never that good of an actor. Don't think that I didn't catch this.

Do you remember the way that I hounded you for details? I was voracious in this, and you were evasive. Maybe you hoped I'd hold onto figments of you, that I'd paint you as something more innocent in

retrospect. As though the particles of us haven't kept me up at night.

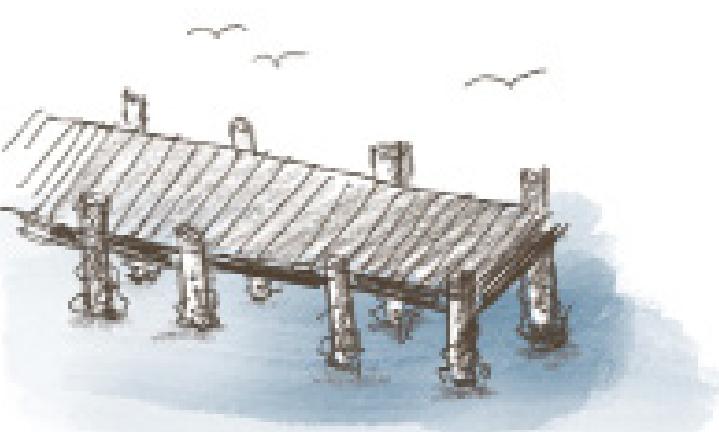
I've been debating whether I rip apart this letter entirely. Part of me wants to pretend I'm more like you and leave you guessing. I could be something that moves on its own, find a new ocean, and I wouldn't have to rely on a shell to hold me together. You might notice the corner of the first page bent where I considered it, but I couldn't follow through.

I could feel our dynamic rearranging itself. It wasn't anything you said, rather the way you moved like a recluse. How in the weeks leading up to it you started to lean away from me. You texted less, our calls were shorter. I was an idiot, and I deluded myself.

There was something intoxicating about being near to you. I don't want to write that- I fear your ego doesn't need it. But it felt impossible to pry myself away. I stuck around until I thought you didn't even like me, until you only touched me if you wanted to have me.

Fastened to you as though you were that wooden structure jutting out into the ocean, I let wave after wave break against my face, and I endured each one. Now, thoroughly battered and lying on the shore, I review all these details that happened between us. Do you reflect as well? Or do these thoughts pass through you?

You don't have to write me back. I won't answer. Just do me a favor and pay attention to the way sand shifts under your feet.



Evan

Laiba Usman

— Lost Stars

I met you with stars in my eyes,
the patience of a saint.

Your sarcastic remarks came across as charming
while your unimpressed glares proposed a challenge
to overcome. Your pain resembled something like a gate.
Something we could stroll past with satisfied smiles
and our hands intertwined, but I never could've guessed
what would lie beyond that line. Beyond your irritation was darkness,
an anger you never confronted. I was a fool to address it, yet I was
relentless.

Nights spent trying to keep you alive through your highs
had been paired with mornings drinking my favorite coffee,
drowning in sweet compliments. Weeks with unanswered calls
followed by frightening screams never compared to blissful days
spent loving each other with words sugar coated in praise.
All those years I had thought of myself strong until I wasn't.
Until I returned your promise engraved on a silver band,
representing plans we were always too young to guarantee.
I thought it was weak of me to no longer believe
in you, but it was the strongest I'd ever been, leaving
instead of trying to see it through.

Now that years have passed, I look at you with dry eyes full of ice,
the patience of someone who's been sitting in traffic for the past
decade.

I find myself fixed in unimpressed glares,
spewing pessimistic remarks.

I look at myself and am met by someone bitter,
resembling the man I once knew
and I can't even imagine anyone
wearing the same stars I once gave you.

— *Wedding Bells that Call Us*

Three years of effort, to rebuild what we lost.
To make something of all I had left.
I resent the crisp invitation in hand
inviting me to a ceremony, I'd only
ever dreamt of for myself. And I continue
to resent the flowers and name holders,
the white chrysanthemums, included
by the bride who wouldn't have known
better. I resent the beauty of it all, knowing
you would have appreciated it. You
with your decade old Nikon D camera
would've wasted the night taking
pictures instead of speaking to any guests.
And I find myself wasted on the lack of oxygen
instead of the champagne I used to enjoy.
Attempt after attempt, my lungs fail me
as I fail them, stepping out for a cigarette.
I focus my eyes on the end of the stick as
I attempt to light it amidst the harsh winds,
But the flame cannot reach it when it's pushed away.
The last thing I expect when I look up is to find you
standing in the dark, outside of what is actually
a bright venue. You stare at me dumbfounded
in your black slacks and wrinkled white button up.
You stare with your stubbornly certain eyes
while your mouth trembles like the fearful man you are.
Three years ago, I thought it would be us here
and your shirt would be ironed, you
would've even agreed to wear your cross while I
would've worn white instead of pink.
Instead of standing before one another
in the dark night, we'd be standing together

surrounded by white dahlias. You'd look happy
instead of regretful and I'd be fearless instead of haunted.
Yet we stand against harsh winds in the darkness
with no words to offer one another,
with no light or life to reach one another.
I look at your washed out hazel eyes,
thinking of what a perfect color it would make for a ring.
Perhaps my own eyes
could've resembled the bronze wedding bells
had you come home.

Mariam Munawar

*— May Be
Cinderella May
Be Someone Else*



Samantha Wund

— *In the Gallery*

I think that it is romantic
in a poetic way
how you were born just after Dalí had died
like the two of you were
almost
meant to exist together
similar to how you and I
almost
existed together, too
yes, I know he is not a good person
yes, now I know that
you really aren't either.
That is not the point...
Or is it?
looking at the art
we only remember how it
makes us feel, in the moment
we do not see the
cruel person behind the brush
despite the message being clear,
The Persistence of Memory
endures and endures
however not evenly
“to each his own,” we say
but what a lonely life
a skewed, scared perception; hurt.
Why do we idealize?



— *A Book About Letting Go*

An unexpected encounter,
on the 18th of December-
that was the start of my final chapter...

no heroes, no villains;
nor a fairytale ending;
no white horse, no carriage;
no bride, no groom, no wedding;
no home, no children;
at least there will be memories-
of love and laughter;
then the storm that came after-
leaving a broken picture frame
once holding our now shattered dreams.

I will pick up the pieces,
I will take away their meaning,
I see now, despite the tears;
that I could die happy
knowing I have faced my biggest fears.

The end.

— *Grief*

I must have gotten hungry
through the night; I think that I
got up and sleepwalked into the garden
to eat the stones again.

Today I awoke,
carrying all of this extra weight
in my stomach,
and in my chest.

I must have choked on a piece,
gotten it lodged in my throat.
I can still feel it there-

John A. Yeomans I

— *Creation*

Creation

Before anything stirred,
before breath or boundary,
a Thought awakened—
alone in a cradle of formless night.

It reached into the void
and whispered, Am I alone?
But emptiness is a patient god,
and answered only with silence.

Long ages drifted without motion,
until Time—unbidden, unborn—
uncoiled itself from nothing.

Thought beheld it and asked,
What is this river with no source,
this road without an end?

Darkness kept its secrets.

Time moved.

Darkness deepened.

And from their quiet struggle
Light erupted—
a single breath defying the abyss.

Thought trembled before it.

Seeing Light, seeing Darkness,
seeing Time,

Thought dared the oldest question:
Who am I?

Then, from everywhere
and nowhere at all,
a Voice rolled through the void—
a sound like shattered stillness,
a silence louder than thunder:

“Have Wisdom.”

Thought held that word
as one holds fire—
learning its shape,
feeling its weight,
knowing it came from something
vast and unnamed.

Ages spiraled onward.

Thought watched the newborn world
as Light and Dark made their borders.

And when Light burst again
and scattered creation like sparks,
Thought found itself woven
into living forms—
beast and leaf, wing and water.

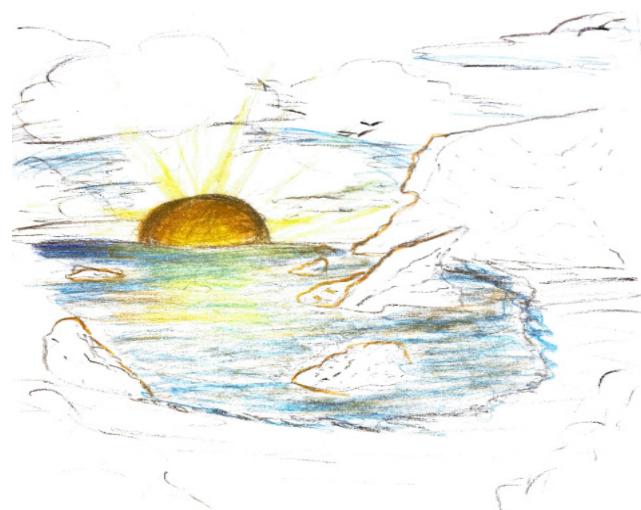
But it was Man
whose mind opened wide enough
for Thought to rest within,
to grow roots, to bloom questions.

And so, through Man,
Thought asked once more,
softly, endlessly,

Who am I?

No answer came.

Only the memory
of that first command
rising from the deep:
Have Wisdom.



John A. Yeamans III

— *Muted Music:* *Inspired by Radiohead's* *"Lift"*



William J. Yeamans

— Earl Grey

“Tea, please,” said the man. He smiled at the kind elderly woman in front of him. She turned her frail body and began heating the water.

“Just over for tea today?” she asked. She suspected he may have come with an issue on-hand as he usually did, and she observed his uneasiness. She looked up at her grandson—older now—and returned his smile. She was a woman of magnificent beauty, soft eyes and comforting presence. He relaxed, knowing that nothing could betray him here, lowered his gaze and rested his shoulders accordingly.

“Actually, something has been bothering me. And I can’t quite shake it off.” She lifted an eyebrow and beckoned him: (“Go on,”). “You see,” he continued, “I don’t know anything.” At this, he felt long relief come over him and he appropriately sighed.

She chuckled at once and found his wandering eyes. She said: “Silly boy! What ever do you mean?” It seemed to her that he already knew the answer.

“I mean, I suppose that, well, I’m not so sure actually,” he stopped and scrunched his brows. “I guess that it seems... somehow wrong, or backwards, that I’ve learned all my life, and the more I learn, the more I realize that I don’t know much of anything.”

“Isn’t that funny how it happens? It sure is a mystery,” she said.

“Yeah,” he replied, “I figured that you know a lot, so you could probably help.”

“Ha-ha! You’re probably right,” she spoke softly and turned to steep the tea. “Milk or cream, my dear?”

He looked up and thought for a moment “Um,” and then, “milk please. Just a splash.” She smiled and carefully poured, placed gently the piping tea in front of him. He watched the steam dissipate into the open room, swirling and thinning—thinning and swirling.

Eventually he sipped, and warmth came over him. “Thanks,” he said. He could feel the comfort in his hands. “You know, just being

here is a blessing.” She smiled greatly, and felt her own tea warm at her fingertips. They now sipped in unison.

“So now,” she said, “Back to your question then?” He looked up, as though waking from a daze. Oh yeah! That question! He had, for a while, forgotten those troubles.

— *Tidings From the Rain*

It was hot enough;
Enough so that you poured,
Or, firstly,
Felt the need to.
Drops
Felt by skin—
They’re gentle drops:
Cool and refreshing;
Calmly resting upon the earth,
And never falling from it.

From where do you fall? said I.
“From the air,” said they.
We thus continued:
And where shall you land? asked I.
“Why, nowhere,” answered they.

And so,
The reviving drops,
They braise our gentle skin,
Filling us so!
With that indescribable feeling:
That unfading appreciation,
For he who sits tirelessly above,
Counting upon each beloved hair
Which stands to absorb the gifted rain
And put it to good use!
While the surplus drip-
Drip-drips onto the earth,
Also to be embraced
And thoroughly accepted.

Beautiful Incongruences:



*Those wonderful moments when
the unexpected blooms amidst the ordinary*

— *A Letter from the Editor:*

Dear Community,

I hope that you are all well acquainted with Perspectives by now, this lively literary edition, bursting with color and with many stories to tell. I would like to thank all of you, both contributors and readers, for stories are only as good as those who read them, and I sincerely extend my gratitude to all of you. Thank you all for helping bring this issue and these stories to life.

I could tell easily from our early meetings and events that we would have a wonderful crew for this issue, and that, we most certainly did. I have been so delighted to share a creative space with this wonderful team of editors and all of you contributors. This issue in the making has been a journey filled with new and familiar faces, valuable lessons, and plenty of hard work along the way.

It did not take very long for this issue to come out of the idea stages and make it onto this paper. We had more submissions than we knew what to do with, and we are thus very happy with our selected pieces; we do hope that you all enjoy. We intentionally selected art works and written pieces that range in wide variety: ceramic displays, vibrant artwork, poetry and prose, all bold and imaginative.

Without any further ado, we are very excited to share this Fall's edition of Perspectives. It is only a small piece of our appreciation, expressed here, completely in color, and in the form of literature. I would like to thank with uttermost gratitude, our advisor, Leanne Warshauer, for guiding and supporting this creative process all the way through. This next section of the magazine is dedicated to all of the most wondrous elements of life. Here, we find community. We learn to know and love each other through challenge, and at times, through hardship as well. Let us accept these mere challenges as adventures and embrace such hardships as opportunities— opportunities to grow, like flowers up from the pavement, a beautiful incongruence made manifest in us all. Let us embody the unique harmony of that which contradicts, but all the same exposes the most vulnerable of clarities: love, light, and all in its likeness.

— My sincerest gratitude,
William Joseph Yeamans

Amanda Albrecht

— *Ego*

The disbelief of the obvious
Because it does not involve you.
A conscious decision to be without you.
Not out of ignorance, but for choice.
Because they do not want you.
Maybe a part of them does
But in the end,
You are not part of the bigger picture
And therefore, not needed.

An artist choosing colors
Carefully, purposefully
To paint the canvas.
You are there on the palate.
And yet not on the material.
You scream at them
Listing all the reasons
Why you deserve to be there
Why they are making a mistake.
Yet in the end,
You dry up
Unused, untouched.
You put yourself on the palate
Time and time again.
Yet the layers pile up
Because it is not your art
And you are not their choice.

Then one day,
You peel yourself off
And get your own palate.



You fill it with different shades of yourself
And other colors you love
Working together to create your own picture.

Stand back and admire it
Notice the countless strokes
And unrefined texture
Remember the layers you built
And those moments of patience
as they slowly dried
Aching for more of your touch
Leaving the paint undoubtable
In its beauty and purpose.

Lastly,
As you notice and reflect,
Realize you are not only the paint,
But the artist too.

Alexis Tenek — *Fragments of Yesterday*

Failure: a failing to perform a duty or expected action.

Perseverance: doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

Uncertainty: it sent me down a long path of the unknown. The consequences of my actions were shining brightly in my face like a flashlight. The world around me turned black and white. The day finally came when that dreadful email showed up from Professor Thornton. All that hope, whatever was left at least, vanished quickly into the dreadful air. The punch in my gut felt so strong. The email said that I failed the final and did not pass my class. Suddenly, in front of

me were two separate roads. One on the left and one on the right. My feet, which felt like hundred-pound weights, stood on the ground frozen in time. Which path should I take? My hands were shaking. Time was moving fast but slow all at once. Should this journey continue for me or end? The smell of failure was strong. It smelt like rotten food. "Would you like to retake these nursing classes in the fall?" said Professor Thornton. "Take the classes again?" I thought in my head. "Does she not understand how much it took out of me to take these classes the first time?" I said to myself in a scorned voice. So, with a heavy achy heart, my decision was made. My last email back to Professor Thornton was sharp and quick. "No, I do not want to continue with the nursing school program in the fall" I explained. Then, shutting my laptop in disbelief, my heavy feet slowly walked to my room. The dark figure in the corner of the room was bigger than ever before.

In the distance, there was a long tunnel. The tunnel had bright light shining out of it. The light told me that everything would be okay, but in time. Yes, the failure was heavy, but it didn't kill me. It took a few years to get those shackles off my feet. That dark shadow in the corner of my room finally started to fade away. "This has to stop!" I said to myself. No longer were people going to look at me and feel sorry. This bright light was the hope that had me fighting on. That little devil on my shoulder whispering in my ear, "You failed once you will fail again" was not going to discourage me anymore. "One day it will get better" was a constant loop playing in the back of my mind.

Then, out of all that failure something new started to grow inside of me. As if I was a flower sprouting up out of the ground for the first time in the spring. It felt like someone planted me in a dark hole, and it took years for me to finally blossom. Finally, there seemed to be a light at the end of this dark long tunnel. Like the sun shining in the sky and feeling the warmth on your skin.

What does it truly mean to persevere? To persevere means doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success. I'd consider myself to be very resilient and that has helped me before in the past. With my new-found light and hope for the future, I put all the failure

behind me for good. And then, this past June my daughter Ezra was born. Ezra was a little surprise, but not a mistake. My daughter is now my new-found light. Watching her grow every day has given me so much appreciation and hope for the future. That dark shadow in the corner of my room has turned into laughter and joy. The night my daughter was born turned out to be life changing. The fear of failure lingered around in my mind still. Yes, failing nursing school was one thing, but I couldn't fail as a mother. Being a mom is something I've always wanted. When my daughter smiles it reminds me that I'm a good mom. My room, which used to be filled with loneliness and darkness, has now been replaced with the sweet sound of my daughter cooing. Her cooing to me sounds like fresh morning coffee being poured, or the taste of something sweet like candy. The dark shadowed figure in the corner of my room doesn't haunt my nights anymore. After five years, finally, it was time for me to get serious. Looking at myself in the mirror saying, "It's now or never". Now, I had a reason to not only fight on but not give up. So, it all brings me back to my original question. If we could go back in time, would we? I'm glad to have gone through all that failure. If that failure never happened, my daughter Ezra would have never existed. My life wouldn't be the same without her. So yes, failing nursing school had a purpose all along.

So, we must accept failure as a part of life, to move forward. We shouldn't let it define us. It took years to finally find myself again after being consumed with so much anger, and what could have been. When you put your whole being into accomplishing something, you really can achieve it. I wanted to be like an archer that shot bullseye repeatedly. I was running away from my imperfect self, instead of embracing my shortcomings. The biggest blessing out of all of this was my daughter Ezra. When I finally finish my associates degree, I'll look back on all of this and laugh. I'll be proud of myself that I didn't give up. Things might have looked bad. It seemed like the end of the tunnel for me, but little did I know, my new journey in life was just getting started. The bright light at the end of the tunnel is still shining and it is brighter now than ever before.

William J. Yeamans

— *Wildflower*

Watch her dance with the wind;
Lost in the flowing of coriolis strides.
With elegant strokes below the midnight moon,
a Wildflower blooms in the dead of night.

She moves in such graceful ways,
As though she is the only one to bear witness.
As they once said, “If a tree does fall...”
She somehow escapes the fact of my existence.

Vibrant shades of electric pink glow across her face,
Like a gem brought to life by lunar light.

Delicately reflecting,
As though she were a mirror of all things true.

*It is odd to what degree we examine ourselves;
She seemed not to notice, but perhaps she did the most.
As she swayed and moved with the glittering tides,
She could feel the once rigid, cold winds turn soft and blue.*

B. Ne.

Wildflower.



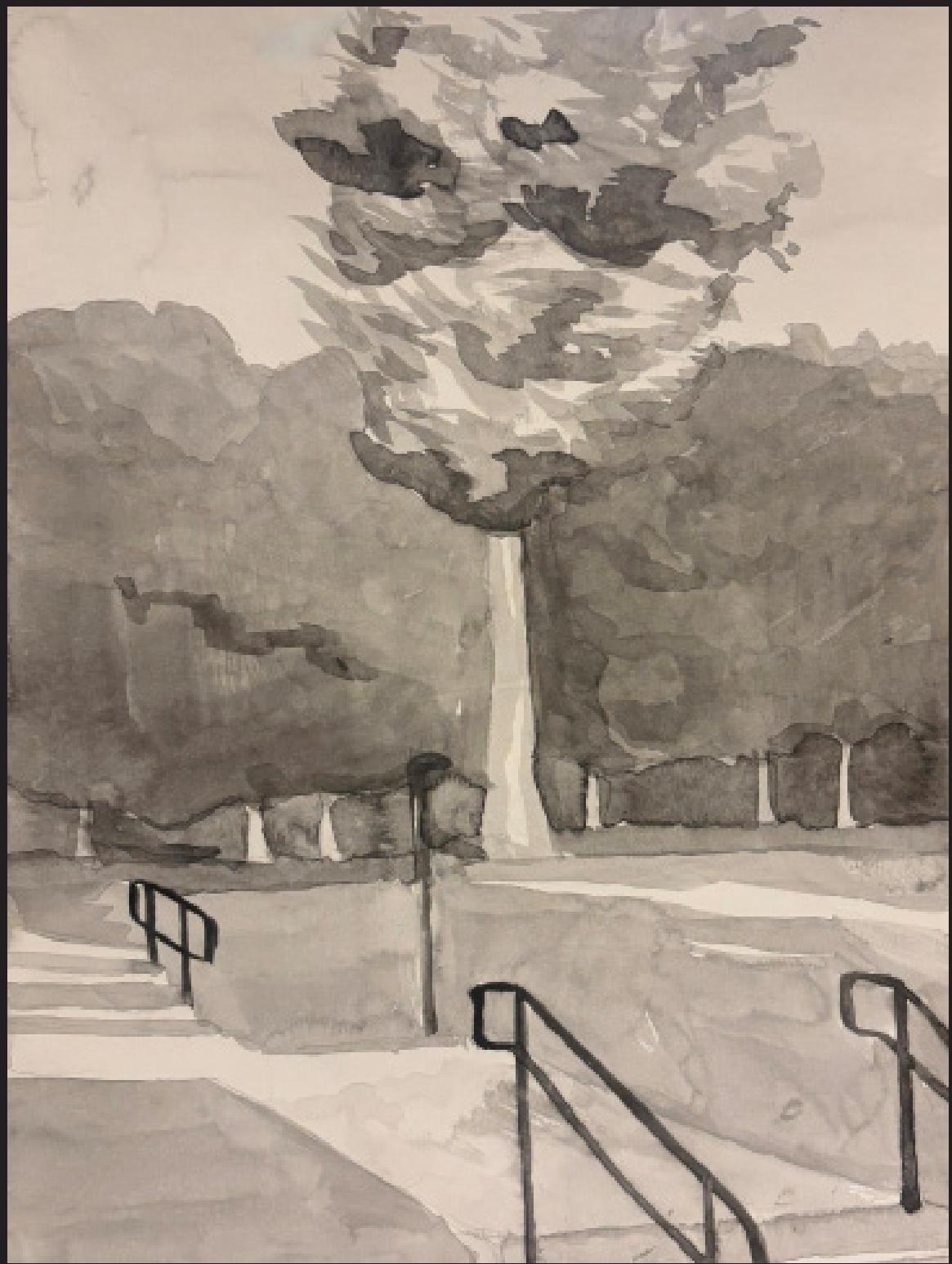
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Perspectives Literary Magazine aims to produce a collection of both literature and artwork which showcases the creative expressions of our Suffolk Community members. Our publication is released each semester and accepts submissions of a wide variety; from poetry and stories to paintings and photography; *Perspectives* ultimately provides a common place in which individuals can seek publication, and thus, contribute their own ideas, stories, and perspectives to the artistic and literary world.





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