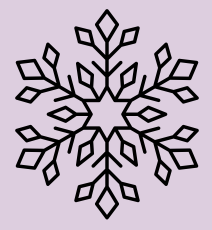
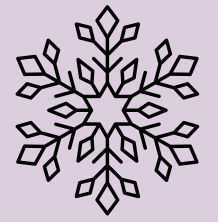


winter solstice



seasonal fruits magazine



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the beginning of faint

winter

yuu ikeda

the colder wind becomes,
the warmer the inner of my heart becomes.

winter thorns are like a fireplace.

they warm my heart,
at the same time of piercing my skin.

throughout winter,
i can feel warmth that childhood me couldn't
feel.

Snow White

Mahnissa Maneerut

In our cozy, quaint abode we dwell,
Seven dwarfs, a family, we've known so well,
But a stranger came, like a winter's bite,
With skin so pale, they called her Snow
White.

Her name, it felt so cold, so strange,
In our home, she brought an eerie change,
Why did they let her in our place,
I longed for her to vanish, without a trace.

She wandered here, with a princess's grace,
In her presence, I felt out of place,
Her voice like a song, so sweet, so pure,
But I couldn't help but feel unsure.

“Snow White,” they called her with delight,

But to me, that name just didn't sit right,
Why did they let her stay and share our
space,
I couldn't bear to see her face.

Yet, as days turned to weeks, I came to see,
A kindness in her heart that set her free,
She cared for us, with a gentle hand,

And slowly, I began to understand.

what we do

Blanka Pillár

This is what we do.

We eat yellow fruit in the winter, we wish for sun instead of clouds, we light a lamp in the morning.

We break glass on ice, we stand in the way of the wind, we wait for the green, we wash dead windows.

We run from the woods with our faces in our hands, we smile, we poke, we build bridges between black teeth.

We hide from the giants with a parapet up, we bathe in a shallow red sea, we buy a star.

We misunderstand words, make new ones, wait, paint sky-blue roses.

We dry shapeless inkblots in billowing
smoke, we tell the earth
tales of blowing threads. We
sing snail songs, we straighten vines, we
travel across.

We stand and stare. We spot a shape, we
move towards it. We watch for a few
seconds, we
want to ring out, to make some beautiful bell,
like the lute of angels swinging. Take a
breath,
speak nicely, smile with open mouth, take
two steps back, repeat.

Instead, the sounds of astonishing clarity fall
away, stop somewhere in the dense air, clump
together and drift away towards the endless
vault of the grey sky. We speak on in silence,
we
wave, and they follow us, blind and sightless,
in young old age, in bound limbed freedom.
We set them out in the lonely midst of the
whiteness, and forge silvery sinks beneath

them.

Away we watch the masterpiece as the light
of the pocket mirrors gleams on it, as
meaning
grows between the snow-white nothingness
and the darkening sky, as the tight ropes
loosen,
as the time rushes by in grains of sand, as
they laughingly lick into the chilling
cream-flavoured ooze.

And then comes the wound train.

And we carry the silver home from the gaps
in the soiled train tracks. Because, that's
what we
do.

mr

Blanka Pillár

It was just a moment in the deep night sea of
life,

With a heart twisted into yarn at the eternal
beginnings of ends, Dreaming with longing
words atop pasts,

On the softly parting edge of converging
destinies.

Somewhere, time taught between openings
and stops,

Above the slow-paced, quiet chorus of
orphaned angels, Behind the red memory of
running

sands and minutes,

Into the rush of the moment, a royal blue
tear leapt.

games in the garden, under the snow

Elisabeth D.

When we were toddlers,
we used to play games in a garden all year.
The season did not matter,
nor did the weather.

When the summer heat burned our skin,
we'd use water in our games,
and when winter would arrive,
we'd replace flowers with snowflakes.

Our parents recall this every year
around Christmas,
as they walk into that exact garden
but there are no children rushing around
anymore.

No,
it's empty now,
and we're all in bigger cities.

When I'm saturnine I look out the window
and wonder if you're doing the same.

The rain is falling
and it doesn't help with the loneliness,
but if you're here,
witnessing the same rain fall down,

then we're together again.

Approaching Winter

N.A. Kimber

Winter is slow now.

The days stretch out

with the darkness,

and I become covetous

of warmth and refuge.

The snow is something to be admired,

gazed at from a window

as I sip tea or hot chocolate

and bask in the company I keep.

The snow is something to be feared.

I hate to feel its touch,

be subject to its will

and the danger it creates

in the world around.

It knows I hide from it,

and it seeks me out,

the cold seeping into my bones –

leeching out the warmth.

As a child, the winter
was never long enough.

I'd spend hours amongst the cold,
till my hair and skin
were soaked to the bone.

Till my body was bruised and battered
by the sled as we crashed into the snow.
But I'd have snowflakes on my eyelashes,
a flush in my cheeks,
and a runny nose to boot.

My laughter would dance in the air,
a swirl of smoke too quick to fade.

It was easy to get back up then.

To let the pain subside.

To measure the pain as worthwhile,
for all the joy the winter did provide.

When I did not fear consequences
or broken bones.

When I did not know
what true pain was like,
no, not at all.

There was a time the cold
could never hurt me.
Filled me with life
rather than leaving me destitute.
I am much too old now,
despite being so young.
I wonder when I won't be afraid
to live as I once did.

Without caution,
without the measure of time.
Without the counting of each season;
the coming and going of strife.
May it come before
the winter of my life.

I won't be able to fight the cold then,
as it seeps into my bones.
It will be a part of me,
along with the creaks and the groans.

The Bird Caught in the Six Pack Rings

Fiona Adair

I see it wrestling with the plastic one
morning on my walk to school,
and I stop, of course I do.

Watch the struggle
as it hops in place
letting out squeaks of
pain? Alarm?

Cannot even flap its wings, and I think
this is it, this is how humans
kill animals
aside from killing them.

I shiver in the cold and shove my hands in
my pockets,
notice that the car next to the bird is
running,
warming itself up.

Someone walks out of the house I have

stopped in front of.

A woman who definitely

also notices the bird, and I glance

up at her and

hope I can trust her

and I

walk away without

helping the bird—

This is it, this is how I kill.

Demeter Creates the First Winter

Hannah Denton

Death takes you all by surprise.

Now, like me, you must dig down
into the earth, search among
the lifeless things for something
that will sustain your life.

You will watch, your heart will soar
as the first green buds burst
from branches, tiny tokens
of your torture soon ending.

But first, see this earth transformed:
under the steel grey sky, sun sapped
of its strength, feel it
with your entire body: the ache, the lack.
The mother who loved you once
now sees you a stranger.
She casts her smiling face aside.

A withering eye glazes all
that grows before it
under ice.

So it is with me.

When my child walked the earth,
all sprang to life before her.

Skies shone glittering blue,
not bluer than her eyes,
and her voice was the sweet breath
coaxing the flowers to bloom.

Now, mortals, reap the harvest of my
devastation.

No more will I suffer alone.

Grief bleeds into everything I touch,
leaves the shiver of death behind.

Seasonal Demands

Samantha Terrell

This year the leaves turned
From green to rust and grey.
We thought they skipped
Orange, yellow, red. Now,
As snow threatens to
Hide their decay,
Bright, tie-dye colors
Smatter over the mountains,
Providing cover before cover
Comes in a different form,
Demanding flexibility, changing
Our minds with the season.

Christmas Miracles

Samantha Terrell

Today didn't go as planned.
Our bowl full of memories fell
And shattered into a million cut glass and
seashell
Shards. And, I burned my hand
On steam rising
From the oversized
Pot of boiled potatoes.

But
The seven dollar ham
Went off without a hitch! And,
Every night
When we climb into our bed,
Freed from fragments of pain, enfolded
In warmth, is a miracle to me.

Winter Meditations

Samantha Terrell

I.

Meditation

Vesper Sparrow

Perches on its branch,

Wanting no row

With bully Blue Jay.

Solemnly, it holds its silent place,

Lingering, even as I dare a glance.

II.

In Winter

Flakes peel

From a dry,

Whitewashed world, tumbling purposelessly

Around Arctic air,

Waiting for past and future to become one
In the New Year sky.

III.

Lengthened Days, Shortened Lives

Another Solstice over - the day by day by day
Of premature endings has passed.

Another year is over - with its same and same
and same

As the last and last and last.

Covid Winters

Have turned to Springs.

New life thwarted, some still

Await the end of suffering.

We light another candle for the dead,

Praying, this year, Equinox won't be turned
on its head.

December

EJ Rivers

When the ground turns white
and the air takes a bite
off the end of little ones' noses.

When darkness falls
and the fireplace calls
with its comforting glow of warmth.

When we reflect
on a year of memories and their effect
on the shape of the year ahead.

When we let
our inner child play
instead of harbouring our laughter at bay.

When backs hit the ground

and limbs flail around
to call the angels to the snow.

When we sip hot chocolate
then watch our peppermint breath
disappear in front of our eyes.

December

Christian Ward

Winter's showmanship
is flaunted in December.

Observe the snow
making every landscape
as elegant as a swan,
frames the deer and hares
in a Christmas card pose,
and everything glow
like a robin's red breast.

Winter's undulating fields
move with its chilled breath,
the holly berries lighting
the harvest mice asleep
underground while the season
moves everything with its quiet prayer.

The Stars Cane Is My Imaginations Pen

Claudia Jane

When you look up at the stars, what do you see?

Some people see nothing but a black sky,
light pollution reigning on their lives.

Other people see inhabited planets,
imaginary lines connecting star to star.

There's only ever one constellation I've ever
noticed and seen,

One I thought I only saw in Wheeling,
but it follows me and I smile when I wonder
why.

Three stars,
parallel to each other.

They do a sort of curve,
a curve that reminds me of the pixels you see

up close on TV.

“Hey, doesn’t that look like Jack Frost’s cane thing?” I say.

Puzzled looks are given. “Who’s?”

“You know, the guardian from Rise of the Guardians?”

They’ve seen the movie, but they don’t see what I mean.

We continue walking home,

but my eyes are peeled to the sky,
and I keep tripping on damaged sidewalks
with weeds and snow.

Another day months later,
I continue to trip on sidewalks,
too busy looking at the sky.

I bid my friends farewell through the
windows of the rooms.

“Look!” I call. “You can see that constellation from up there!”

“Okay, you crazy girl,” one says. “Good night.”

“Good night,” I say,

not to them,

but to the constellation without a name.

A late night ride home,

I stare at the stars above momentarily before we enter our home.

I think of how this sky is obscured by the street light above me,

how I wonder what the night would look like if we were entrapped in darkness.

My eyes squint to the boundless sea as I hear the car door shut,

and I notice those three stars parallel to each other.

My eyes widen, can't possibly believing I

really see it from here,
but I do! There's no mistaking it!

My mother has already went inside while I
stand here,
beginning to feel lightheaded,
as I imagine,
a white frosted guardian,
blowing in the winds above the clouds
on the way home.

It is then I remember my age of eleven,
looking out the window of the classroom
filled with equations,
trying to control the snow.

The Bitter Side of Pittsburgh

Claudia Jane

The rigid downtown.

The horror of unfed pigeons and the horror
of those who kick them
as if they haven't already been down for so
long.

The Benedum Center.

Where those in velvet dresses and stiletto
heels
enter as if there are not humans begging for a
dollar to get home
just on the other side.

The desperate attempt of those with perms
trying hard to avoid eye contact as they pass
by in their warm fur coats
as if there isn't a mother without a coat,

bags in her hands filled with childrens
clothes.

Men in suits with gray hair gelled back
glaring at what they call junkies
as if those dark circles under their eyes aren't
from an unrested night
out on the cold streets.

Porsche's selfishly cut off buses.

Oh, didn't you know? In downtown,
One life saved
is better than thirty.

Frosty Whispers

R.S.

Sun-kissed mountains drenched in snow,
Beckon the sky on tiptoe;
Snowflakes gently perched on trees,
Seem to whisper to the breeze;
A calming stillness is all around,
No footsteps are heard of any sound;
Except the bird that flutters by
In the frosty winter sky.

Early Winter From a Window

Hannah Cochrane

Late November mornings bring
Deceptive skies reminiscent of summer:
A brilliant, clear blue expanse,
Blemished only by candyfloss-pink smears.

A low sun shines in,
Warming my room through the glass
Which magnifies and amplifies
The false heat in chilling air.

Waking up to the first
Proper frost of the season,
Which obscures cars' windscreens
Yet to be greeted by the weak sun.

The castle on that hill,
Beyond the tireless train tracks,

Greys as it grows ever colder,
No longer graced by autumn fires.

A flock of dawn birds
Swoop overheard, high above rooftops,
Scheming their seasonal escape
To a warmer world far from here.

winter, the season of

Hannah Cochrane

frost leaves &
frost grass,
glazed morning windows.

bright mornings,
escaping from long, dark nights
to watch swallows dance & depart.

jack frost hurrying
shoppers along streets,
clutching seasonal offerings.

the promise of snow
at Christmas, unfulfilled.
dove grey clouds looming.

hot chocolates & marshmallows,

glinting lights to abate the darkness,

decorations strung around homes.

fluctuations of joy:

a holiday, a new year

and then

we begin again.

Snowflakes in a city

Lee Butler

There are cries at the soft snowflakes
flying through the frigid wind. I can't help
but reach my hand out to the moonlight,
hoping it kisses my nose like butterfly
wings migrating to the stars. The "blizzard"
swarms around street lights, orange globes
humming over just-after-rush-hour-traffic
traffic.

Bystanders bump shoulders and
scrunch their red noses at passersby,
those scurrying with their hands waving
in the air calling after the bus driver.
The tragedy of a snowflake, the horror
they haven't been erased. Each unique
spider web, plucking the strings from the hub
until it's a line of silk. We turn the
thermostat

degree by degree higher till the ice crystals
melt into oceans that flood above
civilizations.

Delhi Winters

Kanwar Sonali Jolly-Wadhwa

Dim, dim sun

Day past day

Sky, a concealing blanket

Spun of grit and grime

The sun engaged

In its daily-toil

Pushing aside

The drapes of carbon beads

Strung on smog

To shine

On twenty-six million hopeful faces

Sliding in through iron barred windows,

Jumping through foggy glass panes,

Slipping through the slit under the back
door.

Casting itself

Sprawling across the brick terrace
With sunny abandon
No more furtive glances
My grandmother, awaiting
Her freshly washed, wet hair
Flowing down her back.

Her mason jars
Brimming with winter vegetables
Pickled in spices
Drenched in mustard and oil
Aspiring for no more
Than to feel the warmth
Of the sun seep through
The round stone walls confining them

The crimson and blue rug
Pulled out and hung over the parapet
To shake out the dust
And soften the wool
Under the brushed gold gaze
Of the winter sun.

That terrace now
Rarely glimpsed
Like the winter sun
In my thoughts
Of days

Plucked and pickled
Long ago
Shriveled up memories
Nudging me to pick up the mason jar
And give it a good shake
To savor the flavor of winter
Once again.

Winter Storm

Dana Knott

Is it the icy fingernails
of ghosts carving messages

into the frosted windows?

“Let me in. Let me in,” they say.

My soul answers, “Let me out.”

Snow Drift

Dana Knott

I will lie down
naked in the snow
and relinquish heat.

How long until
I'm a page turn
away from sleep,

one last heartbeat
away from him,
the one I love?

Will he find me
still in the snow,
a glittery statue
of an icy kingdom?

Let me die euphoric
and frostbitten.

Snowfall is beautiful,
not just to me
and not beautiful

just for me. Rarely
life is as lovely
as a hypothermic dream.

Ceasefire

A. Daniyal

I don't have forces
to tackle the world
today

I feel very tired.

Leave me here

sprawled on the couch

like clothes thrown carelessly
into the laundry basket.

Let me nibble at chocolate
late at night

while the snowstorm
rages outside.

Here I hear the hiss
of the room heater

I let myself melt
in its merciful warmth.

Why can't, for once,
History go on vacations
and leave us all alone?
No more wars and invasions,
Everybody lowers their guns
and just goes home.
Don't make me think
of anything
I shall fall asleep watching
the lights of the Christmas tree
blink.

24 December 2022

Montreal

Winter Fruit

Kip Knott

Even my fallow winter field bears fruit
every night when the moon rises—

either full of light or full of darkness
or not full of either—from some underworld

beneath the snow to claim its tract of sky,
never free of the invisible umbilical roots

that bind it to our planet, an earth-born
yet unearthy mushroom seeding the vast

dark field of the night with luminous spores
that lie dormant for a hundred-million
lifetimes

until, inevitably, they violently blossom into
stars.

Winter's Duality

Angela Patera

O ruthless winter

The season of nature's slumber

The time nature reserves vitality—

Prepares for its rebirth

Please, do not despair

The dark season is not everlasting

Beauty can be found in it, though

If one fancies to explore

Snowflakes dancing in the sky

Sparkling like glitter on the forest floor—

Gleaming like diamonds

Quiet is the world on snowy days

Time seems to slow down, close to stopping

The stillness of the frozen air

Can soothe even the most bruised soul

O merciless winter
Does your cold freeze emotions?
I have no use for mine
Poison consumed my heart long ago
All that remains is a black void—
A shell of a heart which needs to be
eliminated

Drive icicles through it—
Through my whole being

When you are done, o comforting winter
Envelop me in your snowy blanket
And let me soak up all the beauty you offer
While my lips and my fingertips turn the
shade of cobalt blue

Sliced fruit and love incarnate

Alexandra Catharsis

There are two people in a room.

Two birds on the roof above.

One reclines, leaned back,

Eyes shut in the posture of coiled power,

A bridge on which a small beast climbs,

Nonchalantly displaying the sharp points

Of a variety of perfect teeth.

To be at rest is not always easy.

The massed experience, expectation,

willfulness, continuity,

They resent heavy inertia.

And the one looking on knows this well.

The smiling witness at the back wall,

Perpetually holding something back, is

At ease in knowing there is always more than
meets the eye.

In a bubble

Refracted from outside

A love, even momentary, even false,
Has a ripple that touches everything.

I am alone in a room.

Everything unfolds itself to me.