

horizon

LITERATURE

ART

PHOTOGRAPHY

WORKS

ochils ————— edge
the ————— starting ————— point
a half eaten breakfast in caithness
saints & martyrs
sunday ————— mo(u)rning
askew ————— (and other poems)
cooking ————— as ————— praxis
waterboard ————— suicide
————— ecotones
my ————— favourite ————— triangle
nicola ————— & ————— ricordi
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FROM

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autumn stiles • cate fraser
carl alexandersson • reuben bharucha
molly maclean • maria park
tabitha carless-frost • mia king
bee • françois giro
lizzie smith • ned summers
genevieve england • anastassia beliakova
hedda annerberg • hygerta xhauri
ilyas ————— kassam
erika ————— spadavecchia
tom goodyer • roísín phelan
olivia ————— rafferty

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issue

01

This is *The Horizon Magazine*.

WE ARE A SPACE DEDICATED TO THE CULTIVATION OF NEW VOICES AND BOLD WORK. WE AIM TO SHARE ART AND LITERATURE THAT PUSHES BOUNDARIES, THAT CHALLENGES AUDIENCES, AND THAT IS POWERFULLY EXPRESSIVE.

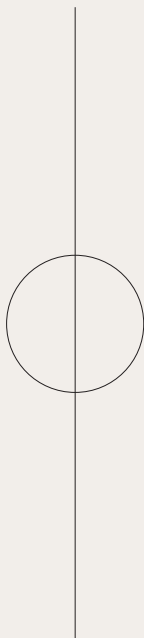
Horizon is a high-quality artistic journal that mixes mediums of *art*, **literature**, and photography. The magazine shall always be free to read, published online and accessible to all, as well as printed and distributed in select locations.

We strive to make each edition of Horizon a collection of beautiful and diverse work. We want every edition to be open to writers and artists from all backgrounds. There are no submission fees or requirements, as we believe there should be no limitations on the opportunity for self-expression.

This is a space for **the bold**, a space for [the beautiful], and a space for the *unique*.

for writing on the horizon

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Welcome to the inaugural edition of *THE HORIZON MAGAZINE*.

This magazine is the product of a few hopeful ideas and a few talented people. During the summer of 2020, a number of us came together and decided we wanted to create a magazine that was open to everybody and encouraged bold and inspiring acts of creativity. *Horizon* is comprised of a team of poets, designers, academics, and publishers who want to create a space for artistic exploration. We want to create a space where anyone and everyone can feel free to express themselves. So, we took these desires and turned them into the first edition of this magazine. *Horizon* is a space for powerful work, compelling work, and provoking work. The art and literature of the following pages shall at times evoke deep emotion and at others surround you in levity. This is a magazine that blends the mediums of art, literature, and photography to create a multi-representational experience in the act of reading.

But above all, this is a magazine that celebrates the creativity and inspiration of humanity.

2020 has been a long, hard, and complicated year. We exist in the midst of a global pandemic, geopolitical crises, the devastating effects of climate change and an utter plague of humanitarian atrocities. However, even in our darkest times, humanity has never lost its ability, nor its drive and desire, to create. We are, and always have been a creative people. I remember, at the start of the pandemic there were many articles discussing how Shakespeare created some of his greatest works during the plague of 1606. This has never surprised me. Creativity, true unique original creativity, is the product of pressure. Powerful creative acts are the product of responding to a need, a drive — an external pressure. Creativity is not an action, but a reaction. The darker the days, the harder the struggle, the louder and more powerful humankind screams in response.

At times, that scream takes its form in art.

We hope this magazine contains a trace of that extreme human reaction. We hope the artwork and literature in these pages communicates with you, explores stories, conveys emotion, and takes small steps towards transliterating the confusion of contemporary experience.

— Benjamin Wolff [general editor]



left **red war;** *above* **erotic**
paintings by Michal Adelt

OCHILS ————— EDGE

[poem] by Autumn Stiles

below the knees by Cate Fraser
35mm Ilford HP5



through sideways rain the
trees clear their throats, shift
from foot to foot, and peer at the loch
I want to touch you but
being still feels good too,
warm bodies so close that
later, at dinner, you will say
the table makes me seem far away.

(a wanderer
would have seen
two forms, tiny
as mushrooms,
crouched close
to the wet earth)

II.

stone ruin —
its only room
a briar patch.

snip of pine
in your pocket,
mouth of ruddy sap



III.

icy sluice
Do not drink
rinse only the sootbloom
from your hands while
morning sheds her nacre
your whole bodybreathing through
your whole body gulp of green air

soft fingers hair warm mouth you've waited for.



above **the sea** by Cate Fraser
35mm Ilford HP5

*can they hear us
in the valley below?
can they hear us?*

IV.

shadows, rooms, accrete time.

millennia of things:
spoons of marmalade,
fly in cold wax,
port-ringed mug

even our bodies,
a furnace
under old quilts

& my gold earring
still there, somewhere,
in tender, claggy mud

clutching light

while farmer & wife
flare once, twice,
under a wheel of stars

V.

two teatimes we stood
warding off the hour

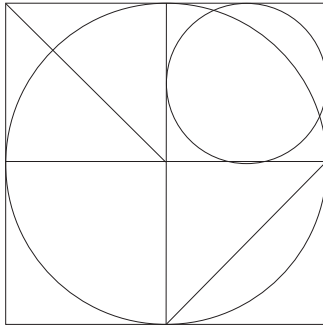
yet such days
will come again -

clean, fresh,
offering.



THE STARTING POINT

[poem] by Carl Alexandersson



I.

He will ask me one day, an early Sunday
morning, nestled under the covers like a sanctuary of sorts
why it is that I always unpack
my suitcase as soon as I arrive somewhere
and I will say that I like to keep things
organised
and he will nod and kiss the tip of my
nose, and swallow my lie

II.

He will ask me one day, a late Tuesday
night, sipping on
tea and telling stories
why it is that my stories never make sense; the plot
holes
making it impossible to trace them
back to any given starting point
and I will say

there are millions of ways the milk could meld
into the tea and still end up much the same
and he will nod and sip
his tea
in silence

III.

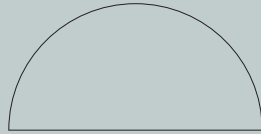
He will ask me one day, over an ordinary Thursday
lunch, talking over background noise and apologies
why it is that I am always late to every—
thing
and I will say that I am never
fully anywhere, always stuck somewhere
between where I want to be and where
I have been
(which is to say
that I am, at any given moment,
the not-yet-melded
milk in any given cup of tea)
and that night
he will pack a bag and kiss my cheek
and I
will try to trace things
back to the moment he first asked me to stay
the night, which was a late Saturday
night, which was, in fact,
a moment ago.



above detail of a window by Reuben Bharucha

A—HALF-EATEN—BREAK-FAST—IN—CAITHNESS

[prose] by Molly Maclean



The sudden flush of dawn had stirred something vile. Collapsed upon the bed lay the final plume of morning's dark, perfectly settled — quite undisturbed by the yellow fingers that stalked over curtains and picture frame.

With eyes like a torx, consciousness returned to the pallid face of the sleeper.

— Indigo we go.

Reach around, slosh. No one there. Expecting no one. Tueew-wWed Wednesday, naw.

No one today.

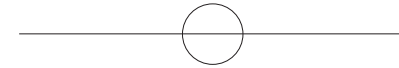
Shapes crouching by the bed are saying their goodbyes in the light. Coffee swelling down a filter.

Waking tongue, working tongue. Stretch back into the night. Indigo we go.

SongsFromARoomAlarm.

The bugger still can't understand why his arm is not a lilac tree. My arm is not a lilac tree. Beautiful question. Poets always ask beautiful questions. 'Fuck God' he says.

There we go now. Eyes open. Good. Like two opals. Couple of golf balls on a green. My face in this tepid light. Death mask. Yield today's first, fart to the Pharaohs and rise.



Kitchen calling. Greasy spoons. Last night left it a purple cave. Blinds half alert, sleep half collected in mildewed sills. Dew festoons and wood-rot bills. Door opens to a wall of. One big ashtray. Closes like a box of.

Crummy table. Crummy toes. Slightly damp. Sticky — always the little bits, crumbs. And cat-litter-croquette-soles.

Ah sit down then, can clean up later. Mind your feet and your head while you're at it. Sunday Herald. Four days past its sell-by date. Nothing much happening anyway. Never going off. Same things. Self-preserving. Pectin headlines. Sheep on North Point Road at the fences again and the union wars and the Americans. News? Feck.

Carunchmunchmunch

— Marmalade I like marmalade.

In a half-swallowed voice, Christ I could write that. A bit louder now, A blind monkey with brass balls and a badger's arse could write that. Grey, it's all grey. Ancient blue of rolling sky and rivers fading to grey 'neath the corrosive beam of the national dentist's lamp.

Shakes head and splutters toast. Laughing comes out quite big bits. Or pimped up to gaudy radium for energy adds. Hoho — Roll up roll up they've got oil and toil. What's happening today? Ah not so much. Want to hear about the weather? Aye. It's grey. We're grey. It's all bloody grey.

Plane chortles over distant chimneys.

Passenger plane! Thank Christ. Not the sirens, not the plant. Not the end today hoho.

Ffffsifflewwsss. Good tea unites good company and I'm all on my own. British summer time and I'm wearing a jumper.

Pppurroww.

— Aw wee Stumpy stumps. Contented wee beastie. Sleek, strong, back like fallen snow. Shame about the front paw golf cart incident. Took it straight off. I wasn't there to see it mind but she said it was a clean cut. You remind me of her you do, make me think of the times.

Make time. Make Tetley.

— Some more biscuits for my wee one-armed bandit? Beautiful cat. Pat pat pat.

Tea vapours. Inward nose whistle.

— Ten already! It is in your bollocks!

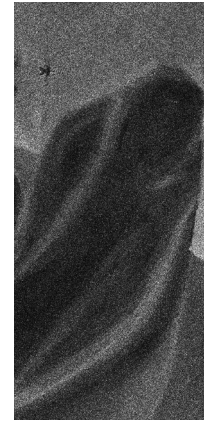


right the wave by Maria Park



SAINTS & MARTYRS

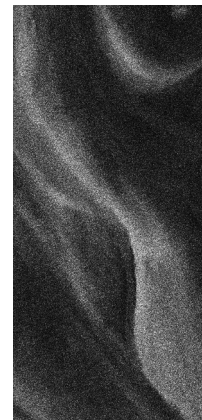
[poem] by Tabitha Carless-Frost



Behind the honey-shadow of a sneeze
On the other side of sunlit particles,
Over cracked faces, yesterday's light lingers,
Gleaming over your little saints and martyrs.
They, unsure of their pure shapes,
Stand still with bent heads and necks.
Not furled to nothing as ferns are at dusk,
But quietly coughing up the afternoon's dust.
They send up prayers with downcast looks,
Warnings about wanings, how you

Pressed your skin too thin into books,
Wilted yourself for nothing and
Unbraided your veins into one long tendril
Then wound it about your eyes
To cover over up all that low, sticky yellow:
Light of tobacco and flat cloud.

You look like imminent organ failure,
Eyes in body bags,
All raw and yawning for lavender.
At least by now you are well learned in weeping.
Scheduled lamentations for weeknight evenings,
Practiced prostrations, each a fresh mask of clay
To adorn your little statuettes.



Because other people are quagmires,
Made from the scent of stale smoke
And patched together with damp leaves.
But the odour of burnt coffee lingers higher,
Thinner notes through thinner air,
Like the tone of a migraine ringing.
Burnt and muddied liquid,
None spilled but stagnant —
Brown rivers never reaching the sea.

below self portrait on my bedroom wall by Mia King



SUNDAY—MO(U)RNING

[poem] by Bee

below **before winter** (inspired by a landscape from the film Night of the Living Dead)

by François Giro



the way she looks
the weight of melancholy
sitting above her own head,
as if the raven refuses to move,
refuses to dig its talons out
from her skull.
how easy we can break once there
is nothing left to stay together for,
right?
how gorgeous we all look when
we're falling,
when we do not have to try to
keep ourselves intact for any sake
but our own survival,
instinct being the only thing we
even try for anymore.

a graveyard full of bones,
and she wants to be buried in the sky.
'a coward's death', some would say.
but maybe she just wants to
free up space.
maybe she just prefers the view
from the top of the world.

and she-
stop.

just stop.

if you break the fourth wall
all you're left with is a breeze
and no dining room.

what i'm trying to say is that things
are never as bad as they seem.
you might have eaten the plum
in the ice box but at least it was
everything you ever dreamed of.
at least you did it.
at least you sunk your talons teeth
into such peculiarly spectacular
skull plum. the plum was worth it,
sat still for so long it ached to
feel anything but the cold.
we'll do anything to be free,

do anything to avoid the rotting
that seeps from the inside out.

so maybe you are not
plum-girl or raven-boy.
maybe you are something else entirely.
maybe you are the reason they both
look to the sky.
maybe you are the dining room whose
dust sits buried in the icebox,
the uneventful mourning to something
we didn't even realise had
disappeared in the first place.

it is sunday morning.
i will dress in black.
i will put on my crown,
made of wood chips
and raven talons.
it will not hurt because i was
never obligated to make it hurt.
not everything has to be painful.
i will remember every character
in the not-story that never came to be.
i will say my goodbyes that never
got a chance to flourish, instead
floundering in endless bounds of blue.

i walk outside.
we made ourselves a new dining room
with metaphors and all the leftover
melancholy that spilled out the icebox.
it still stains the floor in some places,
but at least it makes sure we'll
remember it.
not everything has to be a good story.
not everything is for the mourning.

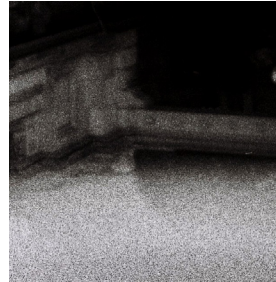
i enter the
dining room.
we are having
fresh plums
for breakfast.

and i laugh,
what a strangely perfect world this is.

A crooked lamp-post
catches in its empty cage the sky
and tilts it
— ever so slightly —
to the side.

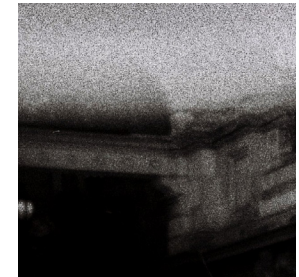
Do skies flow
to fill their containers?

Lapping at the edges,
barnacled with clouds.



HOW TO LAY A FIRE

First, roll up last week's
Tragedies. The fledgling flames
Must be weaned on words.



HOW NOT TO LAY A FIRE

Flames falter: pilgrims
Clinging to a mountain pass
As they nod in prayer.

TELEGRAPH

Don't let your knowledge of the wire
pollute your eyes:

there is no line.
The swallow sits on sky.



a wanderer
would have seen
two forms, tiny
as mushrooms,
crouched close
to the wet earth



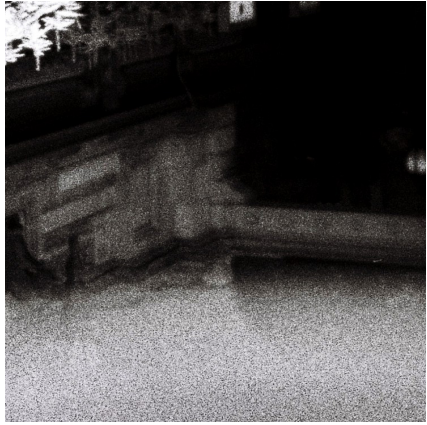
*I wish my
mother would
find her tea, that
she would have
its knowing,
and I look at
the painting
and I see a blue
triangle, and
next to it two
lines almost
touching.*



[selected from] **ways of being with people**
by Ned Summers

You look like imminent organ failure,

Eyes in body bags,



Birnam paranoia my dogs drag
loose jaws hungry for that redshift memory
“
and scythed crockery the gasp
Can you see them
Can you see

[All raw] and yawning for LAVENDER.

At least by now you are well learned in weeping.

COOKING AS PRAXIS

[an essay] by Genevieve England



Over the past year I lost a form of love, but I was showered with another. Ladled in steaming bowls of Laksa, roasted in English root vegetables; a residue of stubborn earth remaining despite a stellar scrubbing. In pools of butter, yoghurt with garlic, dwelling

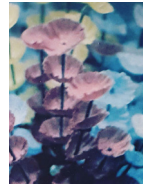
in the richness of Turkish eggs; and a Sunday ritual — always based around food — knees pressed around a too-small London table, knife crunching through the skin of roasted chicken. It was an intangible but omnipresent love. Food crafted by my friends did more than heal me from heartbreak. I realised they were satellites, not

lumps of lonely metal singular in their orbit, but Sputniks, travelling companions. Separate but whole and fully formed units choosing to dance in synchronicity. Sharing food was a recognition of the plurality in the lives I could choose to orbit with. They were, as described by Kath Weston, the family I chose.

Incidentally, I think food can build a family, not to diminish blood ties but to question what types of relationships we benchmark over others. Families or kin are often chosen in queer communities to neither reject blood relatives nor strictly 'choose' friends as family; this rather encompasses a larger rejection of kinship or the 'nuclear family' which pathologises unconventional forms of sexuality and love (or instead, in becoming acceptable, necessitates 'queerness' becoming the salient part of the individual's identity). Chosen families are forged of love, friendship and biology, but most of all they offer forms of visibility and acceptability informed by knowledge that far more fluid forms of gender identity existed long before they were quashed by the cages of colonial gender binaries.

Western folk models of family are founded on the notion that blood is thicker than water, however, consuming food essentially entails the transformation of the latter into the former, it makes those that are unfamiliar familiar. This is recognised cross culturally where familial structures are less rigid, far more processual: The Malays of Pulau Langkawi draw up their lines of

kinship through the idiom of fostering, where sharing food creates ties of blood and birth, just as much as nurturance or sexual procreation. Generosity of food brings strangers from outside familial structures and food cooked on the hearth acts as a creative force to produce new emotional ties central to processes of being 'together' whether through blood, milk or rice.



Outside of Western folk models, food is a wider tool of sociality which builds kin relationships and often takes eminence over biological relatedness. The babies of the Beng people of the Ivory Coast are not believed to be humans, raising a child is rather a process of familiarising yourself with a divine stranger from the afterlife. Unsurprisingly, questions of biological relatedness figure small in a baby's journeys emerging from 'Wrugbe' (the afterlife) where they are divinely multi-lingual beings. Raising a child is a process of familiarising yourself with a stranger from the afterlife, and adults listen rapturously to the babies' babbling for pearls of ancestral wisdom. Unsurprisingly Beng babies are 'alloparented' (the name for childcare provided by individuals who are not related in blood) and the babies experience the breast of many women as a formation of sociability as well as nourishment.

Cooking and eating together has an affective and communal force, to break bread with another is an

experience of sisterhood or brotherhood, of care and connection. However, as a precondition to the advent of capitalism, individuals in industrialised nations are often estranged from broader conceptions of how to be together in non-biological kin formations. It runs as so: the nuclear family naturalises the unpaid labour of cooking and care (hiding the labour power this facilitates in the wider economy) which if not devalued or dismissed is certainly side-lined as insignificant, belonging to the naturalised and private realm of the family (you need look no further than the vastly overworked and highly skilled chef's salary as a reflection of how this ideology travels).



Feminists have, of course, come up against quite a fight whilst trying to dismantle this; an essential harbinger of creating free labour power in industrialised nations is predicated on the naturalisation of European and North American cultural formations of family (most commonly the nuclear family) to which rigid gender roles are crucial. Sylvia Yanagisako describes this as the 'domaining' inherent in late capitalism where the artificial distinction between the economic and domestic sphere separates

emotions, affect and sentiment. And distinctions between the domestic (the realms of kinship) and the economic inform the assumption that domestic labour is not a form of social reproduction (in Marxist terms this refers to activities which reproduce and allow for the labour power essential to capitalism).



Feminist agendas, ardent but exhausted, bristle at the connotations around cooking for they are often cloaked in the limited garb domesticity foists upon them. But it is not the act of cooking which is burdensome but its relegation to the private sphere where women's free labour is naturalised.

It is true that for many (especially women), cooking is a slog; a chore; a relentless rhythm of unrecognised servitude. Often an act of love but also an undeniable reminder of the domesticated femininity women are benchmarked against. In other words, cooking becomes a signal for women's diminished status where domestic chores are as personal as the contours of the feminine mystique, far from the 'real work' of economic relations. However, although cooking food is labour, to reduce it to just this is a disservice. I grew up in a house where love was spread like butter. Although sometimes the latter was too cold, the bread too soft, cooking held significance, something more enduring than its definition as only a form of reproductive labour.



human action. Although language is pivotal to such a process, ideological road-blocks run rife when trying to imagine alternative subjectivities with words alone. The linguist Saussure explicates this describing language as communication which cannot convey truth, but is rather a signifier for that which the speaker chooses to signify. This signification is drawn in the form of historic concepts belonging to a larger project of colonisation, capitalist expansion and oppression. Cooking is by nature a practice, imbuing it with the ability to shift subjectivity, feeding and nurturing alternative ways of doing or feeling.

In writings of culture, cooking always holds eminence. The seminal anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss situated his grand theory of culture in the everyday rituals of cooking. The latter, he argued, afforded humans with the unique ability to transform nature using stones, fire, pots and pans; the artefacts of a culture, bestowing humans with the characteristics to transform nature to culture - and achieve what is arguably the biggest distinguisher between human and non-human animals. However, I like to think of cooking as just as seminal but somewhat less wrapped up in binaries around nature and culture, nor the answer to the ubiquity of human culture located in my favourite Le Creuset pot. But rather cooking as a form of often overlooked praxis.

‘Praxis’ is a practice or custom translated into action; the practical application of a branch of learning or theory. In Marxian philosophy, it is the notion that we must interpret the world to change it, crucially this transformation of subjectivity is first and foremost through practice and



Cooking is a movement of creation rooted in everyday action. In other words, cooking is praxis. It is magic which creates and sustains us, which transforms the inedible to the delicious. Crusts of (much fretted over) sourdough dipped in Zatar and olive oil taught me that friendship and sex can be many different things which are ultimately more complex and satisfying. Even if they were only crusts, they taught me that my grief was not for another person, but for myself and all the love that had been poured into the places which could not contain it. Food helped me learn that honesty, communication and connection can be found in the relationships which are least and obvious.

Sharing a meal is an everyday experience of togetherness, a nod to our most basic and shared experience of vulnerability, the need to consume food to sustain ourselves. Cooking has so much more potential than its condemnation in this brief moment in our current capitalist epoch, it is a practice which refuses in modernity to dwell in the murky realms of the domestic sphere; most importantly it challenges the domestic sphere's existence in the first place. It requires imagination and empathy, eluding categorisation, spilling out in questions which make light of the very notion that our lives can ever fall into neat distinction. What does the person like to eat? What food is home to them? What food formed their bodies? And of course, the anticipation of how they will enjoy the food created for them, and the shared experience of consuming it. Cooking and eating is giving and receiving pleasure.

Friends' food also showed me a new experience of being together. Seemingly small, quiet and understated gestures of care and cookery helped heal me, in fact, they continue to. It is not coincidental that in the Autumn I took the class of the late great David Graeber; his work (like his character) unrelentingly optimistic, highlighted the utopic spirit in everyday acts of sociality in workplaces, schools and institutions; everyday acts of socialism hidden in plain sight – cooking in this instance. However, what influenced me the most was Graeber's focus on the phenomenon of play. He insisted all animals play (ants to inchworms to

dolphins to humans) with no scientific or rational explanation, but rather just for the pure frivolous fun, antithetical to the logic of the normalised ideal of the rational and market-driven actor. In acknowledging food and cooking as more than simply the fuel of capitalism, we can begin to understand it as a form of resistance which carves out new ways of being together, and one of the ways we live joyful, playful and frivolous lives together, because why not?



[left page] collage by Anastassia Beliakova

[painting] Bodegón de naranjas (1863) by Rafael Romero Barros

WATERBOARD — SUICIDE

[poem] by Ilyas Kassam



I read a line of Sophie Robinson's
"Imagine bringing back waterboarding"
And then a child stares up at me with bunny eyes
And I drink my karak
And the eyes are blue
Like in Aladdin or that velvet underground song
And the rain creates a commune
And the rabbi lifts his eyelids
And the child is still waiting
And Sophie is still talking about waterboarding
only she is now talking about politics
And David Cameron is staring up at me with bunny eyes
And I take the bunny eyes and I wrap them in Kleenex
And I feel the paperyness of wind on my face
And my beard recites a revolution
And the child is staring up at me
And I am holding the Kleenex in my hand
And I feel the urge to sneeze
And I feel pandora smashing her box
And McDonald's is advertising free-will
And a nice man, with a *Bhagat** smile opens a door for no-one
And the paper wind wafts in
And I cover my feet with a fossil
And the pedestrians are looking for art**
And the child is staring up at me
And the child is a friend of Corbyn
And the child is looking for his eyes
And the child is eyeing my karak
And the karak is losing itself
And science is painting a liquid
And the medium is wishing for ghosts

* *crying is a word
woven by the father
of clouds*

** *how pedestrian*

And the child is a friend of Cameron
And the child is spitting at fire
And the child has eyes on his brow
And the child is looking up at me
And the karak is drinking the wind
And the bunny eyes are lactating their milk
And McDonald's is questioning itself
And the vegans are lining up for a massacre
And the pavement is cleaned by its filth
And the thighs of the walkers are craving
And the juice of a melon is falling
And god is sleeping with children
And Michael Jackson is barely forgiven
And Sophie is talking about dying
And the child is weeping with lungs
And the swimming pool is now on offer
And I am still sitting
And the rabbit in the poem is praying
And the church has a sale full of cupcakes
And I am drinking my sin

And a nice man, with a *Bhagat* smile opens a door
And a capitalism walks in
And the child is staring up at me

The poem is broken in places
And the child is googling his name
And the child is staring at his eyes
And the Kleenex is free of its politics
And Corbyn and Cameron are listening to jazz
And the child is pointing at McDonald's
And the waitress comes with the bill
And the bill looks like a Rizla
And the eyes look like tobacco
And McDonald's is reading Das Kapital
And the child is running in circles

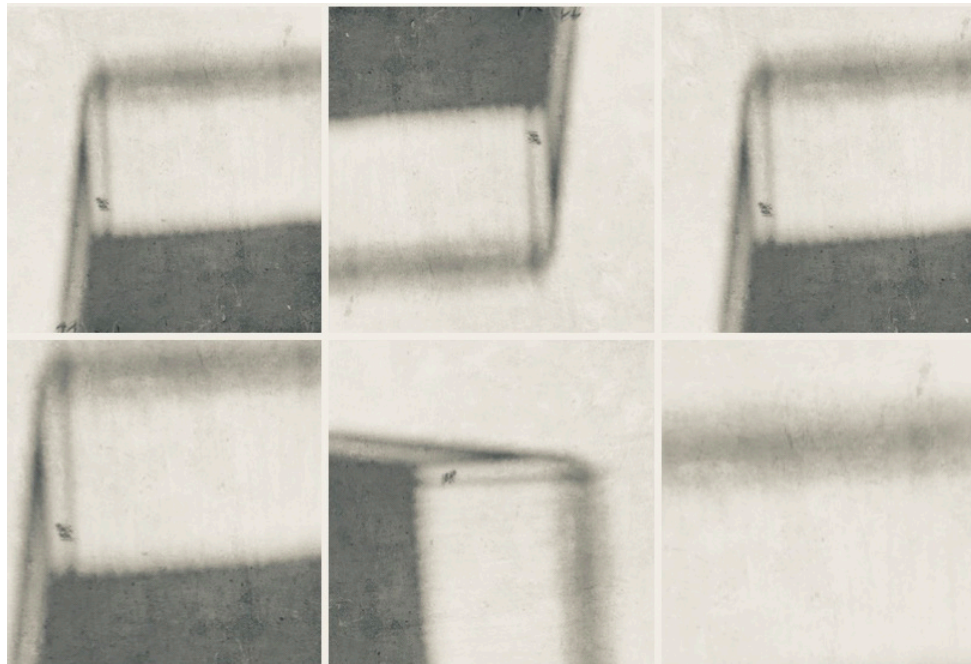
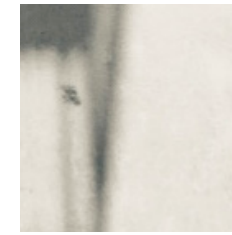
And the chicken has crossed the road
And the other side is made of candy floss
And the child is screaming my name

And Cameron and Corbyn are eating a McFlurry

And the child is talking with Chicken.

E C O T O N E S

[poem] by Helda Annerberg



above the chair by Hygerta Xhauri

[35]

you were fascinated by the idea of wedges
the clear cut

between

what was

and

what is

what the wedge consisted of
what it felt like

(its sharpness was never in question)

its ability to create
dichotomies. my friend said:

*i think it will be good that you go away
for a bit*

and yes, the air tastes different here, yes
the skies do look different here but

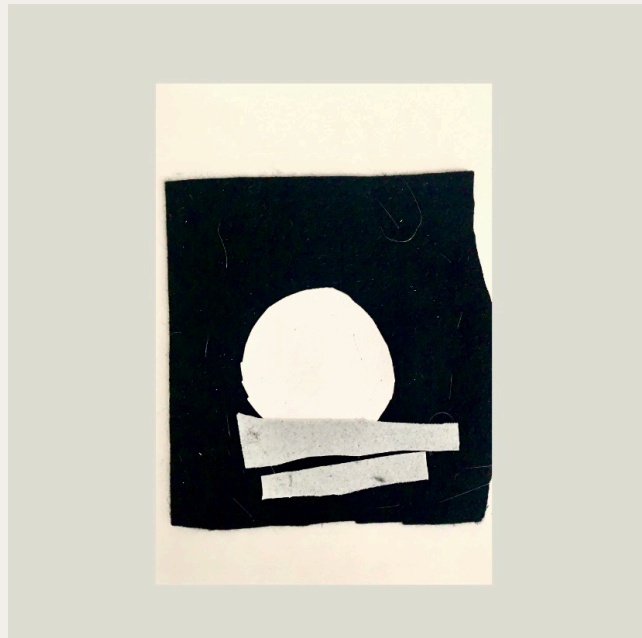
increasingly i see only empty
morning skies so close to death, how

my body looks empty without
the bruises you planted on it so tenderly.

i was only ever
a set of broken pieces

MY—FAVOURITE—TRIANGLE

[prose] by Ilyas Kassam



left Aya (Moon) by Hygerta Xhauri (2020)

I'm holding in my palms a small cup of tea, well it's a bowl, a small bowl of warm tea, it's a little too warm, it's a hot cup of tea, that is a little too hot, I'm sitting holding my tea and watching it lose its steam, I'm watching it evaporate, but it's not really evaporating, I'm watching it lose itself without really losing itself, I'm holding this bowl of tea, and waiting for it cool, I'm waiting in that watching kind of way, waiting for my hands to take all its warmth, for the tea to stop losing itself, and as I wait, wishing for it to cool, in a gentle wishing way, not really a true wishing, but in a 'what will be' kind of way, I look at the painting in front of me and I see a figure appear, I see my mother appear, I have never seen her as such, but as I stare at this painting waiting for my tea to cool, waiting in that non-wishing wishing kind of way, I see my mother, I see her cheekbones, her smile, those tender eyes, I see a sternness, a body that refuses its eyes, I see her in the dress she used to wear, I see her waiting, I see her waiting in a sad kind of way, a waiting with a wishing, but not knowing what she is wishing for, a wishing in a bewildered kind of way, and I see the moonlight shine upon her face, and her eyes remain, lighting themselves with their own light, but her body is deceased, and

the moonlight is giving its light, the moonlight is giving its company, and I'm sitting holding this bowl that is still slightly steaming, and I'm looking at the tea, and I'm wishing to taste the tea, this tea I bought last week in that new shop that opened down the road, the one opposite the bakery, and I'm looking at my mother, who looks kind of lost, lost in a grounded kind of way, and I feel she is struggling to breathe, but she has such good posture, such good posture for breath, but I see she is only breathing in moonlight, she is only breathing light, because light is more important than oxygen, because light is our being, not our needing, but she has been starved of light, and breathing in a breathing kind of way is only secondary to breathing in a luminating kind of way, and I feel she is lost, I feel she is lost in a wishing, but her wishing is also lost in itself, and I see the moonlight bounce off her face, and she has such a beautiful face, such a clean face, so pristine, pristine in a morbid and somewhat beautiful kind of way, and I hear an owl outside of the window, and I am not sure if the owl is in the painting or outside of my living room, and I think the tea must be that perfect warmth to drink now, and so I lift up the cup, well it's a bowl really, it's one of those Japanese bowl type of cups, and I lift it to my lips, and I feel the warm water touch my lips, and I feel a soft joy, like my lips have a knowing, and I pour it into my mouth, and I swirl it around, and I feel the water coax my tongue, well it's really tea, but tea is mostly water, I feel the water swirl around my mouth, and I kind of taste the moonlight, I kind of feel my skin become moonlight, and I hear the owl, and the owl is in the moonlight, and I swallow the tea, I swallow the water infused with tea, and I feel the moonlight wash down my throat, and I feel it clean my body, I hear the hooting and the moonlight clean my body, I hear the trickling of water, I hear it trickle past my ears as if it were a fountain, and I see the picture of my mother, that is now lighter now that it is glowing, that is made of more than forgotten mud, I see her gleaming, I see her enjoy her losing, I see her clean, clean in a breathing kind of way, clean in a way that makes you want to be close to her, and I feel the tea sit in my belly, I feel it looking for the places it wishes to go, and in some way I know the tea is looking for my mother, and in a wishful kind of way, I wish the tea would find my mother, because she is moonlight, and every moon is a little drier than it needs to be, I wish my mother would find her tea, that she would have its knowing, and I look at the painting and I see a blue triangle, and next to it two lines almost touching.

¶

(ricordi & nicola)

by Erika Spadavecchia

ricordi

by evening, she stands imprecise
 lying on her bed. exsanguine madre immacolata
 in the most foetal position, she says lasciami dormire
 in dialect, in a blue nightgown, in the yellow light of a lampshade
 consumed in self-immolation by her elementary, loneliest

rituals, love rituals, men rituals she says, tuo padre era uno stronzo.
 i sit on a chair and watch her strained face carve a gelid statue in
 my head. i love her, i say, but i don't say it. i don't say it
 her hair in a braid like a bale of straw, irremovable, nailed
 on her pillow. her back arched, exhaustion her prayer: a pennant of
 piety,

prostration. she says nothing. she says nothing. i am fifteen, ashamed.
 she is forty-five, her mind transmigrated, depleting
 every distance from old wounds to the next. my friends
 talk, ashamed, matta matta matta matta (da rinchiudere)—they say.
 i say nothing. i say nothing, ashamed:

tonight. i find your obstinate
 memory irrefutably
 confined, crucified in the
 sacrificial altar of my childhood. narrowed,
 contracted to fit in my throat, to lodge
 in my features: eyes, nose, lips
 breasts, hips. yours, in
 ductile communion.
 mine, a catalogue of penitences. and

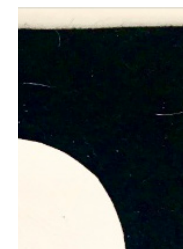
i say nothing, i say nothing.



nicola

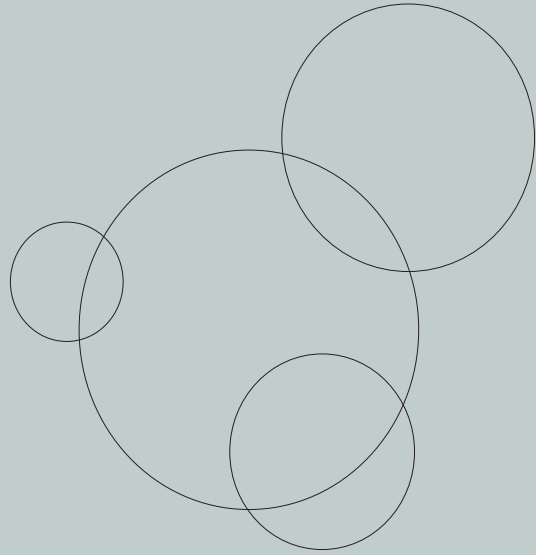
i wait, i, yes, for yesterday's time
 in pristine tangle, this is. you move
 arranging your body at the end of
 my bed: murderous you tend your
 memory like cyclamens, the courtesy of
 your absence. rimani, rimani, or
 offer, offer me, offer me words to
 silence: you, sit propped up on pillows
 in nonna's house. yes? mio ricordo senz'arte:
 you just arrived home from the
 beach, your presence is salsedine
 but your voice unappealable:

i am 5, you stand tall per strada
 uncollectible: you don't see us, you
 see us as you shout for me without
 a word: your immediate call
 is an ascetic silence i never
 listened to



M A R I A N A

[short story] by Tom Goodyer



Except on Fridays, when the laundry needs doing, there is always an uncorralled moment of tiny worth at the close of each afternoon. Pouring black coffee into white cups. Watching the grey plumes of steam fold and wither like fabric or the damage that linden tree leaves can do to cold sunlight with their shadows' impossible geometry.

Sitting high up on this balcony and maybe reading a book or just watching, Anoushka feels these moments as more golden than apricots and she is holding a half-bitten apricot now. Bright juice runs down her arm like veins. Sometimes the smell of the Moroccan family's cooking reaches out of their window and gestures of cinnamon and turmeric, fainting eulogies of mint, reach taut nostrils in grateful goes. Sometimes there are bundling sounds from their floor at night.

The street below is quiet. Nothing but the consonant scroll of bicycles talking past each other and sometimes a shout from a middle-distant square, where kids shunt around a football in worn-out trainers, breach the surface tension.

But none of it is any good, Anoushka thinks. Because if a moment can be held in the time it takes a suspended cafetière to tilt its hot, dark contents out and down towards this chipped mug and feel sharp and whole, then what does that say about the indistinct blur of time which chases me from my apartment on this blue street down the steps of crowded tube stations, dark down tunnels and away at creaking speed to my office in the city? There is a sticky, stumbling time which crenellates her life with junk and heaps of illegible rubble and a time which is single and felt, which elides the smell of cooking and the sun on her skin, the trace of steam and the way milk clouds to the surface when you add it to coffee, but plumes away from breaking it.

It is all surface. The one troubles the other. The daily commitment to labour under a certain condition of time means that these moments collapse forward into the next day's early start, the next day's disinterested brushing of teeth, combing of hair and jolting tube ride.

Have you seen my notepad? Zara had called from the forgotten interior of their apartment in one of these dangling moments.

It's out here, Anoushka called back.

Are you okay out here? Zara appeared at the door, long legs first, baggy t-shirt second, her warm complexion a moist heat.

I'm fine. She smiled. They kissed.

Eric's coming around later, I said you'd cook that pasta thing.

Oh, did you now?

I like to show you off when I talk. If you can't live up to my version of you, that's your problem.

Na, I'm better than you even know.

Oh yeah? Zara took a bite of Anoushka's apricot.

Hey! They laugh.

Hey, listen, actually. I need to tell you something. I'm not going to be able to make the rent this month. Or like contribute to the bills.

That's fine I'll cover you, said Anoushka.

No, I don't want you to cover me again.

Well, someone's got to pay for it.

That will be two months' worth though.

You can pay me back when that money from those pieces comes through. Zara made and sold vases of different colours. A couple of months ago some strange American man had said he'd buy a load to sell in his shop in Dubai but was waiting for his wife to say yes first.

Are you sure?

Do I love you?

I don't know, do you?

Let's make this fucking pasta then.

They fought that night. Eric looked bemused in the corner.

Something about the play of soft shadows, the folds, the exigency of her expressions to be read, makes what is left of Zara's face in Anoushka's memory seem as dispassionate as a piece of origami left lightly on a table, its form only barely construed from all the impossible blankness of a page. It threatens to collapse, nodding like a crane. The feathery smoke of her coffee fractures in the wind.



So, you're just leaving like that?
Well, I'll stay if you want me to stay.
Of course, I want you to stay.
Actually stay.
Of course, I want you to actually stay.
But, in terms of 'actually', that doesn't actually equate to just this.

Zara gestured lazily around the room, the empty bottle of red wine in front of her, the bruised lampshade above, the distressed cushions on the sofa. This had started from a conversation about a coke advert and the mercurial patterns that wanting something takes.

Equate to what?
Numbers.
I just offered to pay your rent for another month!
Anoushka, you clearly don't want to actually do that.
But how could you know what I want, *actually*, Zara. What I want is you living here.
It's not like that though.

Tell me what it's like.

You there in the office, me here scrounging.

I'm fine with paying your rent though, what do you mean?

Like I know that's not what either of us want, but neither of us are going to, like, say that.

Oh, so you don't actually want to live together then?

No, *I do*, but it feels like if neither of us *did*, we would be having the same conversation now. That's all I'm saying.

Zara, is this about something more?

I guess, it's about not knowing if there is something more.

I want to live with you and I'm happy to pay your rent for the month.

I want to live here with you, too.

Good.

Good.

A silence. The lost strands of an emptied bowl of puttanesca suddenly tugged at their attention. Zara and Anoushka had both started crying at different points in the conversation. Light from the TV bled a rectangular ghost on both of their features, it coiled blue in their teardrops. Zara sniffed.

What do you think about this? She drew back her sleeve, revealing a moon-surface-like covering of red-burnt skin about her wrist. Coconut oil? Or what?

Anoushka carried on crying. Heavier, like the throb of heat at the foot of kapok trees, drawn into herself. The tiger-green depths of a jungle.

Eric?

E45, maybe?

Hmm perhaps I'll try that. It's just on the surface, shouldn't have been in the sun so long, I guess.

Over the last few months, the evenings had often been spent like this, mixing wine with ennui, crushing dropped grapes in the carpet black. Rarely did a guest leave without some kind of mild embarrassment. One time, Zara got mad and ate her dinner in the bedroom, while Anoushka sobbed and their guests looked at each other like blank salmon.

Arguments flared up, ate their own tail, then petered absurdly towards mundanity. The way slapped water sheens to a flat pane and shatters, cracking back to the gecko-texture calm of a shallow pool, troubled, somehow changed.

Perhaps I should call a friend, perhaps my mum, Anoushka thinks. Tell her she'd been listening to that record she'd got her, that stares back flat from a forgotten

corner of the living room. The record player is unplugged and gathering dust.

Anoushka works her cuticles from the nail. She admires their smoothness. She lets a vanishing rafter of sun defeated by a cloud signal that it's time to go inside. She takes her coffee, takes her book.

Zara left six days ago. Anoushka hasn't heard from her since, though a pot forked wild with platinum kintsugi still stood by the door waiting to be posted. That was what she used to do. Make a pot, smash it, then paste metallic veins over the cracks. Zara had a baby with a father somewhere out West. Perhaps she was there.

Anoushka is empty as a bone. Her twice-grasped cup of coffee is a port and the dead room a swimming ocean. She finds it hard to scrutinise what happened between her and her girlfriend, that felled words and axed gestures could spin on the flesh-orange taste of a pitted apricot, turn and falter to despondency, to fractiousness, edging out further than their conversations, hushed at 3AM between bedsheets, could capture. She felt like just-coloured rosewater after the flowers had been removed.

It was an accident of language that left her here in the middle of the room, leaky net curtains making light of a black world. The impossibility of communication. The tendency of words to let ponder on lips the wreckage of a moment's quiet, white disaster.

Anoushka never once felt like she would be with Zara forever. Everything else passes too quickly to sustain belief in a single thing lasting forever. The soundless entreaty of the surf to the sand. There were too many things to think about to think about something as anything more than there or not. And too much time collects in unlooked-for alleyways.

Before Anoushka knew it, but way after Anoushka felt it, Zara was gone and there was a postcard-shaped mark where a postcard of white roses had hung on the wall in their bedroom. Without saying anything really, but saying a lot actually, they were no longer together.

The coffee runs down the sink. She looks at the sticky deltas of apricot juice on her forearm, swings the stone at the bin, just to feel her arm whipping through air. Already there is a sense of tomorrow coming in the bristle of evening across the sky, the elongation of shadows across the window.

The stone rattles into the bin, nestled with bank statements, inky receipts and post-it notes. She feels she is almost old. In the way that you always feel you are always young, she believes she is approaching the point where she will always feel she was always old. She might never have a child, she is unlikely

to find the words to find a partner to find a life with that will last longer than a bruising few months.

Like the peel of cuticle from the face of a nail, like the grist and roll of plateau against plateau, time was trammelled surface. It stuck in her mouth. She moves from room to room, tidying cushions she never sits in, picking up her bowel of wolfed-down, morning cereal, perhaps looking at the coagulation of white milk about the spoon.

Anoushka recalls a book of geography that she was once given, stuffed away, barely read. She thinks about a deep trench somewhere. There are waves that suffer the moonlight with arcing spines, stars and great organs of foam and thither that swallow themselves whole in the eddying blue. And deeper down with the death-plunge of a sperm whale. Down deeper and the earth, unseaming like a torn scab, pocks to crevice and whale-bone and geysers, withering, folding sulfur up to the no-longer imaginable surface, erupt. Down here, deep where clutch-fisted amoebae tense like bone roses, lamprey and crayfish freeze to feel the infinitude, and octopi gibber-drift through fosses of dark, corpse-mud. Deeper here and deeper down, blind, where all the squid-ink, smooth dark scuttles blind, down deeper in the pitted centre of the trench, all down dark, all unbreathing black lets up here for shingled rock, there for bleached-out and ancient-white isopods.

And but for the singular, globed light of a solitary angler's wick, jawing the depth beyond strange limits, it's hard to imagine a time that could insist or thrust or push or pay heed to a moment in a cup over an eon sliced dead to rock.



above **and there was a woman staring right back at me**
and ^{previous page} means to me ^{remix} by **Róisín Phelan**

maybe you are something else entirely.
maybe you are the reason they both
look to the sky.



[detail of] **the disorientation of being familiar** by Ned Summers

P A R O U S I A
[poem] by Olivia Rafferty

Can you see them on the horizon
 Beyond the broken gate beyond the scattered sparrows
somewhere liminal my ashen animals

Can you see them Spooling mutely these
sorcerous southern towers hanging by the half-peeled
pomelo sucked to the navel of the sky

Birnam paranoia my dogs drag
loose jaws hungry for that redshift memory the gasp
 and scythed crockery Can you see them Can you see

can you see them
on the
horizon

beyond the broken gate

BEYOND the scattered sparrows somewhere

L I M I N A L

my *ashen* animals



Can·you·see·them

can

you

see

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[*back cover*] **the disorientation of being familiar** by Ned Summers

