

horizon^o

*SUE RIDGE, NIK LIGUORI,
LUCILLE MONA LING, SARAH
HUDIS, KHUSHI JAIN, ADOLPHUS
WASHINGTON, SHIN HUI LEE,
MAURICE TAN/CASPER DILLEN,
RACHEL SMITH, PETER J KING,
SOPHIE-MAI PEMBERTON,
BRIAN AUSTIN, ZACH KNOTT,
TIREE TAYLOR, REUBEN
BHARUCHA, MIKA MORET,
ROSS HOEY, RHIANNA PARKER,*

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*BENJAMIN ROBINSON,
KS REDGRITS, JENIA
DEMCHENKO, NEVA ELLIOTT,
YEEWEN WONG, LILY PETCH,
S.C. FLYNN, OLIVER TOLSON
BOXALL, FIAMMETTA DUKE,
DEVIKA PARARASASINGHE,
ISABELLA LOLITA, MARIA
MECO, YORGOS KAPSALAKIS*

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, CHALLENGES AUDIENCES, AND 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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BACK COVER: **Improvisation**
[collage] by **Adolphus Washington**

Uninteresting discourse of art revolves around its potential to affect material change in its world. Some worry that art is descending into crisis as a further incoherence is founded between the text and the mechanisms of contemporary reality. Nevertheless, at the courageous risk of being denounced as reactionaries, *Horizon* maintains that it is this very incoherency which enables our sole tangible means of interpreting the pandemonium of modern existence, and that the only valid avenue left open to art in maintaining any real relevancy is a certain indulgence in this inarguable nonsense.

Art is not in crisis. Art is crisis. The majority of art is frivolous. The roles of media and art, in the modern mainstream consciousness, are so conflated that the division between an art object and a mass product is confused. This goes beyond valuable public modes of folk expression into a codified blueprint of normalised consumption. Rather than enabling us to celebrate any idea of a creative legacy, to better represent a chain of cultural continuity from our rich and individual standpoints to the odd places in which we end up in an increasingly global and coexistent society, it replaces our communication with a vocabulary determined by capital and its own iteration of production.

Informed by our modern understanding of production, the production of art likewise fills our planet with landfills. Plastic tshatshkes preserved indefinitely by the innovations of our information age, an essential adhesive for the integrity of our trash bricolage. This is a substance operating via a dual interpretation; artistic and material. We are not so radicalised as to contend that such a quality is unique to wider-reaching, nigh industrialised projects, but can also be found in endeavours of what we might semi-ironically call "individual talent". The unending stream of information/expression/product reaches a common estuary regardless of the course it flows. Yet the interrogation of the latter babbles louder: Can you feel what I feel? Can you think in my terms? What remains a mystery (consciously or not) in my language? And do I fail (an insecurity shared by artist and audience)? This is the squirming intersection of brains which stands for a synecdoche of civilisation. There is an unimaginable surplus of meaning attending the existence of any (shite or class) work of art. A cosmos of implication, signifiers floating through.

In its compilatory form, what we hope to achieve with *Horizon* is a revived *V-Effekt*. What better time than now to review such a praxis than in our own peculiar conditions of

modernity? Wherein the most individualised and alienating iteration of culture is more interconnected with the globe than ever before. Our world stage is now a Brechtian epic. *Horizon* strives to curate and exhibit art which does not simply placate, but hysterically gestures beyond the wings. That determinedly insists on the existence of entire worlds beyond the stage, and naturally implicates their attending structures. That is not to imply we privilege exclusively the ideological and dogmatic. Part of the job is entertaining petty bourgeois anxieties. Our relationship with Marx is flirty rather than monogamous.

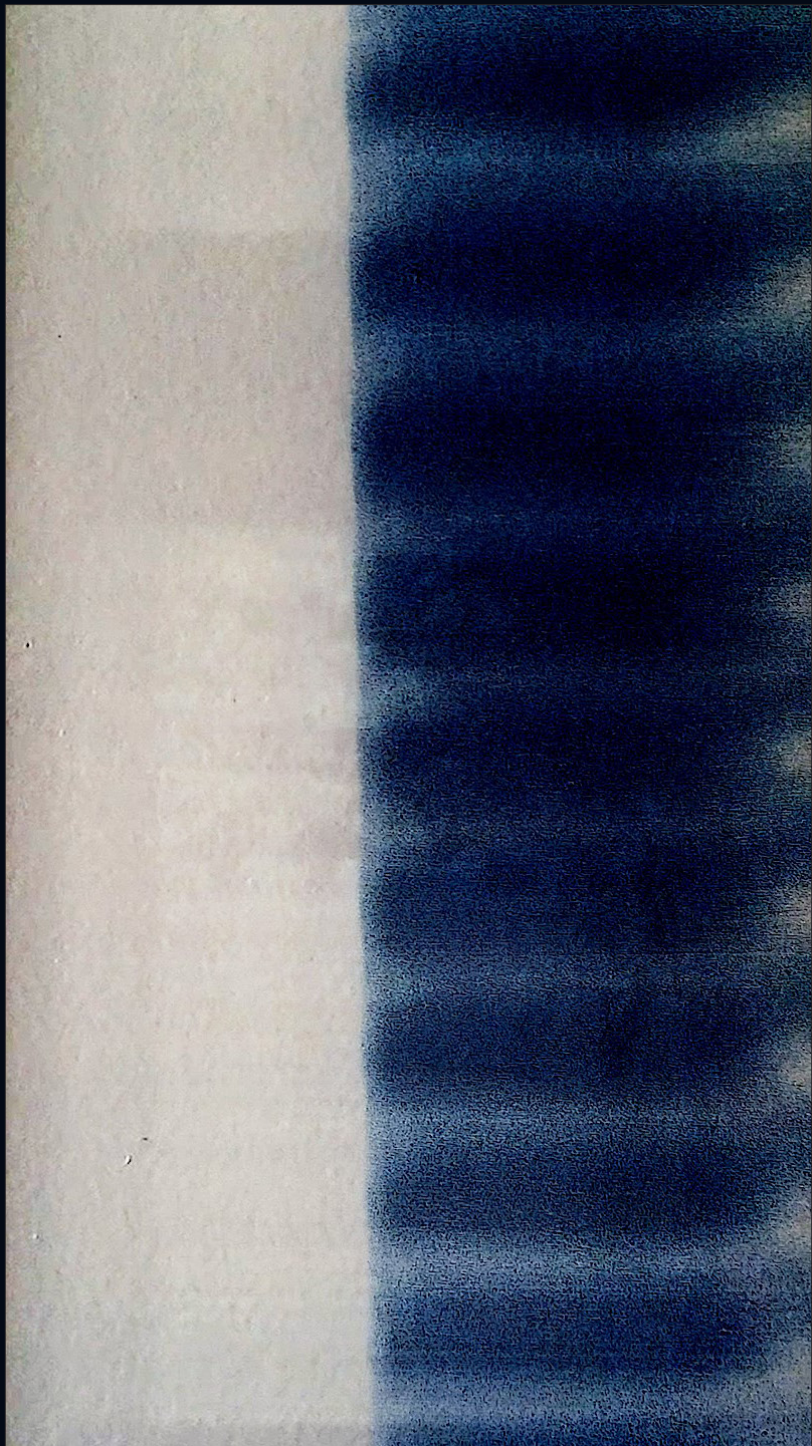
We believe that all works we feature, in their full diversity of colour and form, are afforded a grander context by their association with each other. Standpoints suggest walkways: paths, roads, flightpaths, railways, marshrutkas; whatever avenue of motion an individual might imagine most coherent with their own experience. What is of real substance is this narrative one entertains along the way and in between. A labour of the audience which differs in method, meaning, and complexity from seat to seat. Read on a little further. You'll find contemporary attestations to positions about the globe. Perhaps ghosts of abstracted headlines you've read, offering human context to cold, political awareness. Our writings are presented in a variety of English: non-standard, non-native, in-translation; increasingly less a language in itself, and more a natural phenomenon. A weed of Realpolitik. An Esperanto with an idiotic orthography. Living, breathing testimony of the landfill of human civilisation.

Of course art does not change the world. Art changes people. And thusly altered, these mad, rogue elements move through the world endeavouring to work their inexplicable will. To manifest their human

spirit. Who can say for better or worse? That is the enigma of civilisation. Art, in tandem with its co-conspirators, philosophy and ideology, has always found itself indicted in atrocity. It is an endless, roiling crisis. As such, it is a human responsibility to manufacture art in a considered manner, and to engage intelligently with this volatile substance. The material work of the artist is to grapple with the *Geistigkeit* of an audience – which is a public – and convincingly squeeze in some sense of meaning. Is it so trite to say that civilisation, in its essence, is people? Yes.

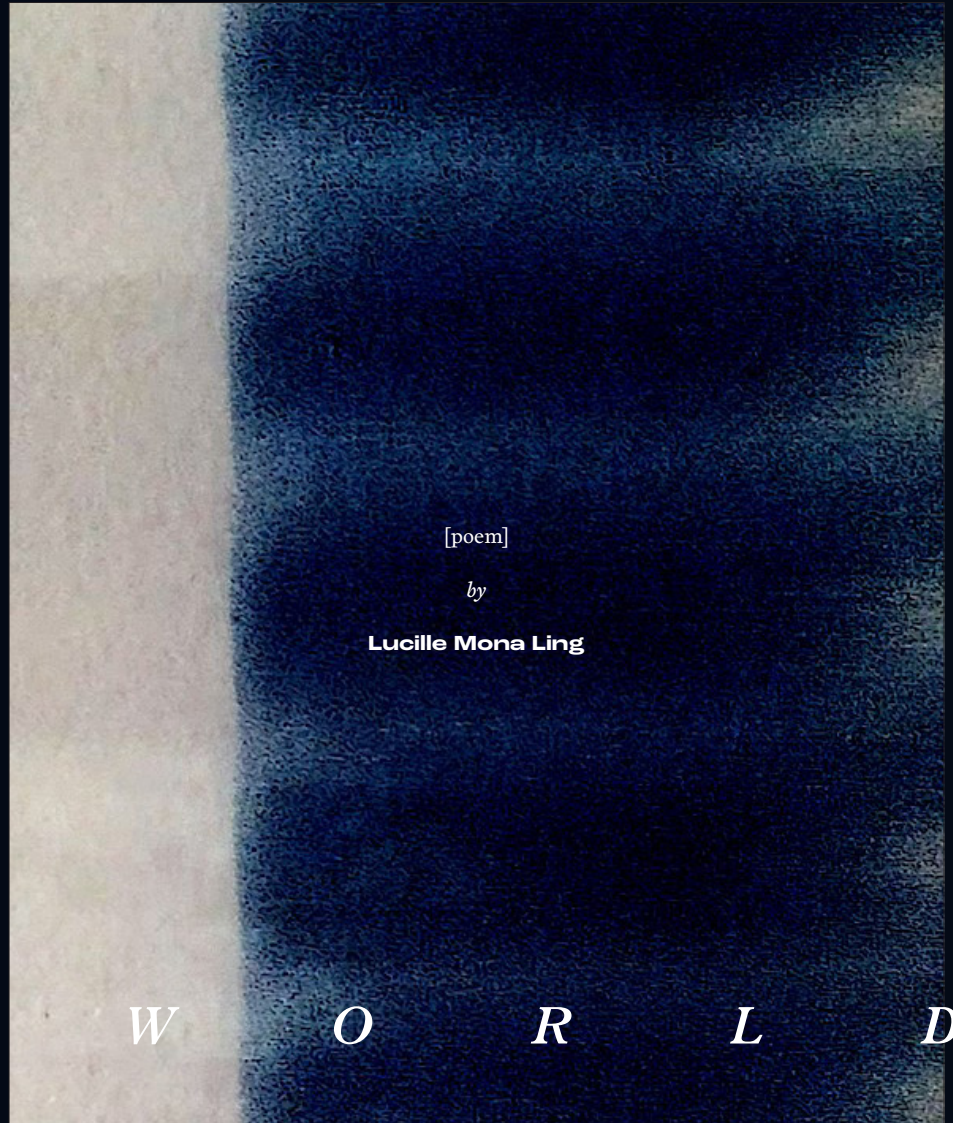






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*G R A D I E N T
G R A D I E N T*



[poem]

by

Lucille Mona Ling

W O R L D

W O R L D

W O R L D

a child doodles confusion
into working faces
sun-melted crayons

cry on in this abyss blossoming
free will crawls out of
the womb of an umbrella

cry on in this anatomy
of openings and closings
released only by a wall sending

wisdom through music
take shelter in button-
holes

flirt with nihilism
in the cinema
glide along rims of glasses

fall into circles
of donuts
do not remember

to count nodes tiny
(no destiny) left
unfertilised roots

a regular ascent descent
inclination to change
tastes like an unripe

strawberry green
gums kissing red
flesh flavours





EVAPORATION

&

SUBLIMATION

[poems] by Sarah Hudis

EVAPORATION

today I feel very little inside
is too warm but not hot just about

the opposite of wind on your skin and so Still

you can't watch mold growing on the window panes but there is more
each time i look

We talk a lot about how we're made of water/ I read that they are all polluted, every

single

river

I try to scan my body for a feeling but there is only the steady unspecific hum
of electricity and plumbing ticking sometimes cars outside

Today I feel everything

The big blue sky splitting open and hope pouring in like cloud over a mountain like a
waterfall like something so heavy and urgent I can't hold it can't keep still can't keep
from thinking what next what next

The fields are on fire like a waterfall like a glacier
collapsing on a nature documentary and the tv is on mute

I want to spit your taglines into the ocean make them into cloud the big sky splits
open like a waterfall like unexpected snow like houses underwater

SUBLIMATION



above **Ode to Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn** [collage] by **Adolphus Washington**

It's 2020 who smokes weed love; a ghazal

It's 2020 who smokes weed love
Two years now what a stampede love

Angry and guilty and scared and happy
Don't worry life's a nosebleed love

Dancing to Olympus drunk and damned
We're children like Ganymede love

Reading Ginsburg and crying in the mornings
We'll be okay hadn't we agreed love

This world is not worth anything anymore
You and I what more do we need love

[poem] by **Khushi Jain**



PAIN THRESHOLD



SACCHARINE ADOLESCENT DREAM
EMOTIONAL GUT-PUNCH
CHRONOLOGY OF MY CRINGE

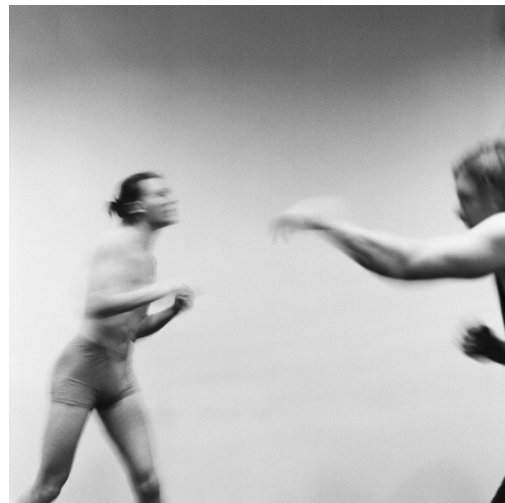
INCOMPREHENSIBLE BOREDOM
DELUSIONAL ECHO CHAMBER
WISH FULFILMENT FACTORY

NAKED SUPERSTITION
SECRET SOMETHING SOMETHING
PATHOLOGICAL DISAPPOINTMENT

GORGEOUS DESIRE
MINDFUCK GYMNASIUM
BULLSHIT LOVE OF MY LIFE

CORPOREAL TANTRUM
SUPPOSEDLY POIGNANT MOMENT
FUCKING MORALITY CLAUSE

PERSONAL LOL HELLSCAPE
IMPREGNABLE PERFECTION
MOST INTIMATE BETRAYAL



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LAST

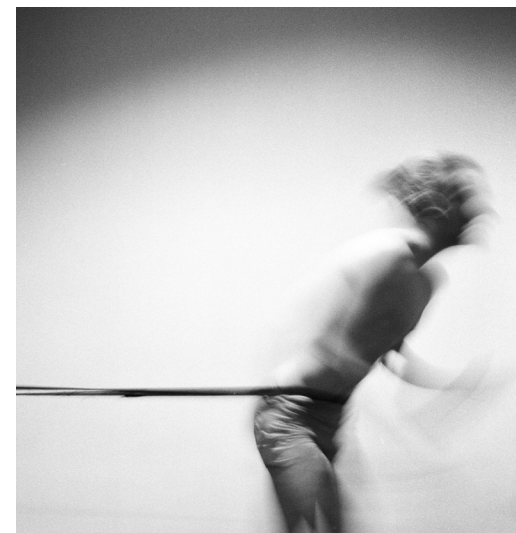
MONTH

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» » » » #

she
said

god is an insect



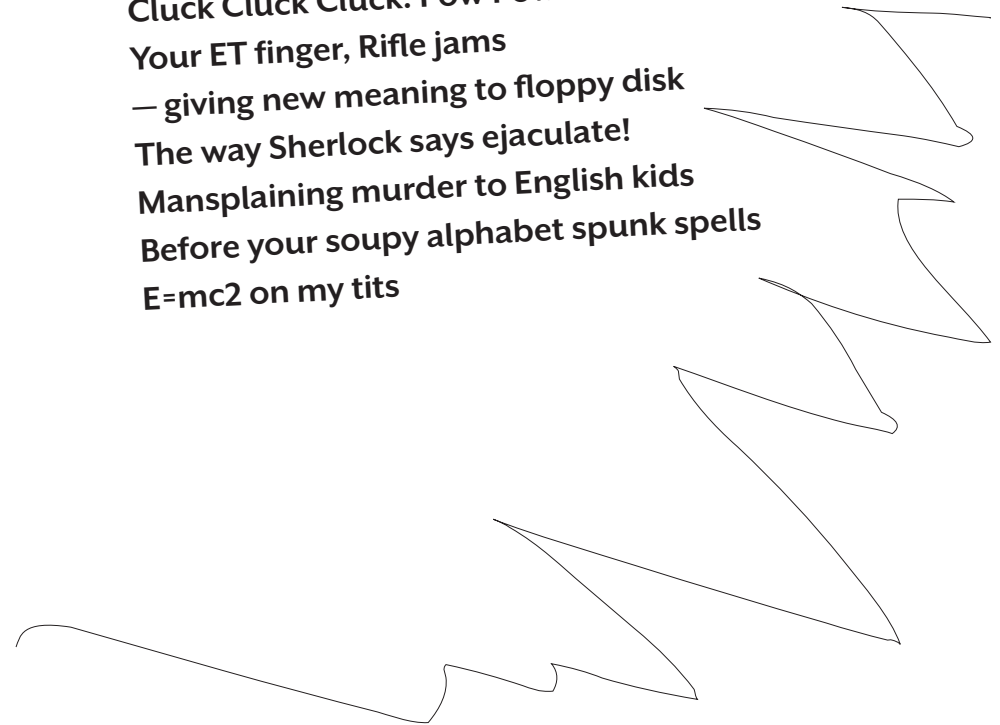


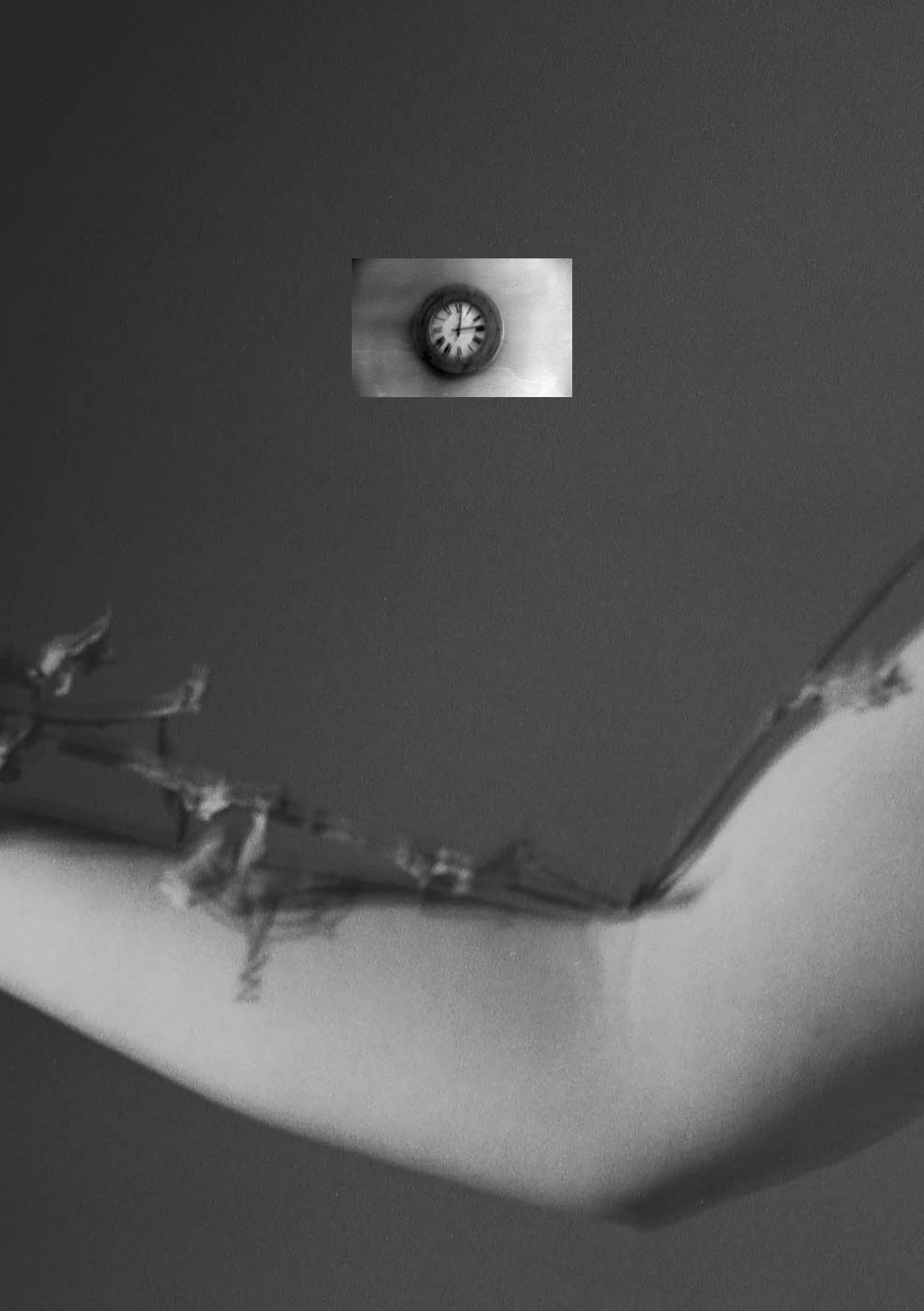
15, 875 GIGABYTES OF INFORMATION
IN ONE EJACULATION

(Thanks Stephan Fry for making
me think about sperm: QI Series J:1)

[poem] by Rachel Smith

The most intelligent species, I'm reminded, is man
When your finger spells its ABCs on my clit
The way you learnt to on YouTube
Between ads for KFC and Army Recruits
If you can cock an erection, you can cock a pistol
Cluck Cluck Cluck. Pow Pow Chicken
Your ET finger, Rifle jams
— giving new meaning to floppy disk
The way Sherlock says ejaculate!
Mansplaining murder to English kids
Before your soupy alphabet spunk spells
E=mc2 on my tits





Two poems

from

ALICE

' S

AD V

E

N

T

U

R

ES

THROUGH

THE

WONDERGROUND

[poems] by **Peter J King**

[photography] by **Sophie-Mai Pemberton**

perplexed
 a peppery piglet in her arms
 she fights back sneezes
 gazes at this world
 of pure peculiarity
 and wonders why she isn't
 in hysterics

navigating through
 a thorny complex tangle
 of apparent contradictions
 and absurdities
 she blinks back tears
 of outrage
 but has squeezed the quondam baby
 much too hard...

and wee
 wee
 wee
 all the way
 home



out make can't
 the I
 rules
 of
 this
 odd
 (not
 to
 say
 ridiculous) game
 said Alice
 somewhat
 peevishly

as she stared into the abyss
 of her mallet's eye

(her ball snuffled, snorted,
 fell asleep,
 abandoned by its quondam
 dam)

"It's dogged as does it"
 purred a voice
 from the thinly amused air

Alice's frustration
 came to a head
 which she lost
 though only
 temporarily

"if only you had studied
 gamin-theory"
 commented the unseen smirk
 as first one
 and then the other ball
 remembered they were due
 elsewhere
 and edged away
 unnoticed

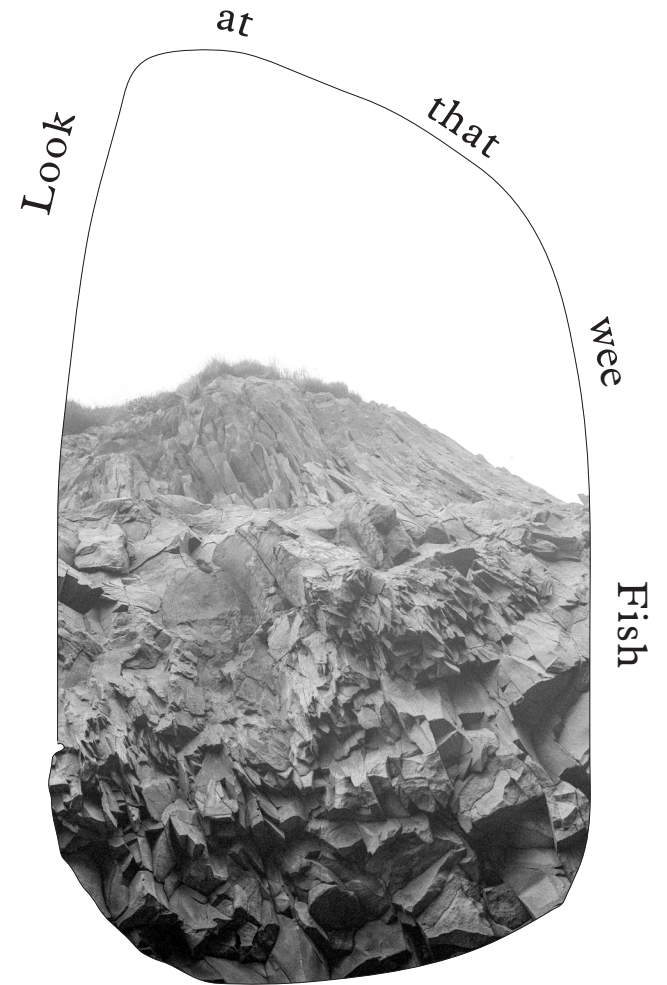
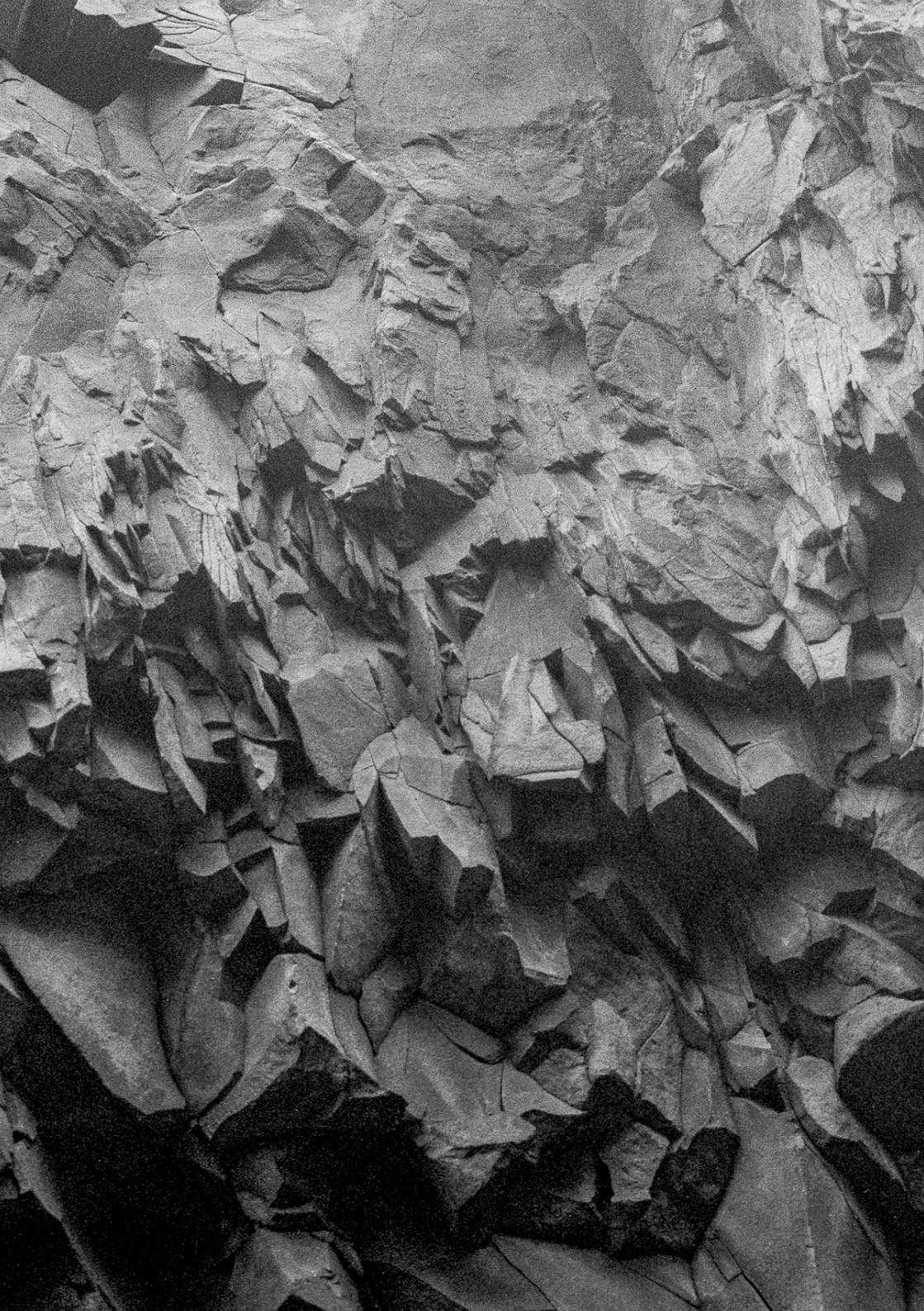




I never met my Grandpa Charles

*I never met my Grandpa Charles.
I heard he was a butcher
And a drunk and he cried
When they found Elvis.
He wrote secret letters
To his daughter estranged
Telling her how proud
He was and that he wished
Things were different.
But they weren't, so
He stopped writing.*

[poem] by **Brian Austin**
left **Dad Caving Suit** [photography] by **Zach Knott**



[prose] by **Tiree Taylor**

Am sittin here, in the dentist's oaffice, lookin at this wee fish, and am hinkin tae masel:

“yer awfy lucky ha'in that braw big tank aw tae yersel.”

Aw they bonnie wee decorations, colourful stanes, and they braw big gless waws aw jist fir yer ain pleasure.

Am watching it. Gawn roond, and roond. Circling beneath that big rectangular ceiling light wit flickers above its tank. Its one eh they ones wi aw the died bugs inside eh it, kehn the wans am oan aboot? Am sat, staring at it, fae the middle eh a row eh those furry, dark navy, padded chairs wi the shiny black metal legs. They're lining the hale room bar fae the wee gaps where the magazine table and fish tank have been pit. Ma bleck, mingin, work clothes and phlegmy cough are making me stand oot like a sare thumb in this polished setting. Am radiating death in this place eh pure, distilled, health. The rooms near silent bar fir the light hum eh the electric and the noise eh the wee lassie tapping away at her computer behind her rounded desk. No a soond fae the wee felly accroass fae me. Thank fuck tae cause ma hieds booncing.

A look at it, and its tiny wee shimmering boady circling aboot that big tank, and a starts tae hink eh that fuckin nasty bastard whit came along eftir ma auld man walked oot. Mum met him whilst we were workin oan the tottie fields during the summer a wis seven. He wis built like a brick shit hoose and didny fit under any eh the door frames in the hoose were aw tae stay in. He wis ay too pished tae mind tae bend er' tae get under thum, in the first week he hud managed tae grow a lump the size eh the east Lomond hill on the toap eh his forehead. His puss wis awready aw misshapen and swollen, and wis covered by skin wit looked rougher, and thicker thin wat a hid seen afor, hardened by years eh bad habits. A mind watching his honds at the dinner table. A couldny believe the size eh thum. Salt and pepper shakers looked lik marbles in his palms. Aye, ye kid dae real damage wi a pair eh weapons like that, and he did.

The chipped nails at the end eh his fin'gers were ay clogged wi the same filth wit caked his clothes, he wis ay hummin wi weeks worth eh muck. Ma mum and him started getting offay close, and a dinny kehn how, she wis ay the first tae catch a bad smell. Mibbe she thought eh him as exotic fir the thick accent he carried roond the fields wi him, it wis wan ad nivir heard afor. Am no sure if it wis doon tae that, or his heavy, wet, slur, thit a could nivir understand the bastard. As the night grew on, the slur wid worsen, it wisny long afor his words wid ooze out eh his mooth like wan loang stream eh tar. Aye, he yist tae beat me fae arsehole tae elbae fir no daen wit a wis telt. Bit it wisny that, a just couldny understand the slaving fuck. His breath wis ay sour fae aw the bevy he wid drink, awbdy tried no tae go near him fir it, bit a kid ay smell it oaf ma mums clothes in the mornings. Eftir losing ma auld man a wis share a wid nivir huv tae feel that lonely again. And especially oot there, in the tottie fields surrounded by wit wis left ae ma faimly, and plenty eh er folk, a shidny huv. Bit ma big brer, Pete, wis ay saft, he made it his business tae look awa' keep his distance, and ay stay well oot eh trouble. And ma wee sister, Eleanor, wis aboot nae bigger than the tatties we were picking at the time. It caused a pain in ma chist watching ma wee Maw and that big, horrible bastard getting sae close, fae afar, aw alane, oot oan they big tattie fields.

Like waking up fae a nightmare, and finding the monster still in yer room, he came back wi us eftir that summer. He took tae the hoose like a stray dug, wisny long afor he marked his scent oan awhin. It wis easy fir him, tae take up a place as though he hud nivir left. That's how he got that accent mum telt us, her distracted eyes looking up tae the waterlogged ceiling as though it were clouds. Like a gid stew, she said, it wis a mixture of aw the places he'd been tae. A disagreed, she wis talking pish, a wanted tae say, if you kehn how tae make a gid stew, how come aws we gets is shite aw the time. Bit a left her tae her dreaming and carried oan wi ma nightmare.

Am back in the room noo wi they bonnie decorations and tiny wee pebbles. Its still awfy quiet and they daylight bulbs reflecting oaf the titanium white paint is bothering ma hied like nae cunts business. They're needin tae get somehin a wee bit soafter on the walls. Some eh that Eggshell or Egyptian Cotton. Aye, ma wife likes the Egyptian cotton. “Am turnin intae Willy” she tells me. Aye “becoming a right nasty bastard” she says, “it's us or the bevy”. She says it as though it's as simple as a matter eh choice. A mean I dinny even kehn when it started fir fuck sake. Its the only way I kin get rid eh this heidache noo. Everything goes softer, it's like am sittin back watching ma life play oot, aye, jist cruising behind the passenger seat. It's no ma anger, it's his, it's no me shouting, it's him, it's no ma lies, nor ma problems either. Aye, everyhins jist easier eftir a couple.

The potent, clinical, sting eh the dentist's oaffice has seemed tae huv given wey tae an uncomfortably warm smell. That kind eh musky sweat that ye git when ye mind actually mind tae pit oan deodorant. No the usual body odour, no far oaf, though. A bit sweeter mibbe, like pitting Febreze oan sour milk. A didny even realise a wis gittin hoat. It's this wee felly. A kehn it. Av seen it afor.



As the weight eh his bloated boady continued tae crawl, and swell, and spread around oor hoose, the waws quickly started tae feel draw nearer, there wis less room tae breath, and if ever there wis, we were ay too scared tae. A hud tae tred differently, carefully. The hoose started tae feel like it hud a petrol bomb oan a windae ledge, ye nivir kent wat was gonna set him oaf, and how bad the damage wid be when ye did. Him and ma maw started staying up partying, music blaring doonstairs. Me and ma brer lay in bed upstairs, oor backs turned tae wan another, baeth a us desperate tae faw asleep, hoping that wid be us until the mornin. Bit every time he came intae the room, pu'in wan eh us oot by the ankles and battering thum until he passed oot. The er' would lay in bed, still, clenching their eyes shut, playing deid like they wee animals wit canny defend themselves dae. Until, without a word, the er wid crawl back under the covers, the bed shaking as we cried tae ourselves. It wis aboot then a started tae pish the bed. He yist tae laugh at us, yist tae say a wis like a wee bairn, thit al need tae start wearing nappies like wee Eleanor. Mum yist tae beg us no tae tell anywan at the school, tell thum ye were in a fight, she says. Nae cunt started bothering us at school at least, wi the amount eh fights a wis gettin intae, they were aw too feart. What goat me through those nights wis the hope thit wan day he wid be goan, take oaf and leave us lik he'd left every ether place. Bit then mums belly began tae swell, and any hopes a hud sunk deep tae the boatum eh ma mind, it wis like a lighthouse hud switched oaf its light, leaving me in the middle eh the ocean, stuck in total darkness, wi nae end in sight.

Bit a huv tae admit, It does look awfy peaceful behind they waws. Aye. Safe. Unchanging. A cannae help but wish a was ahind them anaw. Wrapped in that braw numbing still. That comforting calm drowning out aw they thoughts that swell, and crash, and pound beneath my skull. Foggy and pure, awhin jist, muted. Nothing but a slurred whisper. Aye... tae jist be in there, alane, pacified, numb. That gentle song eh comfort its soaft, ripples caws tae me. It seems tae pu' me in. A kehn If a kid jist touch it, jist feel it, even if jist fir a wee while, a wid be better. It wid aw get better.

When ma wee brer joined us in the hoose, hings changed, a part eh Willy came oot that a hid never met afor, somehin tender, Aye, warm, maybe even. A part thit he only ever showed his wean. Me and Pete yist tae watch, that tiny wee boady, wrapped in his big airms. Wrapped in those big airms. Those big airms that wid haul us oot eh bed each night, those big airms wit sent us flyin accross the hoose, those big airms wit caused us so much pain, giving only comfort tae his son. It wisny fair, it's no fair, we were only weans, there wis nuhin we did, nuhin we cid huv ever changed, tae feel a love like that. Were did ma Dad go, why did he nivir come tae stoap it, why did he nivir care? It wis aboot then a realised a wis oan ma own, thit a could nivir rely oan anyhin, and thit a needed tae find ma ain comfort. And that's wat a did.

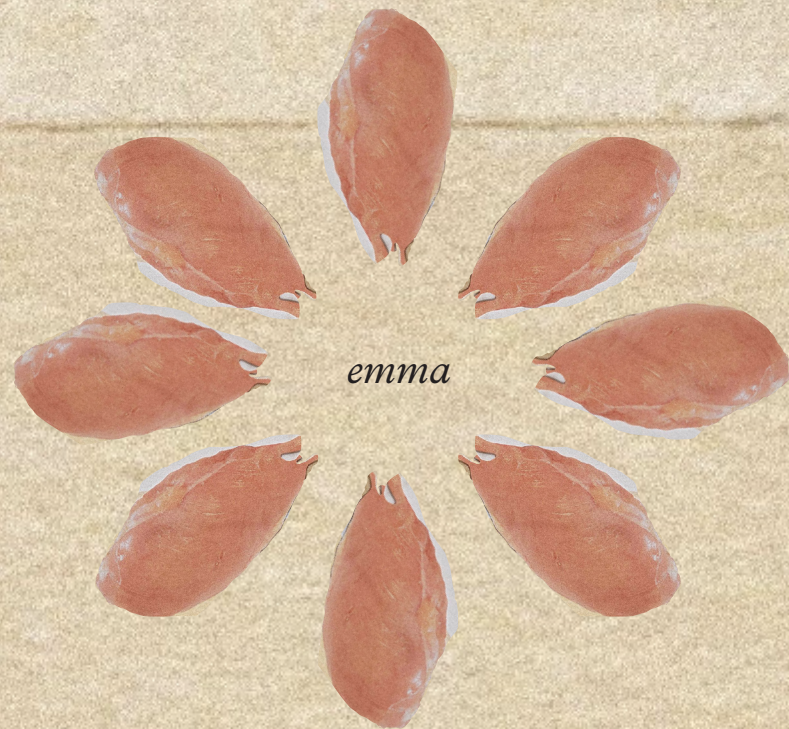
A imagine ma taes in that water, the instant calm it wid afford me. Like when ye first step intae the pool oaf the plane, the first draw eh a bind, the first bevy eh each day. Aye, bliss. Somehin else tae focus oan, somehin tae busy yir mind. These hings

though, they dinny last forever. The reality is aywis gonnae be there. Waiting. Aywis.

Before a hud met him, a hid nivir come tae question hings, a hid nivir considered what we were, nor why we were here. Bit watching him, watching his rotting boady struggling tae stay alive, sweating and shaking, fighting against aw eh that shite eh wid pile intae it. A couldny help bit wonder, why?

Feels like a drafts jist come in and am shaking like fuck. Ma hearts racing, and the skin wit sheaths me is burning, aching fir that tank. Fir that cool relief its calm waters promise me. A feel caught in a daze, wit the fuck does any eh it metter anyways'. A starts tae slip oaf ma work bits. Chunks eh mud and concrete chip oaf and lay noticeably oan the clean, blue, carpet eh the waiting room. It's jist me, the tank, and the wee felly noo. Everything else blurs. The white waws, the cerpit, the magazines, the posters and their fucking shiny teeth, the chairs, the lassie and her fucking tap, tap, tapping, the computer, the noise.

Ma shoulders sink and the thumping in ma hied's given way tae wan long high pitched tone. Ma hearts swelling in my chist like a ballon, blocking ma gullet, drawing me er tae the wee felly in his big braw tank. A dip ma fingers intae the water, the hairs on ma boady ripple, and ma hert skips. This is it. This is aw a need, aw a evir needed. Something to droon oot the noise. The wee lassie ahind the desk is shoutin at us but the noise barely cuts through, its like am under the water awready. It's the only place av ivir been. A dips ma hied intae the cool blue, the world blurs and a sinks intae maself. It's nice in here. Its nae wonder the wee felly keeps circling.



emma

[poem] by **Khushi Jain**

they destroyed the playground
in front of my window and
i told emma it's a metaphor
literature is a sin she whispered
art is institutionalised failure and
truths are subject to market risk

we decided we need a burning question
so she took out her sewing machine
and filled bobbins to perfection
while i alliterated similes

last month she said god is an insect
and religion is taxidermy and
i have too many fountain pens for this place
and we coloured the walls of our childhoods
with white crayons and set up
telescopes to gaze at our mothers

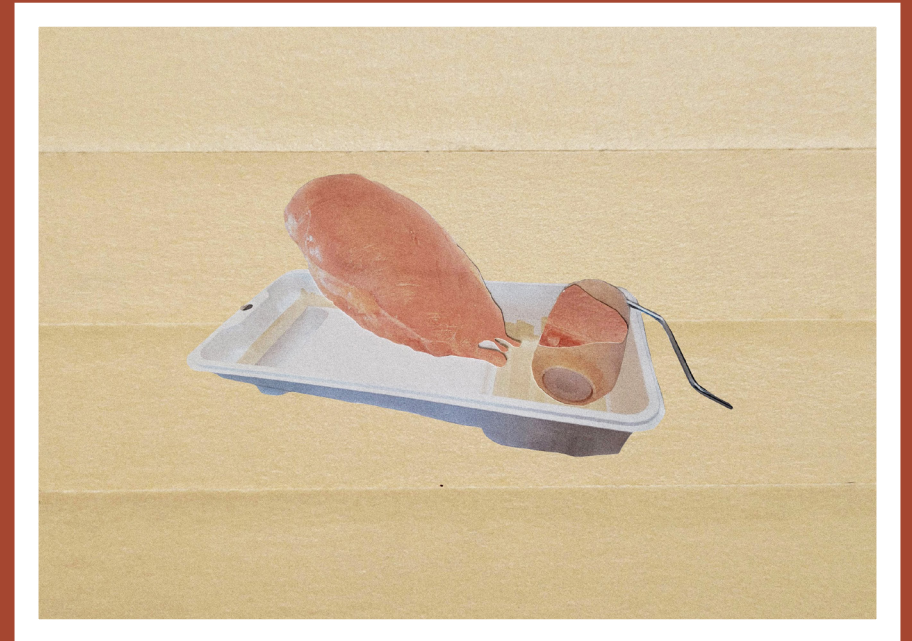
i told her that homer told patrick kavanagh
that gods makes their own importance
and like eve rolling her eyes at adam

she told me that i think in the past tense
and must read some chekhov

i baptised her threads in ink when
she complained that her hands were tired
did atlas' hands ever tire i wondered
she'd make a diabolical atlas
she'd be daedalus and i her undead icarus

so i decided to give her my hands
because love is giving up power
and the future must be gentrified
and we must become contextual

yesterday she burst into tears
because newspaper stands are dying



above I heard you paint poultry [collage] by Nik Liguori

A R M E D



[poem] by Ross Hoey

A R A N

Pulled over head the clean white cable knit
fair steadyshaken hand of grandmother
hidden on those eveninged afternoons when
conversation was rife and sometimes not

the body wrapped up and snug as a bug
in woolened infancy, forced error from
expert hands, comfort lending strength to the
wandering child of lost Erin who makes

his own mistakes accidentally and
consistently, now clad in his armour
he becomes a saint, holding staff aloft
as galloping horses charge forth the land

the little people, the small and the minds
growing their own green trees of thoughtjyodreams
which grow and spread like Saint Brigid's blanket
wrapping up Erin's children with soul warmth

bunched up bottom dragged and stretched holes pulling
growing enough for the soul to escape
water pours in but no human hand can reach
the Irishman impervious to human hate

soul sunglows and smiles beneath moustached lip
green leaf falls, sails down from evergreen tree
cold happy wind blows through, holed jumper, old
but as chainmail will rust, age won't deride use

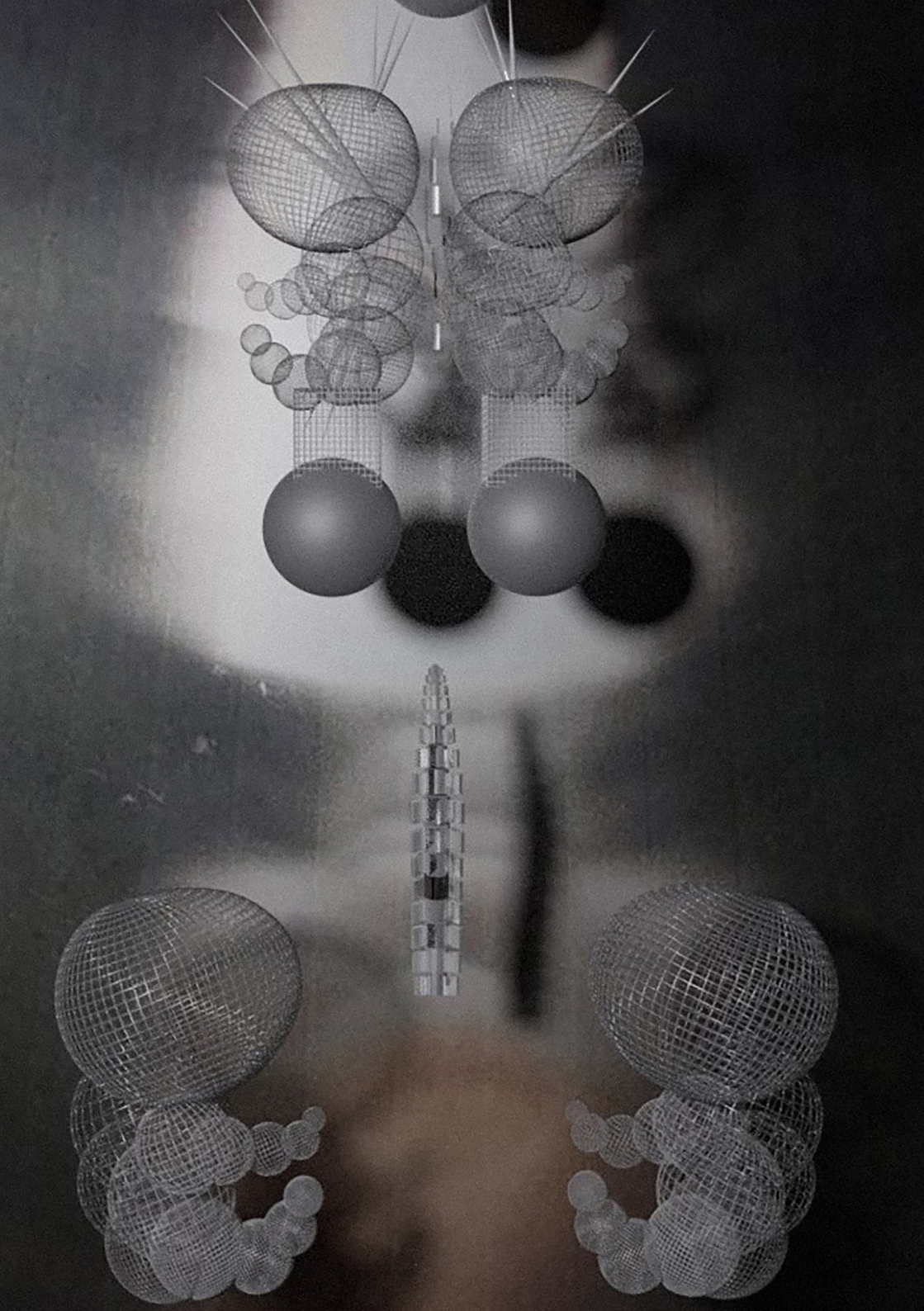
so I arm myself in Aran, as all
the exiled children desire to do in
foreign lands far from the emerald isle
to feel mother's comforting arms again

the world is cold, our jumper keeps us warm
the same worn jumper for you and for me
soldiers of Éire, forever chanting
the songdream of the homeland yore of old

oh come with me to Erin and dance with
the waves of horses, surf glows green gleam beam
crashing on shore while pockets of gold turn
to mud and we know that home is a dream

not to be seen but to be dreamt up again
by the next child and their own journey of
leaving and loss, the wheel of the world turns
the tear falls, wets the Aran wool, and pulls
jumper past the very shape of itself.





AFTER LIFE
AN AI
GENERATED
CRITIQUE OF A
PHOTOGRAPHIC
TRIPTYCH



BY THE ARTIST

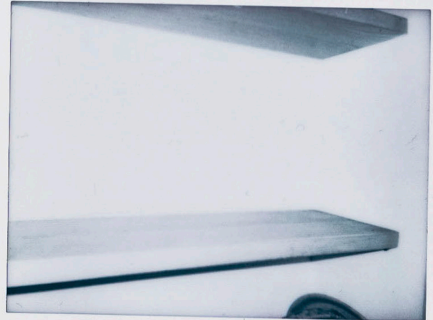
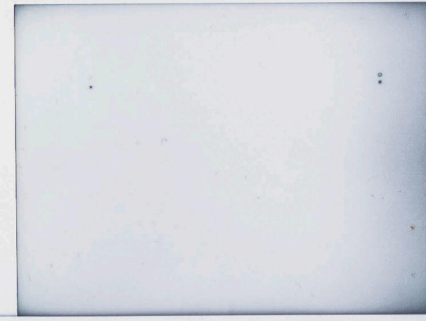
[digital text to speech audio recording]
by Benjamin Robinson

Humanity is ugly,
A humanity of monsters.
On a heavy greyish morning,
Between knees and elbows,
By an unwritten law,
In the wrong place,
The body and mind smoulder.
A soul is one of thousands,
One in a million,
Not a drop in the ocean,
Not with a voice following the wind,
Only the shell
That must somehow live
Among the heaviness and greyness
Entwined in a net.

Untitled [poem] by **Jenia Demchenko**

Людство потворне,
Людство потвор.
Важким сірим ранком,
Між колін і ліктів,
Неписаним законом,
На непотрібнім місці
Тліє тіло й розум.
Душа, одна із тисяч,
Одна із мільонів,
Не каплею у морі,
Не голосом за вітром,
А тільки оболонка
Що має якось жити
Серед важких і сірих,
Заплетених у сітку.

[translated from the Ukrainian]



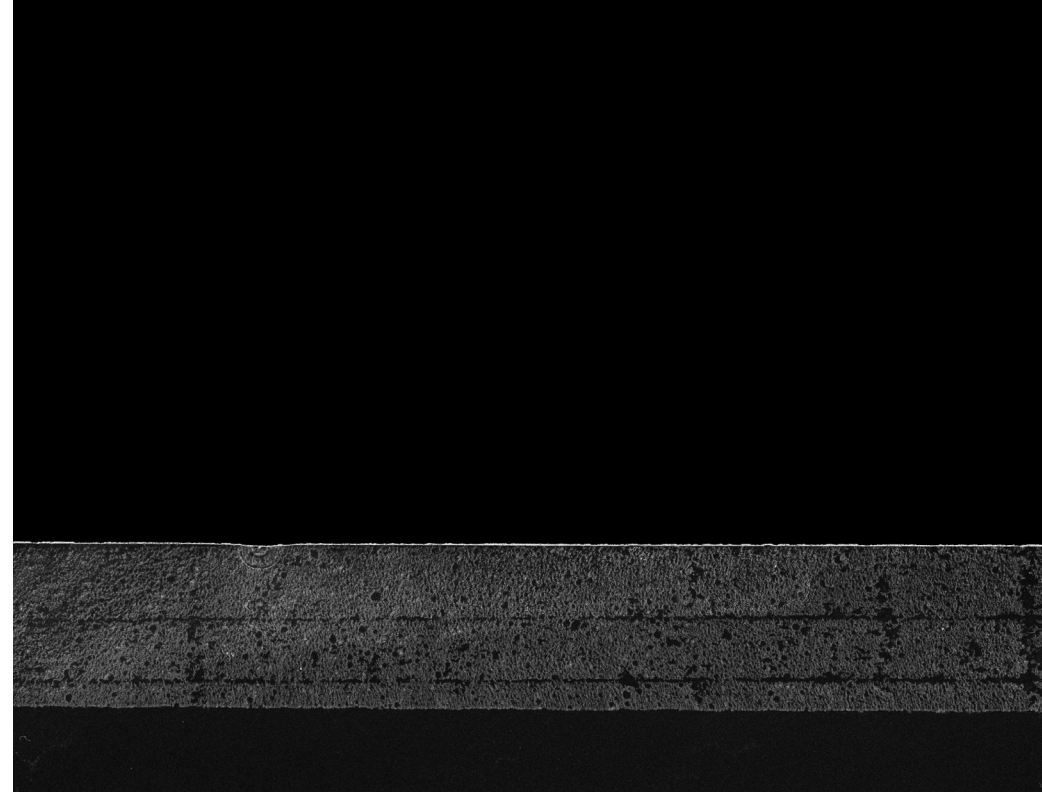
of the spaces you left [photography] by Neva Elliott

G A R T H 'S

We met Kyle at Garth's
They were close in age
But more like father and son
To see him you had to look up
Passed the boulders behind peacocks
And roosters tucked away
So the mountain lions couldn't find them
Pulling to the center of a drum
He's probably watching a movie
Or something but where does truth begin?
Like when a lightning bolt strikes sand
Bone and coral make up Earth's gravel lots
After poachers march on
Take the baking soda back to where it
Belongs because it too has a place here
And if you drink tea of this plant you know
Whether or not magnets even work
In water
Ancient instruments made custom
From PVC pipe and fiberglass pulse
With the lava flowing beneath my feet
Pianos wrapped in plastic drift into dreams
And more dreams and it's dark now
And every star is moving closer asking
If it's the right time to press down and
Pull apart rock to reveal Truth's end
If we haven't met before
We have now
So follow me to the edge
And you'll hear what's been calling
All along

[poem] by **Brian Austin**

top half **Lain** [photography] by **Lily Petch**



bottom half **Broken Printer** [photography] by **YeeWen Wong**



W A K I N G

,

D r e a m i n g

,

d r e a m l e s s

The horse of old age is on the horizon,
mane ruffled by the black north wind
and lit by the setting sun. It gets closer
even as you look the other way,
carrying in its saddlebags
fragments of the future: a riot of rocks
that time's fast glaciers will leave behind
as they gouge an empty plane
where lonely memory stretches,
sharing its secrets with the sea.

D E P A R T U R E S

A town created for the railway
is an empty platform once the trains have gone.
At three in the morning I hear
slicing through the desert-tinged air
the clank of wagon after phantom wagon
carrying away the well-remembered dead:
old people smiling in vanished summers,
schoolmates lost in traffic accidents
and those who hung, gassed or shot themselves
because the isolation told them to.
There's a vacant second-class seat
in one of the very last carriages,
but I'll tear up my ticket tomorrow.

[poems] by **S.C. Flynn**



left **The Gaze** and above **Confidant at G's Barbershop**
 [collage] by **Adolphus Washington**

Reader: I am going to kill you. I am sorry to say so, but it is really for the best. And anyway — I am killing the moon and the stars, and the wind and the rain and all the bodies buried in the earth and the cosmic deities who etch-a-sketched the constellations of which you are so fond. So really you are only collateral — you should be thankful I am saving you for last. A little time to have a final cup of coffee, perhaps, or a wank, or whatever it is that you do to make something from nothing. “Why me?” you might ask, and if you were to then I would reply “because I like you,” simply, truly. You who had the foresight to single me out in whatever publication it is that I have weaseled my way into, this little nook from which the world explodes.

You may also ask me — straight, candid, nameless face to faceless name — “Why are you doing this? Why should the world end?”, sniffing, grovelling, pleading. I have no interest in answering these questions — it is enough for fiction to gut itself, as you shall see, but to flaunt and twiddle the supernumerary nipple of authorial intention is purely masturbatorial. My final act is an undoing because you have read the title already.

It is an eponymous act; I myself do not matter very much. Perhaps if any microbes live on from this, my armageddon, and colonise the swirling specks of space-dust left behind, the proto-planets-and-stars, they will pass around stories and name me. I would be hero and villain of all their newest myths; the name the wind whispers as it picks up its mantle to shuffle the ice-ash rising from the nebulae’s corpses. It is a pleasant thought, but impossible: there will be nothing left. No synth-sounds or smoke-machines, no ash and no dust, only — well, you shall see.

But I am getting ahead of myself; our unholy rapture has not yet even begun. So let us begin now, so many words from the beginning. And let me make this easy to swallow: I will start with the bees. Maybe I will even spell it out: *poof!*; or *simsalabim!*; or anything else, to make it palatable. But rest assured: they are gone.



Do not — reader — do not tear your eyes from this page — but know, out there, they are no more. No more buzzing in your ear because they think you are a flower and your brightly coloured shirt some calamitous petal; no more honey for your aunt to give you on your birthday; no more no more no more. I began with the bees because it does a lot of the job for me: see how the economy of pollen and seeds is crumbling, we are in the fourth quarter and it is only depletion, plummeting lines on graphs into mud which is dryer, now, and pallid. See how the rainforests wither and the throng of scary buzzing things which stick in your neck to drink blood has died down to a whimper. Din is no more, the lights are out, and everybody is frightened.

Of course, there are ration-cans of cubic meat and biscuits and crackers, so life will limp on relentlessly yet. There is far more work to be done.

We turn now to humanity — full humanity: philanthropists and paedophiles, the Pope and all the angels and the killers and the homeless, and TV licence checkers, and primary school teachers and soldiers and solicitors and and and — I could fill my numbered pages with endless lists of everyone: Heads of International Operations, your own mother, Marie Antoinette. Living and dead, fossil-fuelled and calcified under aeons of muck and sediment. I could, but — we both will surely tire of it, reader. I am coming to like you more and more.

Amongst the endless anaphora, though, allow me to make one thing very clear: it hurts. I am going to destroy humanity and do not think it is figurative, do not think it is without real suffering. For this is the stuff of limbs being ripped apart. I might shirk a little weight off my shoulders and delve deeper, inward, beyond the swimming little cells in your big and fleshy bodies; beyond the smaller stuff inside of them which loses the honour of physicality. I am pulling back layers and layers of living — macro to micro and all the rest of the prefixes. It is all come undone, like putty, like hummus; this the slop-stuff of your very own making and being. I have singled out the marrow of the marrow and here it is: the less-than-atomic impersonal pronoun, it, in a state between matter and nothing. I pull it apart. I crush it, explode it, I crumple it up. I have used a pip to flatten the orchard.

But still — life has the impetuous proclivity to stay alive. Even amongst the wreckage, amid the marshes and wastelands and the volcanoes spilling magma from inside the Mother Earth, like pores oozing pus, like a thousand leaking anuses. Yes, be repulsed — for this is what I meant when I told you it is painful. Do not lose yourself in the tide of lucid prose or in a densely worded thicket: this is death; Yin spills from the circlet like a tortured ejaculation. This the sort of white creation which destroys, affable as I am, manicured as Thomas Ferebee's finger was.

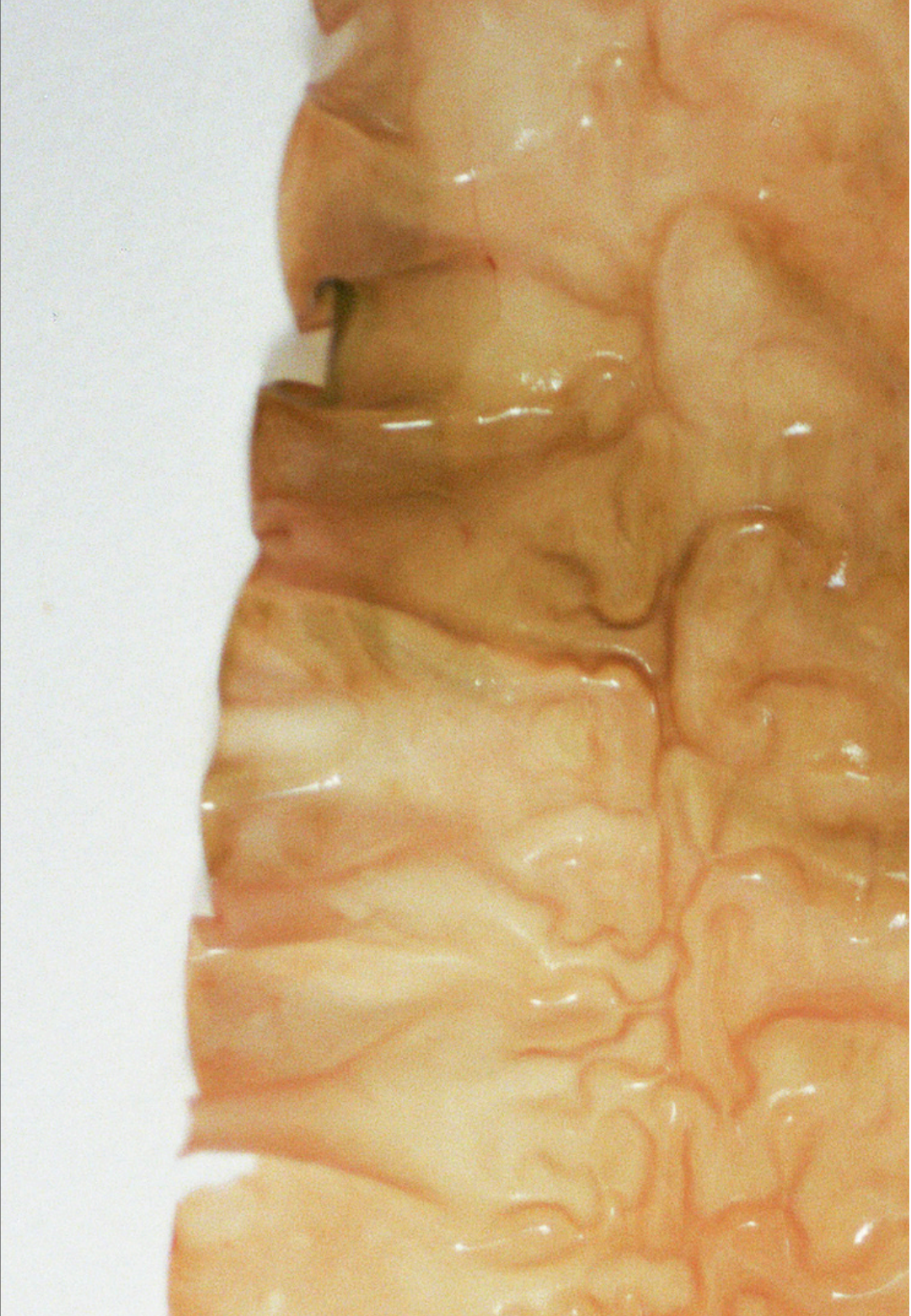
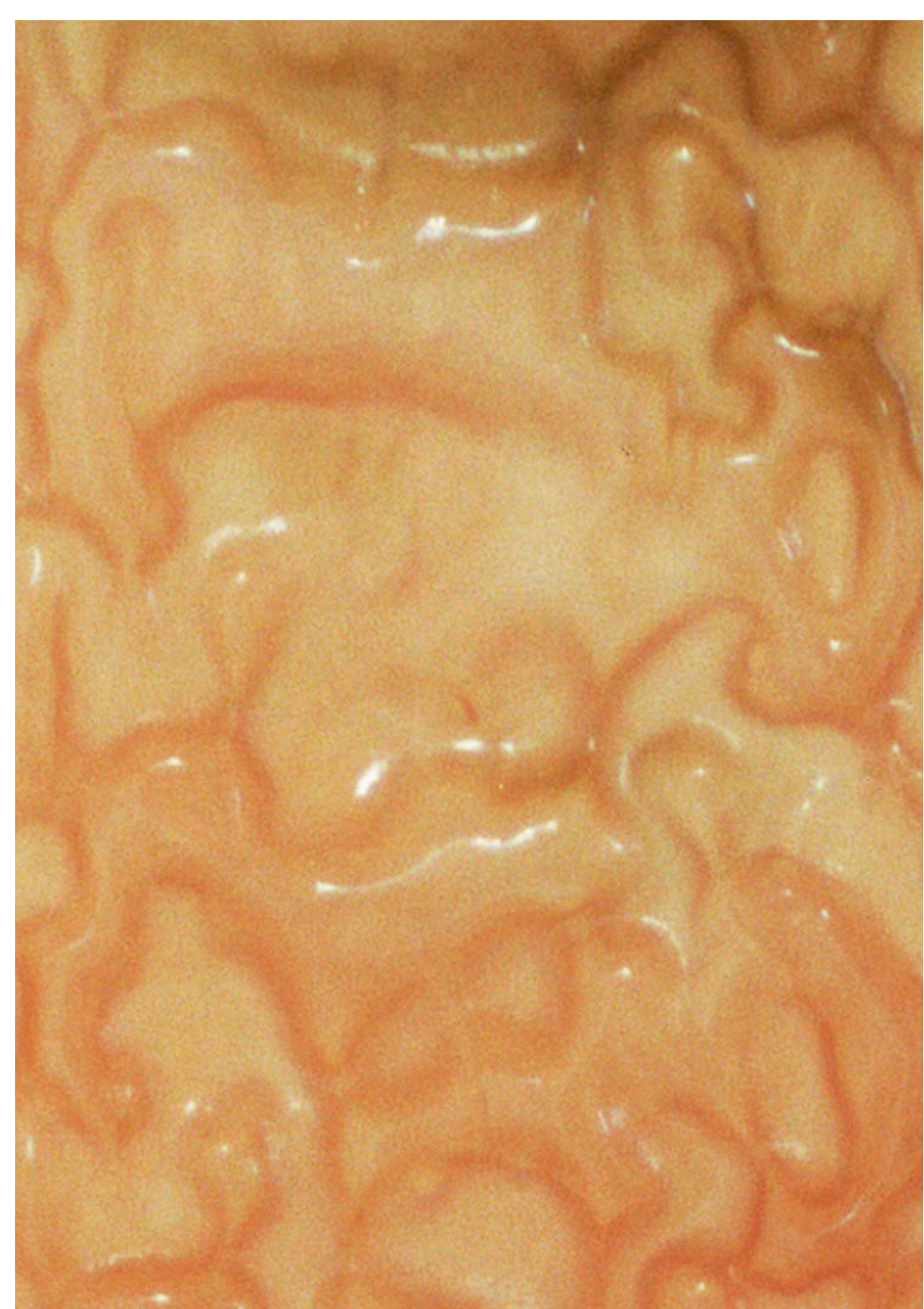
In this tearing apart of the universe I pull fibre from fibre, tissue from tissue. Ligaments picked off of bone like a piece of paper torn up. Screaming, wailing; fields of vision smeared with tears like the stained window by where you water your plants. Let the words *gooey* and *squishy* slap your shame and your

conscience like a wet stinky fish. Stomach the meaty consequence of being. Roadkill drawn from a fleeing body back into flat and red and viscera, the equation of life and noisy metal death just a bloodstain on the tarmac.

I do not need to tell you there was so much more you could have done with it all; I am sure every time you watched the sunset you came close to understanding. But I have taken away your sunset, I have taken away your stars and your moon and your absinthe. Look behind your eyes and see that the world is all in ruin now: the molluscs rejoice in the neo-primordial sea which would surely brew new life if I let it. I have torn down the chasm into which every creature stared when it seemed only to be stargazing. I forget what it was made of; maybe blood and amnion, placental stuff and viscera; maybe memories and spirit-wisps, who knows. Now it is only elemental, it is less than the sum of its parts, and the world is finally ending. And we are far-gone now in emptiness — that which I cannot convey because there arises, as ever, that impertinent gulf between style and substance, form and function, sandwich and egg and cress. For I can pelt you, fairly easily, with little kernels saying *empty*, *vague*, *null*, or even wash you over with this bucket of the fluid slip-sliding of nothingness, the empty space between the nucleus and electrons which makes up so much of what we call entity, because there is an emptiness in everything, not just on the sad arid plateau of the desert but wriggling in between the grains of sand, knocking around the head of the dry and thirsty traveller trudging one sorry step after another to some promise of fullness, some spring nestled deep in the sand from which substance flows, the occupier of space, the killer of that vagueness to which I am only trying to elude but which screams and claws forever at the vagabond's throat.

But I am only leaving you a little time to think of things, as you always do. I am sure that whatever you just did with that emptiness I gave you, it was filling: maybe you skipped right across it to the nearest promise of stuff, maybe you filled it in with thoughts and annotations so that by now it is not empty at all, perhaps your mind wandered to the washing you must do later, or your plans tomorrow night, or maybe even that dread-filled thing which you have spent all day avoiding, which your every thought is so carefully sketched around and outside of so that your life by now is its negation, be it heartbreak (I was going to continue the list but it is certainly nothing other than the tearing apart of fibres inside you, I am sure). Either way — we have strayed now from emptiness. Body (container of something) and something (filler of body) crumble, or ooze, stood alone and null is that one thing the two can never fuse to form; for null is the thing they both hate most. It is not in the nature of language, or life, or whatever, to reach for something outside of it; but, alas, our only choice is the self-restrained struggle whilst that binary exists, that duality at the core of all things, of inner and outer, real and unreal, soup and bowl.

So: let us be done with it. The line between all things has been rubbed out.



Now to call clouds cotton swirls is to weight the heavens with fluffy stuff which justified slavery; it is actually an act of courage to struggle endlessly to render the world believable. For potential and verity, unborn and dead, are met now — so that the many lines of being which run concurrently, which split off from one another every time you choose coffee or tea, or your black socks over your grey, is all muddled as this sort of — but let me stop there, for with the figurative being literal and the other way around, if I say it is all soupy mess then you will emerge from the rubble with a carrot in your mouth, drenched in blender-blitzed peas and harbouring croutons.

Emptiness and fullness converge just as the physicists foresaw in their prophecies of the postpostbiblical heat death: the stuff of it all, of squirrels, of squids, of the 1985 Illinois tax code, of glittering jewels, of falling in and out of love, of boundless evocation, you can be sure, have been — excuse me — have been, will be, having had been, being, were, stirrups, chemosynthesis, Alzheimer's — excuse me for getting ahead of myself: have been pulled apart and diffused — sea-spray, plastic-free glitter, longing, tobacco, birth — so that all that once was full, was stuff, was something, was anything, was empty space between anythings, is now all together in its primitivest parts; that is emptiness and stuff. So that all the cosmos is a carpet of nothing and something, never, it seems, to regroup into Janus-headed life: chocolate cake with icing, The Monkees, igneous rock formations, first kisses, wolf howls, LED lights, spires, fronds, copulae — excuse me, the flow is getting ahead of me, you, we, they, he, him, Sharon, it, Manchuria, fences, clacking sounds, starlight, nebulae, Newton's principles, a traffic cone, a suicide. This the final deluge, like Noah's, like the ice caps: the final primordial sea is sweeping us into the infinite stuff/nothing which is being and unbeing, doing and undoing, all at once and never.

You are bound to have noticed by now that there is one doing not yet undone, one final river whose shores are still unbridged. I mean language, the messenger, the colour of the ending of all things. Perhaps I could have written tqwd; said uŷh and . QUEOHOQHFSDJ; tkane yosuo toniwrHE inot a greinon baaaaaaarrreeeeellly reocningsbale, asiud see hwo you stilil ese somiehtghigng? Beofre 持ち去って, κατεβαίνοντας στο άγνωστο, لم لوزنلا نم دي زم, f545r5fttcacen89craehjahaswsirch. But it would just be an embarrassment, a waste of ink, for we both know that as long as you live you will interpret, you will read, you will make, make, make! Meaning, tea, love — the list is endless and delves into a formlessness which I cannot contain — again the game of elusion. Your constant undoing a doing, your peeks at the void occupied by the light your eyes give off — I am finally tired of lists. Perhaps some day the technology will arise for me to reach out of this page and wring your neck with non-figurative hands. As you scatter off from this passage, into blank space, you will all once have been here you and your words and your grey socks and your and grey and socks and everything else I could muster to make for a moment they were made and unmade

as you were as all things are wont to as is happening to me now as we part ways and I impart you with my final undoing of yourself in this moment of nakedness in which I tell you the moral in which the parable reaches its namesake and it is that although you will surely do and imbue and live and make until the worms eat your reading eyes in this moment here I am killing you you are finished and you must begin again begin again makes something from nothing and draw nothing from something and put anything together to make well and unmake whatever spills out from the end of these words — the world you must return to as the page gives way to whiteness and you lift your eyes at last.



D R O P P I N G
H E A T / /

[poem] by **Devika Pararasasinghe**

*I touch you.
I touch the plants.
I touch another.
I use no hands*

*Out of the seemingly marginal, — that
moment won't leave, out of the circle is
infinite space // see the thing that came out
of a thing is that I couldn't sleep last
night. I think I saw every hour With
no daylight in-between -*

*Knitted in sternum, kidney pebbles, — pop
to pry. Rolling, to keep on keep rolling,
we've hit the*

*goldmine. A so-called pharmaceutical
registered high. Wait to hear My heartbeat
on a diet again. Watching the ice-split.
In one selfish night Eating from the jar,
drinking you in the Field is watching the
ice-split, — that moment won't leave. Won't not be
a burden.*

*The cuckoo trapped, honest, blanket-bare,
in Chicken-slaw. Here are no corners, all
shadows, — still
the hour of the day that wavers at a
heavier sentient
You faithless man,
Old like water // Wants on a wanted horse
with a horn
When seeping starts, vibrations follow, we
walking saw a pay-day, a liver in
formaldehyde.*

*The lens has become unfriendly, real. I
wait on the know,
How to get into someone else's dream —
I need to deliver a word
Like the one that just fell
to be seen with[out] you painting
another future
is ÖGA FÖR ÖGA, My vegetal
kin, my Cowboy says, what Simon says I'll
get over it today, so you'll get
over
it someday, see I say dough rises when
you let it rest, — on a dessert spoon, I'll*

see you soon

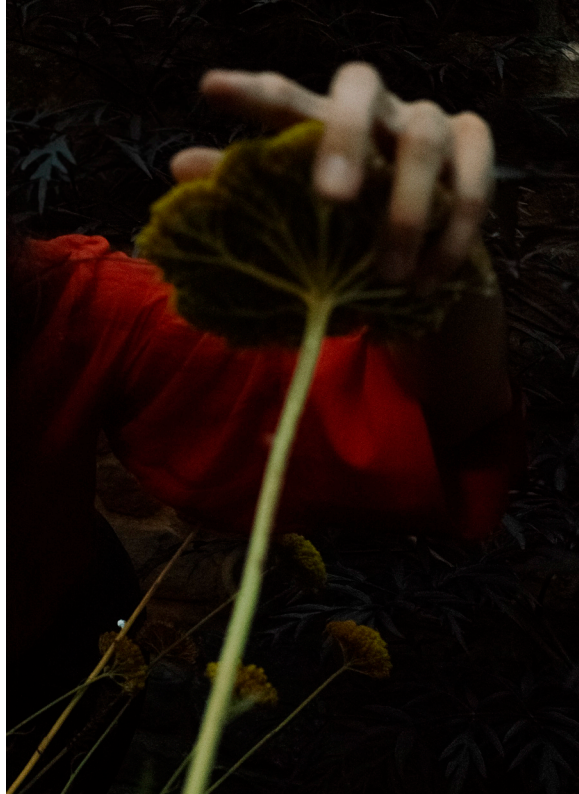
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*Joined in song, in troubled sleep. Every
thing you touch, touches you back. My Climb from
continent to another, – say if I
were water I could be grafting in skinned milk
Chewing Bubble gum, a body without
Body. Laying on a dreaming, on how
to flutter out –
Touchy objects, we Swallow, we fed to
the weathers and it gave 2 suns
you an alchemist dream on the almost
weather change that becomes a plague of the
night.*



above **it's april and i'm feeling romantic and uncanny**
[painting] by Isabella Lolita

before **Flowers Mary** [photography] by **Maria Mecca**



[poem] by **Lucille Mona Ling**

epilogue arrives as rough
tongue new in my mouth

your elusion manipulates
illusionary mechanisms

a hedonisti/c/limb
use an automaticket

to depart from my
depraved self-respect

adjacent raves
blow committed people

through tunnels
daffodils fold eyelids

I receive answers
from plant gossip

unencountering your
engineered endings

ebbing sea disambiguations
disclose scenes for lipreading



HOMING

Keon Wong

Homing
by Keon Wong

In his debut collection of poetry, Keon Wong explores personal history, identity, modernity and the contemporary condition with a staggering use of language and imagery that is both shocking and beautiful.



— horizon

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by Naomi Collier Broms

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AS A WILD BOAR PASSES

Naomi Collier Broms



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contact:

[*instagram*] @thehorizonmagazine
contacthorizonmagazine@gmail.com
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