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Zephyr: The Seventeenth Issue

Zephyr Faculty Advisor
University of New England
Megan Totten
University of New England
Melissa A. DeStefano
University of New England
Sarah Fleischmann
University of New England
Shannon M. Cardinal
University of New England

See next page for additional authors

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editor-in-chief Megan Totten
junior editors Melissa DeStefano and Sarah Fleischmann
faculty advisor Susan McHugh, PhD
clerical assistant Elaine Brouillette
design & typography Megan Totten & Melissa DeStefano
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cover photograph Curiosity – Michaela J. Kenward

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Welcome, wild North-easter!
Shame it is to see
Odes to every Zephyr;
Ne’er a verse to thee.

CHARLES KINGSLEY
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A DEDICATION

This seventeenth issue of Zephyr is dedicated to the incredible faculty at the University of New England.

There are thousands of colleges to choose from and when incoming students ask about this campus, we can proudly boast about the supportive professors who not only care about our grades but our overall well being. Teaching is such a difficult and undervalued profession but they have never lost their fire and commitment to their students.

It is our hope that the faculty continues their amazing work and continue to inspire students to write and create amazing works of art like all of those submitted this year. The professors have participated in making an amazing community that we look forward to display through Zephyr in the years to come.

Thank you!
Zephyr Staff
Confessions

Alanna Sachse

Bury me with your dreams
Mine are already doing so

Don't give me that impending stare
My eyes won't see you the same way

Deceive me with your words
Mine can barely be expressed

Can you embrace away my failures
My arms have constricted all my trust

Cut me with your smiles
Mine are beginning to bleed

Show me what your passion is
I'm having trouble explaining mine

Drown me with your presence
I'm at ease when you are near

Save me with your heart
For mine is in need of some repair
A Murder in Amsterdam – Halie Pruitt
The way we creatures move

Kristofer Olson

There’s a sadness in the way we creatures move, Burdened by weights of strife and fear. Hidden away, in falsity, lies, and squandered truths.

Even in a bounty of boundless youth Without youth’s fountain we drink our years There’s a sadness in the way we creatures move.

Words ring richer than the sweetness of exotic fruits That eventually fall too deep to rot in un-listening ears Hidden away, in falsity, lies, and squandered truths.

Beneath all the scars fought in tooth and nail- Wounds this deep are known to never really heal. There’s a sadness in the way we creatures move.

Our cries are water that ripple through liquid blue But thirsty lungs drown when they gasp for drier air Hidden away, in falsity, lies, and squandered truths.

But you are not from this place or of its earthly roots, Not hollowed in its sacred rules, you’re unaware There’s a sadness in the way we creatures move, Hidden away, in falsity, lies, and squandered truths.
Backpacking – Melissa A. DeStefano
Bus

David Kuchta

(Upon Watching the President Cry)

Late, the bus pulls up.
Curbside parents,
the news of Newtown on their lips,
end their pacing.
Worried words are breathed back in.
Eyes scan the row of windows,
three parents seeking three faces
on a bus like any other bus,
yellow like any other bus
with children like any other bus,
save those of Newtown.
How We Grew

Linda Labbe

Hard to believe, but so very true
Trial and error is how we grew

Three strikes you’re out, made us sad
But learning the rules wasn’t so bad

Respect is earned is so very true
But if you don’t respect others,
    they won’t respect you

A hard day’s work may well be tiring
But if you’re not willing, they’re not hiring

Give a little more than people expect of you
Is great advice that’s tried and true
light

Leslie Ricker

great pressure was released
with the rising of the sun,
dark had fortified fear
and its going was a wish
answered by an understanding,
that 'dawn is ever the hope of man';
certain spectrums of society settled
into sleep,
into dreams of illuminations,
into things that ever linger-
the lilies of light:

"flies and lies and floating things,
a dream, not a dream come true,
lines and minds and parallels,
geometric power playfully askew,
at night, light, is lighter too

milkweed fluff, light as air,
a tear heavier than the dew,
a smile's in style,
a nod is a laugh in lieu
of better payment
   for things that don’t
   and things that do"
Czerny, OP.820 – Sarah Gorham
Bees In My Boots But Don’t Call Me A Bee Boot

Melissa A. DeStefano

(If you understand this reference, congratulations. Go have a drink--on me.)

In the 90s, a whole bunch of highly fashionable shoes were created out of rubber and/or rubbery plastics including all sorts of galoshes, sandals, rain boots, and even heels. Obviously only the cool kids wore them. Since I was one of the coolest 90s kids ever invented, of course I had all of them in every style, design, and color, and in case you were wondering, yes, there is photographic evidence.

In the 90s, I was also an avid sock hater. I mean nowadays I’m on a white sock hiatus, but back then I was on a sock hiatus in general. This made for an excitingly painful lifestyle. I was either barefoot completely or wearing only rubbery shoes, so my feet were either bruised and blackened or suctioned in a rubber vortex. I don’t know if you’ve ever worn rubber shoes without socks, but if you have, then you know what I mean. My gross little feet stuck to those suckers like crazy glue.

There was a set of railroad tracks near my house while I was growing up. If you followed a path alongside a river through our back woods, you would come out to the railroad tracks, and then if you crossed the tracks, you would come out to a bigger river. When I was about four years old, my mom, brother, and I took that exact walk.

It was the middle of the summer, so it was nauseatingly hot and humid. Christopher ran ahead like a goon, mom struggled to keep up, and I wandered along behind. I liked walking along the rails of the train tracks with my arms spread out like I was on a balance beam.

Mom regularly warned us of dangers in life. For example, watch out for hand sanitizer because it actually spreads germs more than it kills them so it’s pointless, and don’t ever wear a necklace to bed because you will choke and die. Also always check yourself for ticks in the bathtub—even behind your ears—and don’t microwave things without lids on because it splatters everywhere and that’s gross.

As I walked along the rail, falling off every two steps, mom warned me to watch out for wasps. My invincible four-year-old self paid her no mind, and soon enough I felt a tingle in my boot. Since I was wearing rubber rain boots that went almost to my knees and of course wasn’t wearing any socks, this was normal. My feet were permanently in pain. I thought nothing of it. A few steps later, I fell to the ground screaming and crying.
My mom saw this as a regular activity on Melissa’s daily schedule and decided it wasn’t a big deal. She yelled for me to stop being overdramatic and just catch up to them. I continued screaming and crying violently, rolling in the jagged stones beside the train tracks. She probably said, “Oh, brother,” right before she ran to calm me.

My speech was so incoherent that I sounded like a drunken monkey. She couldn’t figure out what was wrong with me. I was wildly yanking at my boots, and she was just staring at me, perplexed as to what caused this ridiculous outburst. Then she saw a bee fly out of my boot.

Suddenly, it was no longer a temper tantrum but an emergency situation. She pulled at my boot desperately, but the thing would not come off. I had gotten some river water in it from my usual stomping routine, and it was suctioned to my foot pretty badly. Bees were flying out of it in swarms, terrorizing my mom and I. She was blinking and swatting, all the while still twisting and yanking my stubborn boot.

The more she jolted the boot around, the more it hurt. I was making sounds that I didn’t even know were humanly possible. I was screaming so loud that I was sure I could be heard in NYC, and if a person’s screams could be converted to energy, I could’ve also powered the whole city for at least a half hour. Finally, my boot popped off with the most satisfying shloosh sound that I have ever heard.

By this point, my foot and legs were covered in more stings than I could count to at the time (and I could count all the way to like ten at the time, okay?). I even had some on my arms. It was truly a repulsive sight. My limbs were exploding, swelling up to four times their normal sizes, and my mom was freaking out. Christopher had somehow caught up to the severity of the situation and was standing over us, staring in absolute disgust.

Mom carried me over her shoulder all the way back to the house with Chris sulking along behind us, disappointed that we never got to the big river. Dad propped me up on the sink and treated my stings with some sprays and goops that stung even worse. I cried for the next 48 hours.

This is the reason that plastic/rubber shoes went out of style after the 90s. They were deemed unfashionable (not to mention hazardous) after a series of articles that my mom wrote online.

I’m lying again. We didn’t have the Internet back then.
Our Family Tree

Linda Labbe

My heart can’t decide if this is real
Or pictures my mind paints of how I feel
Filled with emotions I’ve never known
When I look into your eyes, my feelings have grown

So keep painting pictures, you’re my hearts scene
Stroke the canvas with passion, colors serene
Friends are questioning, they think you’re obscure
The colors, emotion I cheerfully endure

My heart can’t decide if this is real
Or pictures my mind paints of how I feel
I don’t need proof your love is sincere
I look into your eyes it is so very clear

There’s something deep within your eyes
A home that only you and I could devise
The pigments crafted in my memory
Now potential makings of our family tree
Freedom – Melissa A. DeStefano
Amazing

Coleen E. Burpeau

Sometimes when you’re all alone
   It’s hard to see the light
Cause the world has done some things to you
   That maybe weren’t right
And you’re alone by the waters
   Where life has cast its lot
But hey it’s time that you moved on
   It’s time to show them what you’ve got

   Cause honey you’re amazing
   I’ve seen what you can do
You could fix this broken world
   If they’d just listen to you
I know you’re feeling down now
   But come on give me a smile
The road you took is not that easy
   But the fight is worth the while
The world may laugh at what you say
When you’re fighting your war
    But the victory is better
Than what was there before
    So buckle on your armor
Your weapon’s in your hand
It’s time your voice was heard
Yeah it’s time to make a stand

    Cause honey you’re amazing
Like a formula mixed right
    Difficult when pulled apart
When together you’re just right
Like a miracle from Heaven
    Like a sunset on the sea
The world may try but they can’t stop you
Cause you’re perfect to me
The Gift of a Flower

Halie Pruitt

It was not until his final hour
That I had decided to like a flower

A presence of painted cheeks
Butterfly wings, a withered thing
A choir girl sings
Her voice vibrating, I heard not a word
I stood by stone in misery.

They came in bunches
A lively shower
Of gifts and presents
Including the flower

She sat in the corner,
the brightest of pinks,
Sat right in the spot
where my dad used to think.

among the casseroles and
The cakes that mold, day by day
The food grew old, yet still
The flower, young and free
Took no pity and simply
Stared at me.

In house, but the icing and mold
the wind had come in
And swept away the flower
As I thought of my father
In his final hour

It seemed like years, in the days
That had past, the flower still lively
Its petals would last
Until the day, I caught my eye

Looking over to the corner.
Withered and wasted, shriveled
Cold
Reaching inward, towards each other
The petals did fold. Layer by layer
The color had faded, all that was left
Was the leather, so jaded.

The pink velvet skin
Smooth to the touch
The petals fell downwards
As the flower bit the dust

Upon the floor
Where I had settled,
No flower was left
Only the petal

"He loves me now
He loves me not"
Only In an instant when life is shot

I picked up the cakes
I picked up the bowls
There was naught left
Ten Haiku for You

Paul Cornell

We watch through window
barefoot gulls' indifference
to the arctic mist

I play piano
But my third finger won't rise
Timid from marriage

Ten ducks in a row
Sneaky old alligator
Nine ducks in a row

Flying gull – mouth full
Touchdown with a pizza to go
Party on the beach

I used to sing well
But lately I can’t seem to
hit the F n’ Gs

Beautiful tide line
Interesting, unique patterns
Crustacean graveyard

Fifty dollar check
Buy something special – love, Mom
I bought shoes with souls

Oak leaf, nose in sand
moving like dancing gecko
Nature’s Geico ad

Small dog out to play
Circling eagle seems to say,
“Here kitty kitty”

The contemplative
never seems to get a job,
.......... but thinks about it
MY ALLEGIANCE

Sahra Hassan

I pledge MY allegiance to the ones forgotten
Disposed of and thought as though they are rotten
Thought about while they’re living as terrorist
Then they get killed and seem careless
Like an error in life’s unnoticeable mistakes
Not knowing that understanding is all that it takes

I pledge MY allegiance to those who can not speak
For I am their voice
In this world that won’t let us rejoice
The voice that shouts through the darkness and misery
The one that is fighting for their memory in history
Their struggle, and their life that was once unnoticeable and forgotten by many.

I pledge my ALLEGIANCE to a world full of Peace
Where everyone could live in ease
Where the word Hate
Was just part of a person’s imagination
Where there is no fighting nor any pain
Where everyone cannot go insane

Where you can’t even grasp
The word conflict, and War
Where there is no discrimination
Nor any segregation
And the one thing that’s on everyone’s mind is
Integration

I pledge my ALLEGIANCE to those who are suffering in the name of war
Trying to survive through all the pain of postwar
This pain that suffocates to the point of despair
As they gasp and try to breathe for air
This air that symbolizes the blood and pain
suffering and struggling without any gain

MY ALLEGIANCE
Is all I have
For it is my voice
That represents my choice
The choice to live freely
Without being pushed down easily
A place not far from here

Kristofer Olson

There is a place not far from here-
Where the wind rushes and the water runs,
A place of solitude, a place of sorrow-
From there, body and land become one.

There is a place not far from here-
Where the land is lawless and wild,
A place where war is waged between tooth and claw,
Between wounded animals with broken jaws.
From there, bodies and minds are broken one by one.

There is a place not far from here-
Where there lies a sea so green,
Wind rustling leaves, licking the ground-
A place not close yet not too far,
From there, the body is all but one.

There is a place not far from here-
Where darkness blinds those who see,
A place where monsters crawl and people flee,
A place where one’s voice is the only response-
A shout an echo, a scream a splash.
From there, instinct is the only one.

This is the place, the one right here-
Where trees are skyscrapers and the rivers as roads,
Where the wind is a whisper and the birds a choir,
Where mind is over matter and life holds hands with death,
A place where decay gives birth,
To the new and strong and holy earth.
A place where death becomes life,
To get to this place- only open the door.
From there humanity is not the only one.
Rice and beans

Steven Byrd


Something I love most about Brazil is the food. For breakfast you’ll find bananas, sliced pieces of watermelon and papaya, cheese bread, cakes, fresh juices, and, of course, coffee and milk. Lunch is just as delicious: rice and beans, vegetables and salads, pastas and meats, ground corn and manioc meals. But especially the rice and beans is the most important combination for the Brazilian diet, the so-called “duet.”

Rice was originally cultivated in China, beans from the Americas. Rice represents one of the best sources of carbohydrates on earth, but is very poor in protein; the beans complement that lack. Together they create a perfect harmony.

When playing soccer in Brazil, the expression “rice and beans” is synonymous with a simple game, without ostentation, but efficient and effective.

I recall one day, in the city of Belo Horizonte, when I played soccer with some friends. I performed horribly: I tried many difficult skills, such as long crosses and dribbling through defenders, usually giving away or losing the ball. My team got very upset with me because of all my errors, and, naturally, we lost.

After the game, a friend of mine, William, consoled me and addressed my poor playing. “Play rice and beans,” he said. “Remain calm with the ball, pass to the nearest player, and don’t attempt difficult skills. Play simply and efficiently, rice and beans.”

William revealed to me one of the most profound philosophies I had ever heard. That is, rice and beans is not only a balanced meal in Brazil, or a philosophy for playing soccer, it is a philosophy of life.

Think, for example, how many times we complicate our lives by attempting “difficult skills” we are not adept at doing, or simply doing things we shouldn’t be doing?

Another example from Belo Horizonte: at a barbeque with some friends there was a young man who was behaving quite crazily. He drank too much, screamed liked a wild animal, spoke incoherently, and even played Brazilian badminton – a game called Peteca – in his underwear. He was truly the “party animal,” as we like to say.

But, when his girlfriend arrived, he suddenly became calm. He put his clothes back on, stopped screaming, and began to converse intelligently. It was a true case of Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde. I was unsure of what he was: party animal or gentleman? Perhaps he needed his girlfriend to be balanced.
In all areas of life – politicians, business persons, lawyers, mothers and fathers, teachers and students, sons and daughters, friends, boyfriends and girlfriends, and so on – many opt to be complex instead of being rice and beans. People lie to each other, criticize each other, take advantage of one another, steal or destroy things of one another, instead of pursuing balance and harmony. A friendship, a relationship, a family, a community, a society, a country cannot progress without some sort of balance.

Of course the world is extremely complex, with a labyrinth of social and personal problems to navigate. But perhaps the best solutions for these are to play rice and beans. In the words of the ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao Tsu, we should “seek simplicity within the complexity.” The best teacher teaches rice and beans, knowing how to explain the difficult in an easy way. The best politics are rice and beans, simple but efficient. The best friends are rice and beans, simple and transparent.

With a simple and transparent life, a rice and beans life, the world would perhaps have more harmony, more opportunity to give and receive the best of ourselves, and to create more trust amongst one another.

Think about the Chinese symbol, yin-yang: It projects the same type of harmony as rice and beans: white and black and together. The harmony of life is essentially that: a harmonious friendship, a harmonious marriage, a harmonious society.

Of course, one problem is that people, for some reason, seem never to be satisfied. Who has little wants more, who has a lot wants more – be it more money, power, knowledge, space, time, friends, love, and so on. It may be a type of defect we have to learn to live with. Our capitalist system especially projects this ideology upon our society: you “need” to have this, that, or the other. Hence, people prefer to, or are encouraged to, complicate their lives instead of searching for just rice and beans. Why is this?

People are often very ambitious individuals who prefer to flee harmony in search of something better, something more, in life. They procure complications, then solutions for those complications. This can be something admirable, though it can also be prejudicial to others. Be as it may, people often like to have something besides just rice and beans. And this may be understandable, as eating rice and beans every day, for all meals, could be somewhat unpleasant.

Of course, Lao Tsu has yet another philosophy for this problem: “He who perceives he has enough will be rich.” Said another way: those who learn to live rice and beans will always be wealthy.
Enjoying the Ride – Hannah Gato
Monastery of Tibães

Steven Byrd

(Translation of “Mosteiro de Tibães” from the book Outras terras: crônicas e ensaios. Natal, Brazil: Sebo Vermelho, 2015, by Steven Byrd)

“Braga prays,” so goes the popular Portuguese saying of this small medieval city rich in churches and castles. One of the oldest churches in all of Portugal is here, dating to the rule of the Germanic Goths, who settled in Braga after the fall of the Roman Empire. Around all the churches abound fields of corn and wheat and grapevines. One encounters here the historical, the religious, and the aristocratic foundations of Portugal, including the origins of their unique Romance language.

At the Monastery of Tibães calmly sits the observer on this cool July day, overlooking the medieval city lying in the valley below. Only sounds of a fountain, birds and bugs can be heard. Occasionally a song from a distant piano echoes somewhere from the ancient chambers of the Monastery where we were lodged. The smells of flowers and foliage fill the hillside. Sitting at the chapel, thinking, looking is, indeed, a religious experience.

The observer reminisces about his arduous, somewhat frightful, journey the day before, giving thanks that he arrived. The spiritual respite was worth this moment, for the arrival was neither simple nor peaceful.
To the Earth

Coleen E. Burpeau

I sit on the banks of a river
I smell the sea nearby
The winds embrace me now
In a late summer’s time
I close my eyes a moment
And let nature tell its tale
The passing of the seasons
All lost within time’s veil
Each one had a name, I learned
Woven in its rhyme
Of days of ancient glories
A far past golden time
The winds are whispering secrets
Telling of the days
When the land was once as one
An island in the waves
The waters tell their story
Of abundant life now dead
And many a foggy mourning
For the few left in its bed
The earth too tells of woe
Of creatures now long gone
From its grieving mother’s face
They’re now an ancient song
As I sit here listening
A woe comes over me
How can we heal a dying earth
A sea, a sky, and trees
The answer I know not yet
Tis so close, yet vague
All I know is earth’s a shadow
Of a once more glorious day
circular diversions: a world not meant for curving

Melissa A. DeStefano

the world
[which is so large]
can [sometimes] feel
[so small and]
empty.
the people
[who surround and suffocate]
can [sometimes]
misunderstand
[everything and]
everyone.
solitude
[which is so comforting]
can [sometimes]
split
[the air and]
your skull.
reality
[which is so real]
can [sometimes]
light
[a match or]
your temper.
loneliness
[which is so lonely]
can [sometimes]
lead
[away from]
home.
sleep
[which is so thoughtless]
can [sometimes]
end
[your day or]
your life.
blindness
[which is so cruel]
can [sometimes]
steal
[your breath or]
your heart.

[nothing or]
everything
is
forgotten.
[sometimes]
you remember
things
[always]
change but
[most]
people
remain
[somewhat]
the same.
Skimming thoughts

Linda Labbe

Thoughtful moments' cares, concerns,
inspiring one into the next

I tossed a rock and watched as it glide across the lake,
counting each time it touched down,
skimming the waters' surface
each little connect producing a tiny circle of waves
thoughts breeding thoughts,
then blend away into the clear smooth lake
alas a sinking feeling I'd forgotten something
as the stone plunges to rest at the bottom of the water
emotion

Leslie Ricker

color is there:
tree and cloud and sky,
the picture filled in by

an idea? a dream?

tall as an afternoon moon
a vision:
th bubbly orange in resurrection;

double-lit landscape
births emotion, then seeks words,

perfect words,
maybe nouns with notion

of desire or devotion,
such fast-evolving emotion

"I wish I could issue here

words capable of orbiting

"I wish I could issue here
(signal of acceptance
which might
marry well with sanity,
that I may, this love,
destroy with craziness
instead of vanity"

the quest for perfection
conquers ordinary emotion,
the moon drowns
in the sky's restless ocean,
its light devoured

by its own motion
I dream of a world...

Sahra Hassan

Last night I had a dream.
I dreamed of a world full of Peace.
Where everyone could live in ease.
Where the word hate was just
Part of a person’s imagination.
Where there is NO fighting, there is NO pain.
Where words are not spoken in VAIN.
Where no one can even grasp the words
CONFLICT, and WAR,
And there is no DISCRIMINATION,
Nor any SEGREGATION.
Jimi Hendrix once said,
"When the power of love
Overcomes the love of power
The world will know Peace."
I dream of a world where war isn’t the key,
And Peace is a possibility?
A world where my two little brothers
Aren’t afraid to walk in the streets with
Their hoodies on.
A world where officers aren’t feared
By the minorities and instead respected and loved.
I dream of a world that teaches us the
Beauty of our differences.
Where I’m not judged based on my race,
Religion, or the simple and
Beautiful fact that I’m a feminist.
A world that knows just because we are a
Wealthy country doesn’t mean we don’t have people suffering.
Suffering from mental illnesses that need our attention;
Poverty, homelessness, and covert oppression.
I know one day we will overcome all this fear,
Negativity and prejudice that has clouded our
Minds and made us resistant to happiness, joy, and solidarity.
I am wise that I am alive for this day because
I know that it is then, that I can say,
“My dream has come true”
Dandelion Days

Shannon Cardinal

Five years old,
Sun child laughingly rolling on the front lawn.
He’s no longer the screaming boy unwilling to dress for school and board the bus-
His atoms have risen above tantrums
   and spread out into space.
He’s flashes of color and light, he’s the blue of his eyes
The blue of the house, the sky, the avengers backpack
Swirling by me, covered in grass.
He plucks a dandelion and brings it to me-
"I got this flower for you. Do you like it Auntie?"
"Thank you, it’s beautiful."
I smile back into his eyes and he is so pleased with himself,
So pleased with his beautiful, yellow dandelion
That I wouldn’t trade for all the bouquets in the world.
If I could write to put a smile on your face
With flowers in the wind or dancing with grace
Or something filled with deep emotion
I would write with great devotion
So your dreams silently I would haunt
You know the type Zephyr would want
With clowns that have a clumsy kind of saunter
or, he could be on stilts with a skeleton gaunter
If I could write to put a smile on your face
With flowers in the wind or dancing with grace
Or something filled with deep emotion
I would write with great devotion
To your smile, I would surely pay tribute
If I knew, Zephyr would proudly distribute
No one wanted to believe her,
And what good will pursuing this do?
All the evidence swirled lazily round the drain and sunk,
Louisville, Steubenville, Maryville, Hometown America.

"What good will pursuing this do?"
The make-up caught in the creases of her eyes as she smiled her nervous sympathy,
In Louisville, Steubenville, Maryville, Hometown America.
Was it that same guidance counselor, pertly patting the sobbing shoulder?

The make-up caught in the creases of her eyes
As she frowned, her mask so understanding. "It doesn’t look good. You don’t have enough evidence."
That same guidance counselor, pertly patting my sister’s sobbing shoulder.
No one wanted to believe her. She didn’t want to believe herself either.

She cried that night, “I don’t want to do anything. There’s not enough evidence.”
This couldn’t happen here, it doesn’t happen here.
No one wanted to believe her.
Why couldn’t this have been a dream, just a bad dream?

This couldn’t happen here, it doesn’t happen here.
She didn’t want to believe herself anymore.
Why couldn’t this have been a dream, just a bad dream?
She cleaned out her locker, and left the school like everything was normal.

She didn’t even slam the door, didn’t make the cheap metal waver and wobble.
I could have slammed it, tried to shut harder that worst day.
She cleaned out her locker and left the school like it was all normal,
Because everyone wanted to believe in the boys of fall and hometown glory.

I tried to shut harder the worst day of my life,
And the hallways chattered and buzzed. Those bastards high fived.
Everyone wanted to believe in the boys of fall and hometown glory.
No one wanted the responsibility of doing right. They transferred it out of the district.

The hallways chattered and buzzed. Those bastards high fived.
She didn’t want to stay, no one believed her. She just wanted everything new and clean.
No one wanted the responsibility of doing right, so they transferred her out of the district.
I didn’t want my own bedroom anymore, I’m not sure I ever did. I wanted her to stay.

She didn’t want to stay, no one believed her. She just wanted everything new and clean and far.
I could have put soap in the mouth of this town, dumped bleach down its throat.
I don’t want my own bedroom. I never wanted my own bedroom. Please, just stay-
But it was too late to fight. All the evidence had been washed away.
Panes of Passion, Église Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois – Halie Pruitt
in white

Leslie Ricker

in the field, with force,
pushes and pulls and piles,
around the trees,
the remaining swiss-chard leaves
by the season, but not by me

in the mind, with force,
the rich soil beneath
by acute emotions
jotted down
in a hoping soul,

odd that gardens and memories
brown

are put to bed
    in white

the winter wind
wraps snow-white scarfs
throws quilts over
in a garden forgotten

stress-blizzards bury the ground,
belongs to attractions crowned
and with deep devotion are
on nuro-pages and,

are beyond snowbound
move from green to

and when the time is right
World War II – Kristina C.
Drums of War

Coleen E. Burpeau

Are the drums beating bravely
   Out across the moor?
Where are those I hold close
   In that bloody war?
Are they well are they whole?
   Can their wounds amend?
Where do all our soldiers lie
   Safe, alone, or dead?
My family yet is safe and warm
   And the sun bears shine
Yet where is he the one I would
   Wish to call all mine?
The drums are a rapping now
   Just outside the door
And there are ones I held dear
   Victims of the war
Instinct
Linda Labbe

Coolness in

the crisp autumn air.

Newly fallen leaves everywhere.

Animals scurry to collect their food,

sets the country to a hurried mood. Is it instinct or do they

know what lies ahead? Oh the colors of autumn, brown, amber & red...

The sun on the leaves illuminate colors bright. I see them each year, still I

marvel at the sight. Birds take to wing, migrate southward bound. Some

chatter noisily, others without a sound. Is it instinct or do they know what

lies ahead? Oh the colors of autumn, brown, amber & red...Sun sparkle

through the leaves, a kaleidoscope, cheerful colors enlightened autumn rays of

hope. Woodland creatures scamper as birds take flight. Vibrant colors paint a landscape

such a beautiful sight. And the breezes of fall give way to winter

cold ahead. Oh the colors

of

autumn,
brown,
amber
& red....
liquid

Leslie Ricker

"it's my water's
holding me down,
my aquamagnet rescues me
should I drift around,
strange that liquid
would bind me
to solid ground,
it's in air
I might drown"

liquid pulses like
roofrain or oceanmotion;
liquid, like love,
wet and salted-
the historic taste
of tears;
hope floats
on whirlpools
of liquid years,
years gone
to stream around
recall's walls
built to surround
clear lakes
to keep cattle
from going down
to quench
the first of thirsts
everyday
lacks
looks
lusts

for liquid
Donde Estás Chico

Coleen E. Burpeau

Donde estás chico
Por que no veo a ti
Donde estás chico
Por que no estás aquí
Que es bueno, que es malo
Por que no ames a mi
Donde estás chico
Por que no estás aquí

Donde estás chico
Por que tu estás allí
Por que no estás cerca
Por que no estás aquí
Que es bueno, que es malo
Por que no piensas a mi
Por que estás tan lejos
Por que no estás aquí

Donde estás chico
Es mi llamada a ti
Por favor te pregunto
Y estás eternal con mi
Que es bueno, que es malo
Por que no ves a mi
Donde estás chico
Por que no estás aquí
A smile is a lonesome disaster
Made fake by some girl or plastic matter
That turns life to loam and loam to dust.
In arrogant laughter the birds do chatter
While the bees are dead and hate is slaughtered,
By the tweets and cheeks of love's one master-
A black beast that tears its chest to shreds
While the lonesome tower stands stiller in its shadow.

The beasts of hate charge through the street
And their feet pound down twisting roads
To cut the ropes holding us to dirty sheets-
Where we hid ourselves away in sunken alcoves.

Let the beasts, in full retreat, run to cavern caves-
Where fear remains in its deepest space.
The Cavern – Linda Labbe
Grateful – Michaela J. Kenward
Road Trip to New Brunswick

Shannon Cardinal

The shattered teeth of forgotten cemeteries
Grin at us from hollows in the pines.
We talk about everything, and nothing at all.
Hawks circle overhead.
The highway stretches it's long, broken lines.

To pass the time we resurrect
Smiles from yesterday.
We remember things we've never forgotten.
I learn things you've always known.

All the while
You're leading me away-
To a different country,
To the fields of your childhood summers.

The day fades,
We cross the border.
The pines gather close
And the stars come out in droves,
Accompanied by a pregnant, drooping moon.
Willis Tower – Kristina Carlson
Though the marsh might freeze

Patti Géness

Though the marsh might freeze
And all seems lost to the rest
Will we pass the test

Or will ‘down we go’
Become the doubters’ motto
Then arrives a bird...

Whose song wasn’t heard
Since October of last year
On the wings of hope

It lifts the despaired
From their ocean of teardrops
Singing without stop
Song of Spring – Linda Labbe
Sky, Earth, and Sea – Alanna Sachse
sanctuary

Leslie Ricker

swelling shadows wrestle
the tall trees grapple
height and girth
uncut for many years,
beneath groves of poplar,
in an evening wind,
tell a tale of being
perhaps not the finest firewood
but burnable and somehow overlooked
when maples and oaks shook
the ground in their chainsaw-falling
is fading daylight
the shadow’s call
in one, not of shade or
but of hiding and respite
coolness,

"in his dream
running,
no actual end to embrace,
fate
and with sudden freedom from worry
high
on sanctuary”
Scattered

Melissa A. DeStefano

Spit it at me in your finest words
Your mockery never stained so good
Ink in my skin deeper than the sky
Like the moon that holds your shadow in the night—
This is my nightmare:
I don’t want to burden
your lighthouse heart
But my rib-bone ship is lost at sea
And it’s been weeks
since the last time you begged for me
I know my songs weren’t beautiful
like you
But I thought you might’ve liked them
at least enough to listen to—
Guitar string fingers strumming the sand
as we built forests of newspaper on the beach
and watched wildfires burn beneath our feet
You told me the ash looked like my lungs
inhaling countless cigarettes
hoping for a sudden death.
We plastered bits of ocean glass together
like paper mache
I said the color of the sky looked nothing like your lifeless eyes,
And you told me I was right—
right in your way—
You were always the wise one
Praying to God when I couldn’t even read
the signs
were right in front of me.
You left a memory of bile
like the first time I let vodka burn my stomach
When you were close enough to hear me swallow
too far to tell I love you.
But you never loved me,
you loved the bottles
like the ones I used to suck from when I was a child,
and my mother never told me that growing up meant being alone
but if I had known
I would’ve never let you go,
would’ve been the glowing stars on your ceiling
would’ve rocketed to the moon with you in a two-by-two fort built on the cold concrete of my basement floor

But would’ve isn’t is
And isn’t wasn’t was
You can hate me for what it is
What it wasn’t and what it won’t be
and you can smash me into pieces
that reflect like years lost in your eyes
but when I go to sleep at night
I cross my heart and hope to live
and that’s more than I can say for you
Wolf Volcano – Alanna Sachse
The redness of rust

Kristofer Olson

She held her hand down to the water
Just over the surface pondered
Shaky hands never to touch
A frame stained with sunken ships and fixed with nails of rust
That hold together something fine and just
A reminder of thinness in the air to rust
Solid steel or iron cuff.

Those animals that snatch and bite her heels
Scream murder when the water touched
By a metal man of nature’s crux-
Broken by the redness of rust.

Shaky hands and twisted thumbs hover to slight
The eyes of those blind of sight-
With something sharp to cut the throat
Of the metal man and Midas curse
To match the purge and calling thirst
Of Crimson blood that drips in vein
As virtue to the redness of rust.
Social Context:
The Little Rock Nine was a group of nine students who were the first African Americans to be enrolled in Little Rock Central High School in 1957 whose enrollment was followed by the Little Rock Crisis. The students were initially prevented from entering the racially segregated school by Orval Faubus, the Governor of Arkansas despite the end of segregation in public schools due to Brown v. the Board of Education. Elizabeth Eckford (1941-present) is one of the Little Rock Nine. The students were greeted with a violent mob of white students, faculty, and parents determined to halt the integration of racially segregated schools.

**The Little Rock Nine**

Caleb Pulliam

On the first day of school, On the fourth of September

Racial tensions erupted, with just nine embers.

Eyes filled with hatred, Rocks flying like birds

An angry mob had formed, Elizabeth Eckford had not received word.

Her attendance was not wanted, not her nor any of her kind.

Governor Faubus sent in the National Guard to stop Elizabeth and the whole Little Rock Nine.

The National Guardsmen blocked the school, planted firmly on each leg

To prevent those nine embers from igniting the powder keg.

She turned and looked for love in a forlorn place

And found a kind looking old women, who spat in her face.
Surf – Melissa A. DeStefano
Marine Iguana – Alanna Sachse
Weeping willow

Kristofer Olson

I remember the old weeping willow
Where time seemed to stop in a glossy coat
That shone bright in the glaring truth of a winter in my heart.
It reminds me of something that meant the world
To a young boy growing in a sphere all his own-
Under the sobbing eyes of the old weeping willow.

Her face had colour, crimson deep within her cheeks,
Of joy and shyness that clung static to me weary soul-
A colour now since faded now with a hundred empty weeks
Of you staring gently with a glossed over frozen face
And back into those stone cold and frozen eyes
Under the tired arms of the old weeping willow.

We were young and I took all that was in my reach
And I’m sorry that your hand never felt its place,
But under the old weeping willow we are forever frozen
With your brightest eyes still gazing into the dark of mine.
Although the picture has faded with wear and time,
I’ll always remember where you lie under the old weeping willow.
Athena Borne the Aegis

Kristofer Olson

Under the weight of hearts of stone
Sinks the sands of inevitable genesis-
That buckles knees and rivals bone.

Built up from pitch and wild loam-
Crumbles dust to dust in sweet malevolence
Under the weight of hearts of stone.

Within solemn, grey eyes her beauty wove
With desire in the water endless-
That buckles knees and rivals bone.

A serpent slithers in the arbor grove
Where men stand petrified in verdant penance,
Under the weight of hearts of stone.

Osiris glimpsed his crook and clove,
And Athena borne the aegis
That buckles knees and rivals bone.

Grey eyes look with an owl’s wisdom to all unknown
Despite the world’s unpredictable nexus-
Under the weight of hearts of stone
That buckles knees and rivals bone.
Galapagos Sea Lion – Alana Sachse
Help me understand

Patti Genest

Help me understand
The unimaginable
And help decipher

The labels cast out
To those of different color
Religions and class

We're at an impasse
Because if we all believe
We've the right to judge

Then we think we're God
Only God doesn't deal 'hate'
Or call people names
a compound some

Leslie Ricker

somewhere there’s a mind of feeling,
somewhere there’s a light some find revealing;
somewhere, somebody knows
what to show someone
about light, about living, about life’s lust,
and what’s solid diamond
and what’s gold dust

someday, somehow, beyond today’s sunset
there’s a simple awakening of spring,
   a warming to summer,
   a sweet sadness of fall,
sadness, sometimes, is freedom from regret
when word-wrestling winter
   into something of a sweat

sometimes feelings adopt a season,
sometimes a well-seasoned heart
holds some feelings apart,
sometimes there’s a fire,
but if not, why not start
the forest alight with friction,
for added fuel use the fiction
of the ‘frost of an aching heart’;
someday, someway, somebody will find
a penciled hand that feels something
   for that feeling mind
Does it take passage

Patti Genest

Does it take passage
Of someone's life to stop short
And reflect upon

How brief it all is
And how nothing so matters
As the lives we touch

Not all the riches
Not all the mistakes we make
And we all make them

It's all about love
Is it so hard to see it?
Before it's too late
From my hips to my thighs
I am marred, carved out
like the Mississippi river canals--
streams branching out in a form
of organized chaos.
I am woman, and I was the thing,
Molded by the elements:
Wind, water, and
time herself.
And it was as though she had taken particular care
to craft such a roadmap across this fragile vessel
seeming to warn the oncoming traveler

"Be wary...
the path ahead will turn and spread"
it screams
"Change lanes,
now
before you reach the course's dead end that is
my breath alone"
--- these... marks
a curse and lie
a juxtaposition to the plump
child-like face that
creates me.
and even the strong facade cannot mask the truth from the world
-she is the inexperienced child-
she yearns for adulthood,
as if it were easy
like flipping a switch
and away she flies
Triumphant
all-knowing of the world
and of her life
about making love
and breaking ties

No

I would dive blindly into
the world of men
Unawares to the emotional strength required to remain
there.
A Road Not Discovered

Coleen E. Burpeau

I'm lost in the dark
I'm all alone
Can't seem to go forward
Can't seem to go home
Small and dejected
Helpless in mind
But I know one day
I will find
A road not discovered
A path that's not made
Lost in the world
I'll find my way
Out of the darkness
And into the light
I just have to choose
The path that's right
Then I'll fly
The problems keep coming
Pushing me down
Above my head
The winds churn around
But I'll fight the battle
I'll stand my ground
Laugh at fate say
"You can’t touch me now"
For a road not discovered
For a path that’s not made
Yes I’m lost in the world
But I’ll find my way
In the tunnel
I see a light
Speaking my mind
I’ll do what’s right
Then I’ll fly
You’ll believe
You’ll believe in me one day
And in a road not discovered
In a path that’s not made
When you’re lost in the world
You can still find your way
Out of the darkness
And into the light
This is my battle
This is my fight
And I’ll fly
Yeah I’ll fly
I’ll fly
Yeah I will fly
A Misguided Teardrop

Patti Genest

A misguided teardrop
Made its crooked way across
From face to pillow

The journey was slow
Travelling over an ear
Down the neck, - through hair

It knew not from where
It came - or where it would end
Just that it was there

A misguided teardrop
Made its crooked way across
From face to pillow

The journey was slow
Traveling over an ear
And through some fine hair

It knew not from where
It came - or where it would end
Just that it was there
Holes between syllables

Melissa A. DeStefano

language
over time
changes.
"fuck"
equals
"care"
as
"distant"
equals
"there"
and
somehow
I’m fucking caring
from a distance
and you’re there.
"talking"
equals
"lying"
’cos if a tongue is moving
the web is winding
and
now
"lost"
equals
"connected"
as
"forgiving"
equals
"confidence"
and
you’re a lost connection
who I’m forgiving for lack of confidence.
so where are you
when
"twisted"
equals
"mind"
as
"lust"
equals
"love"
and
my twisted mind just realized
I’m lusting for your love.
Little Lamb – Michelle Pellegrino
Internal EXPRESSIONS!!

Sahra Hassan

Every day of our lives is some sort of struggle
The STRUGGLE to go on with life's troubles
Troubles that surround us at every corner
SUFFOCATING, and creeping like a dark shadow

We go through life, not understanding the hints
And foreshadows of our forgotten future
We seek to understand our past
And thus our life in the present goes at last
We Make MISTAKES not knowing that we might break

We think that we have so much time
Tick, tok, tick, tok
Yet, all we do is waste it
Tick, tok, tick, tok
Waste it by conforming to society's OBJECTIFICATION of our beings
You are who you are no justification

BLACK, white, mixed
We are taught to Identify however we want
MUSLIM, Jew, Christian
What ever religion

But the fact of the matter is
We face backlash based on association of RELIGION
And situation due to RACE

One looks at me and instantly TERRORISM is written across my face
Due to the HIJAB that's covering my head most think I'm being oppressed
Will you think that I'm being OPPRESSED? While you let society's views suppress you?

But I will not rest,
Rest until my request is a approved
This request to realize that this piece of cloth on my head
Is a symbol of MY religion
A part of MY identification
Reservation of my MODESTY
This is the HIJAB, it is a representation of who I am and where I belong. I will not let the views of those ignorant to SUBJECT me and take away by longing to belong. To belong in this world that has caused me so much self-hatred. Hatred for me and my people because I don’t look like a patriot. My Humbleness, devotion, and faith are who I am and they are shown through this Hijab. Shown through this holy book entitled The Quran.

Yet, Strangers look at me and they see media’s PERCEPTION. Not of me but my religion. This religion of bismilahi rahmani rahim, asalamualakum, and Allahu Akbar. But the sad thing is, these beautiful Arabic words are not what comes to mind when my religion of ISLAM is brought up. You know what comes to mind. things such as Terrorism, Osama Bin laden, and the 9/11 attacks.

Most don’t know that my faith and my belief is a way to relieve my grief. Grief and suffering that has overtime created invisible Battle scars. Battle scars that have enslaved my body.

But, you know what I will BREAK these chains and STOP these Hidden Tear drops representing my people who have been Prosecuted for their beliefs and their rights. Instead I will fight. Fight through this darkness insight.

This darkness that represents so much heartache. Heartache that has clouded my life and caused me to not care. But I know that I should care. Because the world that I want to live in matters.

A world where there is NO fighting, there is NO pain. Where words are not spoken in VAIN. Where no one can even grasp the words CONFLICT, and WAR. Where there is no DISCRIMINATION. Nor any SEGREGATION.

A world where the DEMORALIZATION and DEHUMANIZATION of people can be turned into empowerment, Courage, determination, inspiration, passion, resilience AND ACCEPTANCE.

A world where I SAHRA HASSAN CAN DREAM and ACHIEVE while wearing my Hijab.
Shards of Glass – Michelle Pellegrino
When You Have The Words To Write

Halie Pruitt

I don’t fucking know what to say.  
I don’t fucking know what to say  
and yet I have all these words  
like fuck and shit  
and get your goddamn hands off of me  
I’m just a kid  
and Jesus Christ I miss my cat

I love writing in small town cafes.  
But I don’t fucking know what to say  
All I can think is that your hands were large and  
rough with lines and cracks  
And that the dog I had as a child had such soft  
and long hair,  
He used to lick my cheek  
and then whisper to be quiet,  
I’m sorry was I screaming too loud?

I’ve got words, I play scrabble  
But you can’t play words like fuck or shit  
Or anything to replicate the feeling of the wall  
you forced me against, I could play “white  
peeling paint”  
But then you wouldn’t know what the fuck that meant
The Way Life Should Be – Suzie Oh
Ordinary

Melissa A. DeStefano

Ordinary people go about
ordinary days with
ordinary objects in
ordinary ways.
Ordinary mouths fumble and
ordinary calves shake when
ordinary people
make ordinary mistakes.
Luminosity – Kate Hruby
Dancing on Day Lilies – Michaela J. Kenward
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