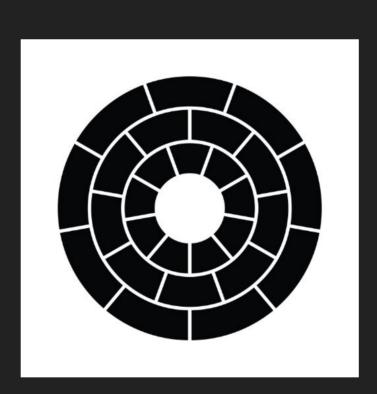


2021-2022



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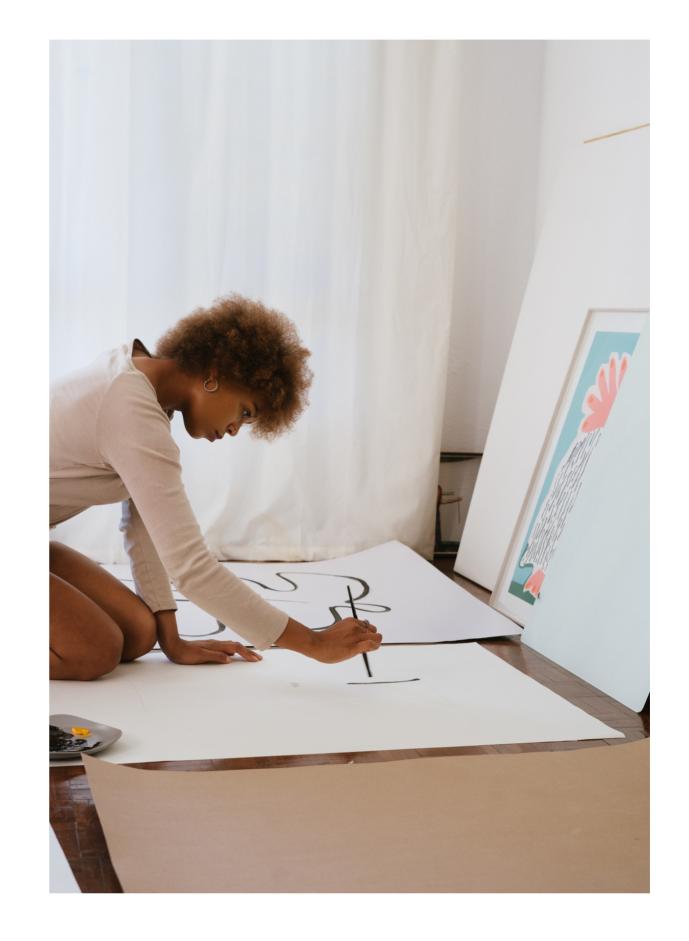


A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

dear reader,

Thank you for supporting Mosaic Magazine's 44th edition. Since 1977, our magazine has represented the creative minds of The Ohio State University. The 2022 publication brings together a diverse group of undergraduate artists and writers, representing a multitude of voices, passions, and stories. We would like to congratulate all of the students whose work had been accepted in this year's edition.

We would like to thank the members of our editorial board, art staff, layout staff, and literature staff for their enthusiasm, creativity, and consistent devotion to Mosaic. In addition, we would like to express our gratitude to the English Department and UniPrint. Without them, the success of Mosaic's events and the high quality publication would not have been possible. We would also like to thank our advisor, Katie Stanutz, for her support and guidance in all of Mosaic's endeavors this year.



Most importantly, this publication would not be possible without you --our readers, writers, and artists. Mosaic's mission is to provide a platform for talented undergraduates to publish, share, and improve their work. Thank you for continuing to submit your work and support your fellow artists in the Ohio State undergraduate community by reading Mosaic.

We hope that you enjoy this year's edition of Mosaic and encourage you to get involved next year by joining a staff, submitting your work, or attending events.

For more information about our organization, please email us at mosaic.magazine.osu@gmail.com or visit our website http://org.osu.edu/mosaicmagazine/

Sincerely,
Maddie, Libby, Mary, And Jayasree
The Editors-In-Chief
Mosaic Magazine 2022

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baggage claim

My suitcase was my first home.

It was a pretty blush pink in all of its cheap, plasticky glory.

and its printed-paisley interior;

The Blond Primark Groovy Chick on its outside posing coolly with her puppy right next to her.

It had scratched up wheels from laps around Mumbai, Heathrow, John F. Kennedy airport, But I liked it just fine. Groovy Chick and her dog helped me carry my clothes and my favorite books, so it was just fine.

Mama and Baba had their own suitcases too.

Baba's was a bit serious-looking with a hard shell and one of those twisty locks with letters and numbers-secret codes., I thought.

I'd fiddle with them while he answered the dozens of questions the Important Airport People asked him
His Baggage was heavier than mine too.

Mama's suitcase was a little softer on the outside but still very heavy and the edges were a bit frayed. I wish I could help carry hers too, but I still had noodle arms. We tied colorful ribbons on the handles so they wouldn't get lost in the sea of bags that all looked the same on those conveyer belts, But all had different contents and character shoved in compartments inside, hopping on different airplanes.

Shradha Shendge



cloud girl

Jessica Sunderhaft

family discussion

I am pacing around my room, trying to find a comfortable position (possible spots include, but are not limited to, the top of my bed supine, or within the closet, either standing up and pressed between the door and my clothes or lying in a semi-curled up position on the ground, or underneath my desk which has no identifiable cozy features but is often used by my cat so may have some kind of redeeming quality I have yet to find) as the strife unfolds downstairs; shouts and noises and a general sorts of discordance echo up to my room which makes me close my door but doing so doesn't really stop all that much so I put on my headphones and look for something calming to listen to (first I consider Bowie, but his work is too good for me to risk building a negative association with, so then I go to other being aggressive and dance-able, isn't it really something you be sad with [in most cases at least; exceptions include, but are not limited to, "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" or "I Just Wasn't Made For These Times"] so I'm stuck be indecisiveness so I press the button that says "Shuffle" but it plays from The Conet Project and recordings of shortwave number stations don't soothe me so I decide to go back to Bowie because I have his 80's work on my phone and his 80's work is hot garbage so I don't care if I make negative associations with it and there's probably at least one ballad in there that I can be sad to) but even though I can block their fighting out I'm too curious to not want eavesdrop (kinda like how I get frightened by particular scenes in scary movies <for example, when its like dark and the camera slowly pans forward in a poorly-lit</p> room [like the part in Saw {the first feature-length film - not the original short film} with the person in the big mask in the closet door) and I hear the awful things my ostensible loving parents say to each other and this makes me feel double plus ungood so I breathe really heavily and the lights start to look very different and they fade and I sink into something approximating darkness (it's more gray/beige in color, than the black that the word "darkness" implies).

I see a trio of roughly human-sized mantises. I know why I am here.

"You realize that they must part" speaks the middle one in a thick sort of English accent.

"I know", I respond, looking down to hide the pain in my face.

"You haven't accepted it" says the mantis on the right, in a sorta vaguely Australian accent.

"I don't know how"

Center lets out an almost paternal sigh, and a thick fog begins to obscure all my vision.

There is a door out of this haze.

I am aware of it.

I choose

not

t o

e x i t

Whether by choice or not, I'm lying in bed. It's darker out. Deafened by quiet, I open a window, so that may sobs may mingle with the noises of nightly insects.

Jack Brunswick

dear time

Am I suppose to feel like this-

battered and bruised by the onslaught of the day?

Clocks keep appearing in my poems with chains and knives. It wasn't on purpose.

Dear Time, sorry, I guess, for turning you into a demon with horns. On day, I'll have lain enough roots. One day, I'll see the

flowers in the concrete. Until then, I'll try to understand. The

golden hours are always now aren't they? Time shouldn't be an enemy on the

horizon. So for now, I'll apologize, because

I'd rather not water the earth with the salt of my tears. But even so,

just as trees started growing in my heart, they have already begun to wither. I wait again for a moonless

knight to pull me out of the thorns. Time, you curved your clawed fingers into my throat and squeezed, put a

little monster in my chest, let it roam wild. It won't stop rattling the bars of my ribcage.

My heart hurts from running.

Now look up. Doesn't the sky look so open without a clock ticking

perpetually down to the horizon?

Quietly, I lay back.

Rain drums gently against the glass, I welcome thunder into my chest, and for a moment I forget that I'm suffocating.

Time is a monster, or I turned it into one.

Under a gentler Time creep up and I sing mourning songs again. Remember how kind you once were?

Well, maybe not. You can't be cruel or kind. This was supposed to be an apology.

Exactly one hour, one day, one year from now-will there still be knives in my chest? I've sung enough eulogies.

Yet forward you run, forward I run. Endlessly to no end. When the sun its zenith in the sky, I will try not to burn. Standing still was not a love I thought I'd miss.

Lena Zhang

the vase

It was designed with the utmost care
The vase with its intricate pattern
Created with an idea of immense beauty
Glorious colors line it's exterior
Hues of gold and brown and tan
As beautiful patterns cover inside
Complementing its hourglass shape
A wonderful piece of art to behold
Useless without something to fill it
Forcing the vase to fulfill its purpose

Filled with flower after flower after flower
And each time the vase hopes
This is the flower that will last
Seas of blue delphiniums
Bundles of burnt red roses
An abundance of variations
All have called this vase home
Some lasting longer than others
But nevertheless, they all shrivel
And the cycle repeats

The vase waits for a flower

Something to fill its emptiness

Until eventually one comes along

A delightful yellow daisy

With awestriking luminescence

The daisy flourishes inside the vase

Its colors bright and vibrant

The beautiful hue of warm sunlight

Personifying happiness for the vase

Just long enough to create hope

But then it begins to wilt and die
The colors grow dim and bleak
Instead of emitting happiness
The daisy begins to appear dreary
Eliciting a somber realization in the vase
As the once gorgeous petals droop lower
Until finally all life has left the flower
Leaving the vase empty once again
Patiently waiting for the next resident
The flower that temporarily makes it whole

Kayla Wilson

lonely beach town

where the breath of salt consumes everything.

from the ocean-stained floorboards of the surf shop
to burnt-blue skies seeping in through palm tree leaves,
this town is eaten away by the sea that surrounds it.

ride your bikes in the grey dawn light to like cinnamon ooze off crinkled bakery paper and press bare feet to the slats of sun-warmed docks over the hungry slop of water against brine-eaten walls.

at every turn we are haunted by the presence of a hunger sea.

pink-icing beach houses and heat-haunted streets

slumped as they slide down to sand-gritted teeth and a green-foamed mouth.

maybe if we make enough wishes on the crabs we catch in jars and the starlight splashes on the midnight sea, we will live forever.

maybe if we swallow enough saltwater in the afternoon, and ride enough of these storm-seethed waves to the shore, the ocean will on day remember us and forget to swallow us whole.

Sarah Druhan



to the lighthouse

Amy Mabey

i saw the light peeking through the remind me of all the reasons to keep

I.) DESOLATION

I can't seem to put a finger on it / the imprint / the feeling / how my thumb smudges the backward glass / seeing my reflection race away in the bus's window as it rolls down / High St. / taking my smearing body away from the night and all I am left with is / mourning / how the first thing I pray to these day has been to a GOD that takes me away from here or gives me the will to keep fighting / no sword appears in the murky ponds I hop over on the disheaveld cement everyday nor suits of armor appear hanging in my closet but gives me just the slightest____push to continue / isn't that just the form of truest love / why did my prayers get answered in a little orange bottle sent by no angel but a man who knows a whole / hour / a half / about me / and what does it mean to someone who only see colors in the trees when they take a little white pill every morning / I would much rather wield an intimidating blade to slice through this darkness besides me / even a little wooden slingshot would work / like the one I made with my grandfather in a smoky basement smelling of sawdust / the unending bend of a smile fixed upon a white-bearded man leaning over a small dark-haired child / who / unaware / in fifteen years / his brain won't make enough chemicals for him to / BE HAPPY / and that's what I keep telling myself to be in the shower as my poems become mantras / my words falling out of my mouth into the stream / then I think about

II,) CONSOLATION

the light peeking through the treetops of your smile and the colors remind me of all the reasons to keep / living / I am not talking about the sunset for once / but a hope that lingers on the edges of your lip and the heat of flames flickering from a hearth of deep-brown in a room they call / your irises / since I mentioned sunsets I think it's worth sharing the day is bracketed by beauty / I have been trying to think of life that way / a gift / rolling down a bike path on Sunday / willow trees leaning over a rushing river / smelling like the warm scent of pumpkin bread / rising from an oven / I saw my friend's / small grin creep across my / heart in the reflection of their black sunglasses / I wanted to box the moment in carboard and send it to everyone and send it to everyone I know / so they could see how amazing life

treetops of your smile and the colors living.

could be / to keep rolling out of Hell / I mean bed / like when we were sitting outside the library starting a great sycamore tree / you told me / beautiful things are beautiful / but it's experiences we have with ordinary things that create true magic and I think they all that / **love** / right? / when the heart scrapes against everyday things until we mold a broken down building into a sculpture of a winged goddess called Victory / I guess that what this all about / not winning / but manifesting reasons to live / and I am not afraid of death / I am afraid of the process of dying some people call / adulthood / or a 9-5 / sometimes I see the light / leaving people eyes on my walks to school as they look into the light on their phones / so I keep my gaze to the clouds / and I know / I know / I know / it is not all life or death here / I know / I know / I know but I do consider this a / FIGHT / and isn't it a great time to be a warrior / I am not thinking about sacrifice / I am thinking of all the reasons to live for / because you can endure anything for a time because when in / desolation / consolation / is coming / but you, no, we, no, all of us / must make it through out of suffering / first / and I again am reminded of the journey of a caterpillar / how they must struggle their way out their chrysalis to become a / butterfly / I think back to the first breath we all too when we began this poem / reminding me that we sail on this floating rock through space together and how beautiful is that / knowing we dance cosmically as / one

Liam Nigro

selene

tonight, i'm starved for neon scraps of a summer evening. you, with the straw of a Coke slushie caught in your teeth, bared like a promise, and i pretend not to watch your hair flow out of the window.

the sun's watercolors have long since fled from the sky, and now the night belongs to you: you move like you own it, like ink in effortless water.

i watch like i always do, as the garish lights of Ohio at night, sterile Speedways and violent advertisements for fast food, blue and helplessly move in your wake.

just like me, futile in the weights of your gravity.

i wonder if you knew that when you smiled at my jokes, it felt like a quiet starburst of the soul.

i wonder if you knew that when you laughed, sleeping cities bent themselves to live around your shadow.

Sarah Druhan

Here lies our love.

Our names engraved on forgotten stone.

Buried deep in the graveyard of my memories,
Rose bushes, wild daisies, and overgrown vines

Hides relics of our burnt-out passion.

Dust brushes against my fingertips,

Thorns prick my flesh,

Crimson drips across your initials,

And soaks into the crumbing soil.

A casket cradles your wilting heart.

Envious of the entwined eternity

I yearn to gouge the earth

Revive the remnants.

Whispering voices of ghastly affection.

I'm embraced by a fog of nostalgia.

Veils of bouguets, lockets, and tear-stained letters.

Below is agony, anguish, and fist-shaped anger.

I'll throw this grief into the pyre
And watch our memory turn to ash.
What's dead will remain dead.
Untouched and resting in peace

Deja Jones

greek tragedy

"For a thousand years, the narcissus flower laments its blindness. With great difficulty is someone with true vision born in the garden"

- Allama Iqbal

"The obsidian corner of my beating flesh
Desires to have eyes roved over myself,
Perhaps linger questioningly,
Perhaps conceive a reality of that
Is a little more forgiving,
a little more appealing

But in the truth, what lingers is desire for fabled Understanding, perhaps a Twin-like apparatus where we Communicate through our dreams and pictures Where I hold the pen you held when I annotate edges

Perhaps find love, that lovely paradox in

A daffodil murmurs in that ever-pleasant breeze, where
I lay my hands on the stem,
connect them to ever-soft petals

which we unite in our mutual loneliness

To find a connection with the silent portrait in front of me

Is beauty a strong enough rope to hold us together?

Perfection is a non-starter

Perhaps it is fatal to view my
reflection

To linger questioningly on myself,

To perhaps conceive a reality of me that is

A little more forgiving,
a little more appealing

Haanya Ijaz



aeneas defeats turnus

Minh-Thu Truong

march of the harvestman

You can hear them clicking, crawling, skittering across the floor of the basement, a series of tick tick in rapid succession and though you have your flashlight, you're terrified to turn it on because whenever the beam reveals will be much worse than what you hear now.

But you can swear that tiny clicks are getting closer and dear God if the sound isn't behind you now, so you fumble for the switch and in the split second before yellow light floods the floor, they scatter and you're left standing by yourself like some kind of asshole who's still afraid of the dark.

"Harvestman," determines the specialist the next day as he hands you the bill with a sympathetic look. "Not uncommon in these parts."

"How do I get rid of them?" you ask, your eyes flitting up from the paper.

He hesitates, then parts you on the shoulder and leaves without answering. He's docked you on the piece, some kind of pity discount you're not sure why you deserve.

You hear them again that night, tapping away inside your walls and you can just picture them twisting their spindly limbs as they bounce in a disgusting fuzzy mass of black bodies and an uncountable amount of long discrete legs. They're plotting, you know it, you can feel it, each one of the copious eyes that track your every movement.

You roll over on your side and tighten the sheets around your shoulders, but you feel something tickling the edges of your feet and in a flash you've turned the light on and sprung out of bed.

But they're gone. You're standing alone in the middle of the bedroom, the covers sprawled out across the floor, the light illuminating every dusty corner and congratulations-you've achieved nothing.

The next day you bring it up to your friends at lunch and the small cafe table goes quiet.

Jenny with her manicured nails and ringless finger, breaks the silence flippantly with a nonchalant "oh yeah, I had them last year," and she gives you the number of a place down the road. Amanda reaches under the table and silently takes your hand. Your gut wrenches at the gesture for some reason, so you busy yourself with checking the notifications on your phone. You don't have any. It's to be expected. The conversation moves on.

On your way home, you decide to stop by the library. There's this old librarian that works there, and you can't be sure, but there's something mystical about her. There's something mystical about the whole situation, so you decide to ask her about these so-called Harvestmen.

When you mention that word, she peers over the top of her glasses at you. She's familiar with them, yes, there've been several more cases recently. They're really no trouble at all, dear. Just make sure you keep your house tidy and full of people and those little creatures will leave in no time.

"Did you know that in the old stories the Harvestmen used to be fixer-uppers? There was no tear, break, or scratch that their webs couldn't mend."

She hands you a stack of books on varying subjects and smiles. "You're going to be just fine, sweetie. I promise."

Tears come to your eyes at her sympathy, but you sweep them away before she can see. You have a feeling she knows anyways.

When you get home, you notice just how cluttered your house is. You kick aside a pair of shoes that aren't yours-fragments of a presence you've tried so hard to forget-and dump the pile of books on your kitchen table. There's four chairs but you've only ever needed two and now you only need one. You look around.

There's so many dark spaces now, so many shadowy crevices where the Harvestmen could hide. You can feel them again, creeping up behind you, slinking up your back and around your shoulders as they trace the wrinkles in your skin and map you out in their webs and-

That's it, this clutter has to go. You grab a box. You start with his stuff.

The next day you got to the address that Jenny gave you. You stand outside Johnson's Wellness and Counseling. You can feel the eyes of the Harvestmen watching you as you take a deep breath and enter, and with that one small action, you can feel the darkness lifting away, one spindly leg at a time.

The Harvestmen are gone by next week. You don't miss them.

Anna Boyer

holy

praise the Lord; I think I may be holy now.
with every drop of crimson that bubbles up
and leaks from my rubbery flesh,
with every twist of my rotting innards,
as I weep,
I think of Jesus.
ice cold water turns wine red
when it meets my shaking hands.
praise the Lord: I think I may be holy now.
when my parents hear, I think they may weep too.

Zoe Larsen



fairy house

Jessica Sunderhaft

liam in wonderland

"I hope you know how brave you've been." The wise man with the grey beard & Curious George calf-tattoo urger.

My footfalls fall down upon the snow smothered brick with naked trees touching a white whiskey-drunk sky / I can't help but feel cloaked in cold today / my water-tight black boots seem to go nowhere as the engine of my mind takes me to the production line of some factory where my soul gets chopped up & pressed & cooked into nice little square pieces that better fit the people & place of where I reside / then / out of the corner of my eye I see a small hole in the base of an ice-glazed sycamore tree / no bigger than three feet tall & without thinking / my heart grabs the reins to this shivering frame & head-first inside into the hollow / I LEAP / my body as an unsung prayer - rosary wrapped & caffeine full

"You walker, there are no roads, only wind trails on the sea." The wise man with the blonde hair & worn blue hat proclaims.

& I feel like I am entering this world again anew / cradled in warmth / Oh, what a sight to see! / A field of fresh green grass with bare feet dancing & jumping & kicking & flying / I see bodies like sunflowers rising towards the sky & moving with some sort of sonic wind / no its MUSIC! / This must be the place they were talking about / I join the communication with my brothers & sisters & see that I am wearing my favorite yellow overalls / even my mullet has regrown too! / Then I see YOU with auburn hair flowing to your carrot colored sundress like a full-flame & your gap-toothed, dimple bracketed smile is as perfect as I remembered / the tattoo of the snail on your forearm leads down to two roses in your hands / one dead, one living / every detail of you seems like stars in a constellation I will never reach from this / wonderland / but YOU come up to me & say "Liam, Liam, are you listening? So yourself free, which rose do you choose?"

"My child - laugh - for I can feel your light across the plains." The wise man with the brown mustache & silver ear echoes.

My long eyelashes open & I am sitting sweat- soaked & alone with my short hair in a tattered button down shirt at my fake mahogany dining room table / a single dead rose sits in an empty white porcelain coffee cup across for me / I am starting to realize that every choice matters because each one is a doorway to light / even the way you fold your clothes & make your bed will liberate your heart but sometimes no matter how strong you are the darkness will crash over your head like a wave at breakfast, leaving you nail-bitten, foot frozen with a cold bowl of oatmeal / BUT friends, please remember there is a world outside that wants to hear your song / friends, I plead you / I have awakened from a dream, body yellow in sun soaked warmth / I have learned day there are sounds so beautiful they force our bodies to move and rejoice / there are redwood trees older than all human beings that you can gaze upon in humble-wonder / there are apples so crisp and juicy they will make your mouths water / there are people who can hug you so tight you will remember that you are worthy of love / & lastly / I am learning that your life is your life - know it while you have it.

"Tell me who you walk with & I'll tell you who you are." The wise woman in the long black dress & velvet shoes whispers.

Liam Nigro

how do you define love

lately, my writing has been all fangs and bitter grins, a book splattered in bloody ink. i turn the page, and i'm dying in my best friend's arms, and i know now that love has always been about sacrifice that i have to make. i'm giving myself away, i tell you. can you hold me softly in your palms for just one night? inside my rib cage, hear achilles scream, patroclus is dead; in the distance, the ocean howls, my throat is raw now. i didn't know i was capable of this kind of rage. i didn't know i contained this kind of grief.

Cat Adams

muscle memory

melodies carry moments
like my heart carries feelings
neither ever leaves the other
instead, they're stored away
until i hear the chorus
then follows the sound of her voice
and the missing comes rushing back
like the force of habit

out of me
into someone i never want her to know
until i hear our favorite song
then like muscle memory
i want her hands back on my hips.

when a moment is engrained
it's never meant to be a thing of the past
when she told me she loved me
i was never meant to forget
the way the sound waves
seeped into my skin
to memorize an ache
i can only recognize
when the heartbreak comes back
to mold the goosebumps on my arms

there's a reason
we can recognize songs we haven't heard
since we were nine
there's a special place in our brains
for vibrations we associate
with growing feelings
growing pains
growing
out of her

Julia Lombardo

silver love

Silence rings
bounding through thin air,
as the orange glow of the lit street
soaks powdered snow.
Silk soft like a blanket,
the pale green curled beneath.
The moon catches my eye,
the brightest thing in the sky.
She charms even the stars,
bathing in jewels
knotting around her
they wink at me,
for me.

So full I can barely hold my stare.

Still her eyes never stray,
fixed and frozen
they embrace mine.
Entranced lips split in wonder,
drawn to what she could be,
alluring mystery.
Though soon an ache dashes my skin,
she, a silent witness so alone.
Always changing,
moving, floating, flying,
eternally watching.
In her company,
all softens in silver light so gentle.

I reach to grasp it,
to feel the thread that comforts me so,
but it merely kisses my grip
like a specter I can't hold.
Drowning in abyss so cold,
any time I'll come to you,
comfort and wash you
in the little light
I can give you.

Jade Josie



got honey?

Morgan Adams

a day in your shoes: for lies l

i took a day trip to elk grove village but it does not feel like home. illinois gets my birth certificate but kentucky gets my heart.

the sky bleeds a perfect shade of cyan as gray clouds sprinkle white crystals onto every tree in the park. the taste of one on my tongue numbs the saddness just for a moment.

i sit on a frozen bench and try to piece together the perfect words to write in my moleskin notebook, beat up by years of spilled hot chocolate and mowglis stickers.

a lover letter to myself.

i pull an orange out of my bag the skin as cold as an icicle.. i love how the juice feels like static on my tongue. i love how the smell sticks to my hands like honey. how holy. i love how my hands can do that
how they can bring something inanimate
to life
and give it a purpose.
to give me purpose.
i love how i never let myself
get too upset
over what's going wrong.
i love how i can find joy
in snow
and oranges
and my own company.

i love how i can write poems
to remind myself
that i'm doing alright.
it reminds me
that i am my own thoughts,
my own person.
and how i don't need a role model
to be a great author.

a love letter from myself.

i get up
and continue to walk the streets
and never watched me grow up
and i think
how i'll die
before i can fall out of love
with this place.

Julia Lombardo

how to count to 10 in urdu

Aik.

Orange peeled for me, ripe--malta

Do.

Bodies pressed together on the beach, hearts beating in unison, dirty phone screen with the music video.

Theen.

Instances our eyes flitted; touched; untouched; red coloring our cheeks.

Chaar.

Origami swans you made me. Times I curled and uncurled my fingers.

Panch.

Fingers of your wrapped around my arm. You pull me to swings down the street.

Chae

Dreams I've had of us; of my hand, your hand, gold and red.

Saat.

Seven years before your mother gives in, her weary hands kneading the atta.

Aht.

Pratchett says 8 is a magical. It is also taboo.

Nao.

In Urdu, noe sounds similar to now. Perhaps our present cannot exist.

Das.

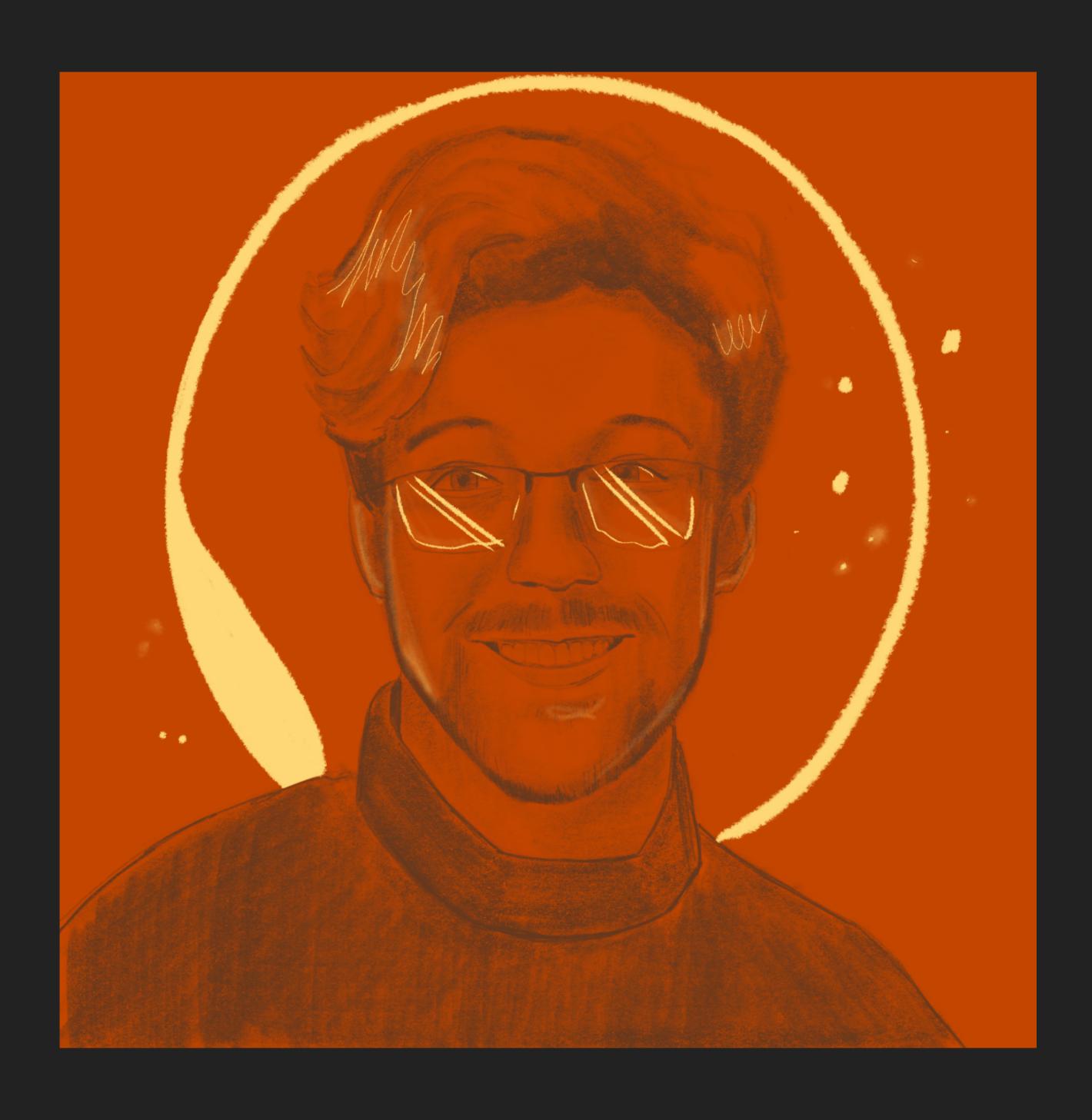
Something whole, barely complete.

Haanya Ijaz



blissfully unaware study 2

Amy Mabey



golden boy

Morgan Adams

AUTHORS AND ARTISTS

Authors:

Julia Lombardo- muscle memory

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