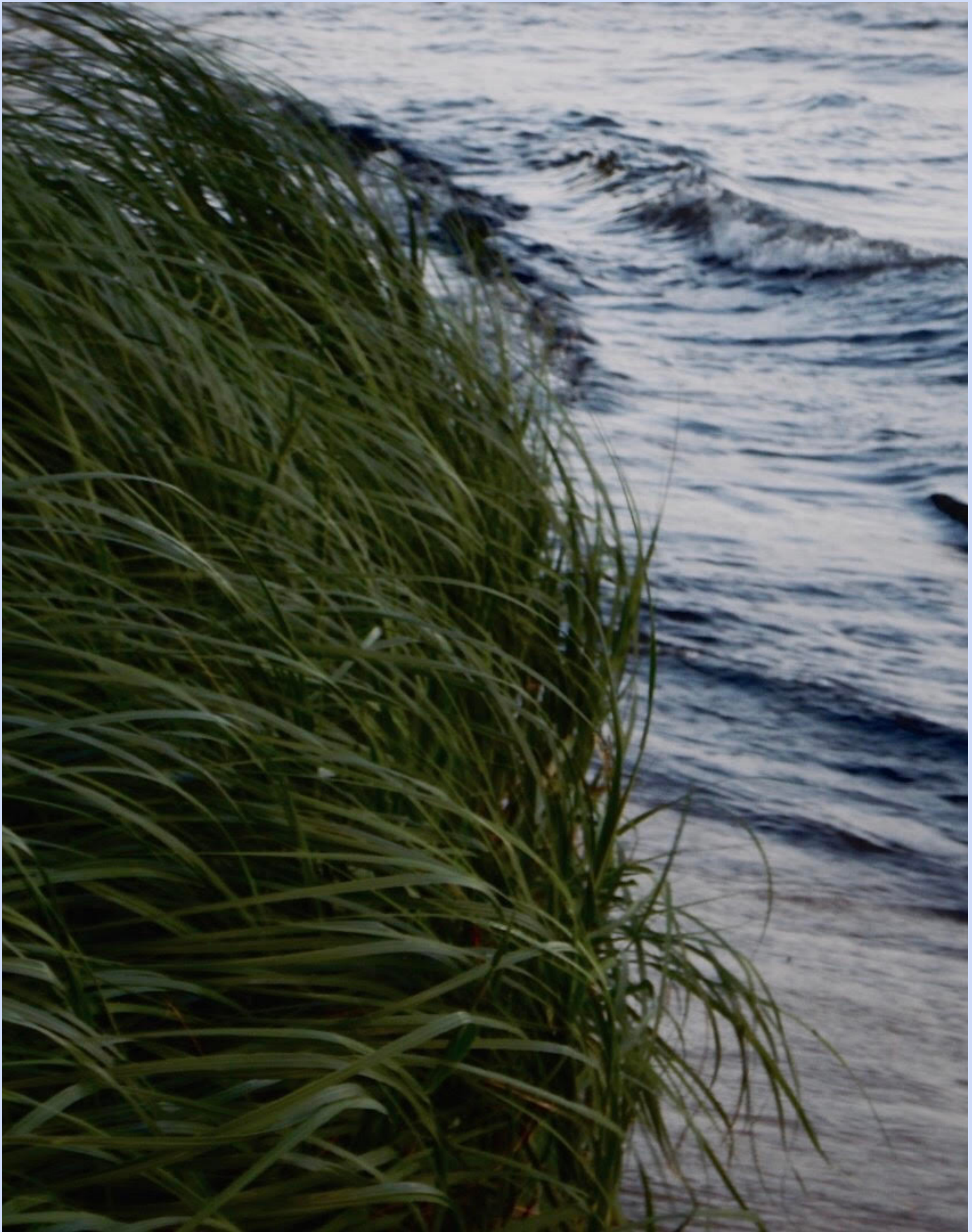


summer solstice



seasonal fruits magazine



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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
JILLIAN-RAE PICCO

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Another Day In May Flowers

EJ Rivers

We cruise down the highway
towards your hometown –
Windows down, our hair blows around.
We race down the quiet country roads
in the middle of nowhere –
staggered lines appear, perpendicular
to the edges of pavement.

You slam to a stop
to rescue strangers in serpent form
because “the Slithering Sisters deserve to live
another day.”

I admire your altruism with my salient smile,
or so you say –

You admire my serenity with a bouquet,
minus the one flower you keep aside

so I receive my next on time.

As we wait for this spring's flowers to bloom,
You insist on filling our grocery basket with
tulips

because my carnations are dead
and you won't dare make me wait again.

We wake up mid-morning
to a sweet summer-like breeze,
we celebrate the season with a glass of iced
tea.

You take a deep breath then decide
You need some fresh air outside –

The May flowers grow where you rest.
They remind me of the supermarket flowers
Near the cup of tea you haven't finished yet.

Remember the day we glued our picture
in the scrapbook, wrote our names in the
sand at the beach?

On cold winter nights we'd

curl up by the fire,
under a blanket, with a cup of warm tea.
We'd laugh and we'd cry
until dawn struck upon us.

The damp rainy days
never stopped your inner child
from running through every puddle in sight.
The May flowers grow
Near where you rest.
Daffodils scatter themselves among
rainbows of tulips –
they remind me of
the supermarket flowers
near the cup of tea
you hadn't finished yet.

A Glimpse of the Blue Sky

Heloise Flores

Clear.

A smile faded from my thoughts until it
became a memory,
Along with the first time you pointed at the
sky and called out my name.
Where the sun sets during autumn,
The view becomes clear from rock bottom.
My soul from your fingertips peacefully.
Collecting each moment –
Until all feelings are transparent.

Waiting for rain.

The ghost of one's presence is an enchanting
chapter.
She doesn't mind a new departure.
Just let her fall in love with a dream that will
never last long enough.

Calling out her name,
she sings her last song.
Droplets of tears fall from her eyes while
waiting for rain –
The blue sky is what everyone sees.
The blue sky is what everyone sees.
Take a glimpse at that blue sky
everyone wants to see.

Clouds above.

Foggy mist serves as an illusion
Peace and serenity among the comforting
shadows.
Sometimes darkness' embrace can be one's
paradise.
Laying down in the meadow, waiting for rain;
now my eyes are completely dry from the
pain.
A few years left until I run away, let this
song of mine live on –

The scent of dew must have mastered
the art of nostalgia.

Burn This If You Need To

Taya Boyles

The best Bard is a poltergeist,
speaking graphite mantras.

The best expresser cries
Phoenix tears.

The best mentor works
with raw materials.

The best revolutions are built by those fed up
with extinguishing fires
and ready to start them.

The best students indulge
in the familiar fluency of a sanguine-grey
tongue.

Clockwork

Blue

Taya Boyles

Currency accepted at River Styx never
bought me a place to float,
or any body of water deeper than a puddle.
I pull at the ground with a silver-handled
shovel,
I could not afford to break over square
ceramic pigs
and dig at the quicksand
like a tweezer pulls a wishbone,
like an angel removes her wings,
like a genie goes back into its bottle.
“Theory of a Deadman” plays softly, pulling
me to a little girl listening to
“Head Above Water”
to override the background
of my family home screaming, something
about a bounced check,

and I scour the hardwood for spare change,
find myself savouring the joy of copper
pulling the resistant carpet fibres,
like a pirate sailing in hopes of unearthing
buried treasure.

Megaphone

Taya Boyles

Verse 1:

Some folks waltz through life
with two left feet, out of sync
with the core melody –
strumming out one-corded lies
and asking kiddie-pool questions

Verse 2:

We're made of celestial bits and stardust,
a symphony divine.
but we often listen to our own beat,
and fail to harmonise in time.

Verse 3:

We initiate an ethereal dance
we don't know the steps to
missing the note in our operatic
blues,
too busy searching for the music.

Seeing Angels

Allie Dechow

Little holes rip into the sky. I find
your name,
like an opened window –
or paint dissolving in water
formless and unfixed
like hours

A space
that resembles
asking a question without
aiming for answers

Like
seeing a bird in flight and knowing
that holiness is visible,
when choosing to see

A space that sits at ease in
a language it doesn't speak
yet knows it couldn't have been said

any better way

And I think, as Mary says

Only if there are angels in your head will you
ever,

possibly, see one.

So, as if burst in flames –

I open my eyes and walk
with fires under my feet.

Sleep by the Sea

Sebastian Soble

Silence settles
In jagged waves
Like sediment, upon
My weary mind.
The ebbing of
The tide with
The day brings
Darkness, so divine.

The subtle slosh
And playful games
Of billows weave
Dreams of lover's kind.

Among the stars
And satin clouds
I play, leave the

Waking world behind.

Firebreathers

Sebastian Soble

Firebreathers in the night
Jesting, fighting, burning light
Playing games of fry or flight –
A golden path, or dreaded blight
A furnace in the forest,
A spark splitting chorus
Between the mountains and the shore is
Where the red flame soars

They burn and burn til morning comes,
Cracking and popping, the battling drums
One last tree – a final strum
The ashes sleep, and embers hum

Beach View

Sebastian Soble

The tender caress of waves
upon the sand,
as sunlight sings
through a symphony
of reflection.

I listen with my eyes,
hearing the soft greens
of the palm leaves
above my head.

The sound of sand
slipping through my fingers,
peppy like pizzicato,
they fall in staccato.

Startled birds of paradise

rise in forte from their perch,
the sound of a steel drum song
emerges from their hue –
violent vibrance, expressed in reds and blues.

The Moon and Her Sun

Brenna Reid

i was scared of the night until i met the moon

she was capable,

courageous

but most of all, she was radiant.

the stars only wished they were as bright.

i told the moon my secrets and she told me
hers.

she was heard

but i saw her

after all, she lit up the night sky with her
vibrant words.

i only wished i were as bright.

the freckles on her face looked like little
constellations,

they twinkled as i observed them

capricorn was clearly printed on her cheek
the moon saw the reflection of herself in my
eyes

her light dimmed

she wished she were as bright as before.

and when the sun showed up,
the moon's light went out.

“moon, where are you going?”

she said “this is best for me”

but it wasn't as dark as i thought it would be
i was scared of the night until i saw my own
light.

Marigolds

Shamik Banerjee

Droop not! o' sweet Marigolds bright,
Although fair Spring is ending;
Behold! for you, has come first light,
And skyscape is distending;
O' succumb not to laxity,
Though Summer is underway,
For who shall converse with the bee,
And besparkle my day?

Why are your Disc Florets afaint,
Gloomy your sun-like face?
For me, they are the patron saint,
Of restoral and grace.

Why does its strength resign your stem?
Hope's true byspel it is.
Few weeks before it was indemn.
What has now gone amiss?

To the arising buds and leaves,
You are Hope's paragon.
What will they learn if always grieves,
Your stamen when Spring's gone?
If proud Heat thinks with his gold flame
He'll decimate you and burn,
Then mind him you've 'Gold' in your name,
That even he couldn't earn.

To Dusk

Shamik Banerjee

The Foxglove and Bluebell of Spring,
Which give a certain bliss,
At dusk, if you, see them dancing,
Life cannot be amiss,
Like school children rushing to home,
Stop by these flowers, play and roam,
And all they know is this.

Thro' cloud-fissures during sundown,
When rush the golden rays,
And spread on rooftops like a crown,
A ruler's head arrays;
This time looks brighter than the morn,
As if the Sun is newly born,
To more its goldness blaze.

For many, 'tis time to repose,

After a good repast,
And as daywork winds to a close,
Good sleep does come at last,
Then beams from doorsteads and windows,
come like Lord's Sacred Heart that glows,
As if He Himself cast.

But when upon a hill or stream,
Shine of Dusk the most be,
As if it is a sight of dream,
Where one is all gay and carefree,
When pain enchains and you can't dow,
To Dusk's beauty, your eyes allow,
They'll waive your Living fee.

Take pleasure from these sweet sweet things,
And like the Schoolchild feel,
For Worries are Gloom's best bearings,
From us that joyhood steal;
Leave all your fears, these wonders see,
For they're God's own hierophany,
Amid this Life-Death Wheel.

An Ode to Our Aparajita

Shamik Banerjee

Fair Mistress of my garden,
your blue adornment astounds even the skies.
My mother, the house-warden,
when sees you, there's refulgence in her eyes.
More clear your hue than all be:
on Summer, when a lake does blue attain;
in April, the Nupur tree;
before dawn, midair's sapphire on the main.

You are called the Pigeonwings;
because you match a Culver's flaps and tail;
for all appropriate things,
you are the mascot who to us avail.

Your bluish magnificence,
makes you the fame-born flower of this place;
and your vernal fluorescence,

is like the brightness on an infant's face.
Your mid has patch of White,
the Blue surrounds it like planets to Sun.
I have seen you are more bright
than the irised sky when rain is done.
You talk with: Drongos, Sparrows,
Bridewort, Crape Jasmine and Periwinkle;
with birds: of seeds and burrows;
with flowers: of day's sunlight and star's
twinkle.

You are sentiments' envoy—
when you hue's the lightest, you make us
ease;

You are the passional joy,
that gives a bard his poetry and peace.

You are bluest on the day
when mother collects you with feet unshod;
then you're the holy nosegay
with which she glorifies our temple's God.

Simple Melodies

Claire Kroening

Piano keys in symphonies
mimic the cardinal's caw
in the traffic light's harmony.

for the world moves on beat,
drums echo a morning hum
overlooking coastal bays –

a thump, thump, thump
towards the streets below.

How mesmerising the simple can
be.

Morrow's Song

R.S.

The early birds have perched
On windows with their morning song.
The wind is rustling up the leaves,
With morning mist upon its sleeves.
The sun hastens to send its beams,
To wake the weary ones from dreams
Of fairies well adorned with plumes
And witches that fly past on brooms.
The blossoms stir, sit up and yawn,
To glimpse the world rising with dawn.
The distant bells ring and chime,
Making the morn blessed, sublime.

And nearby, the rock studded brook
Meanders through crevices and nooks
While you and I walk hand in hand,
Bathed in dawn's glimmering strands.

July

R.S.

Halfway down the year,
When the sun no longer charms;
Nature yields, July is here
With soothing open arms.

The sky is no longer simply blue –
a tinge of summer, a tinge of rain.
If only it would bring just you;
the heart will not complain.

Halfway down the year,
The moon sneaks through the sky,
Demurely peeks through those veiled
clouds.

The wind is cooler, clad in dew
that gently taps the windowpane.
If only it would bring just you;

the heart will not complain.

Cynefin

R.S.

Amid the soothing sound of rill
where the sweet tempest blows
Clouds rest their heavy heads
Upon the mountain crest.

At the crack of dawn or eventide
Where birdsongs never cease,
Swaying willows whisper secrets
To the passersby with ease.

Where trails amble through forest's green
The hilltops are sunkissed;
But as the moon takes up its throne
They wear their cloaks of mist.

If this is a dream, may I slumber on
So that no soul curtails this bliss.
From dawn to dusk in this cynefin,

this haven where my heart prevails.

Frida

Nasstasja Borratynska-Jelly

my feet run raw as I bound into a trail of
smouldering pain just to run up and grab
ahold of the water that runs through my
fingers,

cooling down the heat of anger that flushes
my palms.

even though what I grasp is unattainable, the
effect of inability comforts and heals the
burning anguish of the entire affair.

I find comfort in what I cannot hold tightly
in my hands,

knowing that water can never be held as
tightly as I want without giving me frostbite.

yet again – it burns the tips of my fingers

so I let go.

Somebody's Sun

Nasstasja Borratynska-Jelly

the sun lovingly warms my cheeks with its palms, tickles my skin with light, makes my skin untighten and my hair rest among blades of grass.

pearls of beaming sweat trickle down my flushed face and find a home within the crevice of my lips.

hot and yearning rays illuminate the wet saliva that ices them like dessert,

and my tongue dances over them, tasting the sweetness which quenches my skin's thirst.

my chin tempers and my lips separate,

rippling light fills my throat with lustrous

heat.

I rest,

full and content,

naked skin buried among soft yellow
buttercups and petals of daisies, enticed by a
warmth that pours over me like milk,

thickens like honey.

my body falls

like nectar.

I submit to the sun, a touch that nurtures
the curves and corners of self – only to be
grasped

by a lover's touch.

Mother Like Daughter

Like Water

Bailey Blundell

With a smile breaking her face into its fault lines, my mom hands me an Easter basket full of suggestions: bath bombs as big as empire apples, an oatmeal exfoliant, and a rosemary shampoo-conditioner set, enveloped in synthetic grass. She worries I'm sleeping too much, but promises epsom salts and warm water will melt the knots in my shoulders: abetting my ordinary efforts to raise her water bill in pursuit of self-care. I lie on the bathroom floor and watch the tub overflow. Steam saps sweat from my chin, and I stretch my tongue past my lips to catch the droplets. Is this how it tastes to sink? I submerge myself in a swarm of bubbles, the overflow drain slurps the excess, I beckon hot water until it runs

cold. I cup it in my mouth, swish it
around, pray for the liquid to pasteurise my
insides but the swallow rejects the grainy
remains of my mother's offerings, and I
can't cough them up. I pull myself
from the porcelain, attempt drying myself
with my towel, but we are both sops on the
tile. I am shivering on the floor when my
mother comes in and scrubs at hard water
spots. There's only so little she can do when
she knows we're both drowning.

Bye Bye Blue Mustang

Bailey Blundell

after Mustang by Luis Jimenez

the fibreglass bronco
faces away from the trumpets
and watches planes sail and set
unbuffered by the Second Coming

see the cobalt expunged
in the white of the new day?
--cornea-stains, sunspots, brighter still?

the brass band dilates his red eyes
and the belly of the land bursts lens flare
while the Rockies breathe out rebounding
their anticipatory winds past this world
and just as the pilots see this bleeding

periphery

a neon cowboy climbs out the earth-wound
and boards his skeletal steed to ride far
below

where any man would like to go

and all the passengers shout

“goodbye blue mustang

the devil himself

couldn't have picked

a better familiar”

Hearts and Spades

Orianna LRJ

Kiss along the highway
sleep beneath the stars
dancing by the mountains
fall apart in my arms

Can I give a heart to you,
That's broken, and split?

Divided in my love, for you
I loved you.

Roads will turn,
life goes on
hearts divide
and, cards on the table,

I love you, love
I love you.

Though my heart's divided for you.

I love you, love

I love you.

But that's

not what I want, for you.

I love you, love,

I love you

but my heart's divided for you

I love you, love

I love you.

Kiss beneath the stars

And we'll dance alone.

Even though the wind

Will softly call.

Can I give a heart to you that's broken and
split?

Divided in my love for you?

I loved him.

hearts divide

Life goes on.

Though I've tried

I can't move on,
Still.

I love you, love
I love you.

Though my heart's divided for you.

I love you, love
I love you.

But that's

not what I want, for you.

I love you, love,

I love you

but my heart's divided for you

I love you, love

I love you.

Mon's House

G.P.B.

It was an old house,

a memorable house.

a house in which they dwelled.

It was a fashionable house with distinct
antiques

whose memories held so well.

Her husband built the house

from pennies that he saved;

he swore that he would roam in it

from marriage to his grave.

If walls could talk then I might be

content for all my life.

But that's not so – I just think

& let my imagination flow –

It flows a stream to eternity
where love and hope do dwell.
Its memories reign through every lane
& through its wisdom I gain.

Spinning around you

Tejasvee Nagar

We are parts of this system
and you are my satellite. I think
I am spinning around the sun,
but I never come close to it –
I'm scared I'd turn into ashes.
I want you to pull me in,
I can see what you're feeling and
I wish I could wrap myself as a present,
travel over the seas to be there for you.

But you said that you'll figure this out –
you'll transcribe the information
that your mind is registering, and
the most I do is think, and think, and
wish that I could be there for you.

Everybody's girl

Rachael Sevitt

After "Buddy's Rendezvous" by Father John

Misty & Lana Del Rey

Unlike smoke and heat, lust
does not rise. It stays close
to the ground. The same place
Where ash falls, and spirits
turn to goop. This jazz club is no different
than a sticky back room,
or a nursery. You squint sideways
into dusty rose floodlights. Your body
in this black dress
is liquid. Viscous like honey. The same ruby
that smudges over your saxophone
smudges over the cheeks of the black
and white men who gaze up, slurp down
your rippled existence. In this haze

everyone in the room is a hand
drawn caricature. All they see
is the fine line of your body. They draw
their own conclusions from your brass' wail.
In their wet winds, it is the syrupy gasp
of a rendezvous with their girl.

Oregon Coast

Lori Williams

Foggy mist upon your face,
ethereal this time, this place.
Grey blue skies and agate sand,
barefoot walks go hand in hand.
Pacific rain gives forest sheen,
purple sea star, shells to glean.
Sunset lifts our spirits high,
kites aloft in windy sky.
Seals bark amidst the rocks,
campfire glow and moonlight talks.
Dolphins flirt just off the shore,
myrtle wood, antiques galore.
skimmer board and sketchbook too,
sandy castles with a view.

Life Treks

Lori Williams

As steep the trail, so deep my thoughts.
I walk awhile and become lost
in life and death and in between,
all the mundane and routine.
Climbing high out of my head,
Leaving it to prayer instead.
Life is full of summits steep,
Some days each step just a creep.
You slip on shale, skin your knee,
pour your heart out in a plea.
Wipe the sweat from off your brow,
the journey's long, you wonder how...
It's hot in the sun if you're in the fire,
but hey there, now, look how much higher.
Turn around and check the view,
don't let the trek be lost on you.
Smile when heart rocks catch your eye,

when clouds are magic in the sky,
when bluebirds swoop in for the nod
And sweeping vistas leave you awed
And when your foot reaches the crest
You'll look back down, completely blessed.

Flavor of the clouds

Kyara Alameda

When I was two, I wondered what the sky
tasted like.

I imagined it would be sweet.

Not rich like brownies or chocolate cake
but light like cotton candy.

Flooding with blue raspberry puffs.

Tiny hands grasping forever.

Reaching.

Extending for something solid but coming up
empty every time.

Sometimes the wind sprints away, and the
sky chases.

Those were the moments I felt the closest to
latching onto something.

The local park is where the sweet dreams

aged.

Time drove by and my to-do list became
missed exits.

The flavour of the clouds faded.

I began to wonder why

no one tells you that growing up feels a lot
like reaching up for cotton candy in the sky,
extending for something solid but coming up
empty every time.

Growth stunted imagination.

Time numbed taste buds.

I've used a cotton candy machine in the past.

The heavens still look sweeter.

Beauty in Simplicity

Kyara Alameda

A grey pigeon
Striding about
Aware with certainty
Of its simplicity
Lack of vibrancy
Its inability to attract “oohs” and “aahs”.
Nevertheless, it struts in confidence
Chest puffed out with pride
As if its beauty were that of a red cardinal.
Darts around amongst the others,
Scrimmages,
Sings off pitch.
It continues its stroll.
I can't stop staring.

Falling

Kyara Alameda

Fall is blowing steam off my coffee
borrowing wind from summer's hurricanes
and stuffing the damage of July in the back
of my closet.

In the evenings I sit on the screened porch
and watch my dog chase the same borrowed
wind.

The heat in my town keeps sweaters on racks.
I buy some anyway.

Saltwater turns to boiling water as the sun
retracts

and when the leaves fall
they experience something solid for the first
time in eight months.

I understand.

I find myself sleeping until 3:00 p.m.
yet still getting things done.

Fall is the Sunday of the seasons –
my neighbourhood looks the prettiest,
coated in sunset,
and we are all the same.