



The Lion's Eye

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JOY ABOUND
ANDREW RYAN

The Lion's Eye

Spring 2015

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“After all, tomorrow is another day.”

—Margaret Mitchel, *Gone With the Wind*

CONTENTS



POETRY AND PROSE

RACHEL FRIEDMAN	6	<i>The First Look</i>
KATHERINE TENCZA	8	<i>Pantoum: Hero's Cycle</i>
JENNIE SEKANICS	10	<i>A Bouquet</i>
DEMETRIOS FRANGOS	13	<i>Uncle Nicky</i>
TRACY NAPOLI	14	<i>Front Door</i>
BRENNAH ROSS	16	<i>The Cosmos</i>
JENNA BROPHY	17	<i>Differences</i>
KATHERINE TENCZA	18	<i>Stories</i>
MICHAEL PERRONE	19	<i>Announcing Autumn</i>
JENNIE SEKANICS	20	<i>Concrete</i>
DAVID GOMEZ	22	<i>Reflecting</i>
JULIANNE MANIAGO	23	<i>Places I Have Heard Shouting</i>
NIKHIL SEKHER	24	<i>The Garden</i>
DANIELLE BRUNO-ARLEQUIN	28	<i>Rough</i>
BRENNAH ROSS	29	<i>III</i>
JULIANNE MANIAGO	30	<i>House</i>
RACHEL FRIEDMAN	31	<i>Dyslexie</i>
JACK WEBBER	32	<i>Fragments of a Lover</i>
EMILY THOMPSON	33	<i>His Heart is in the Right Place</i>
ERIN RABBITT	35	<i>A Poem in Response to Emily Dickinson's "Because I Could Not Stop for Death"</i>
DEMETRIOS FRANGOS	36	<i>Moon Answer Me...</i>
JACK WERNER	37	<i>There are No Words</i>
ALENA WOODS	38	<i>Summer Fruit</i>
KIMBERLY ILKOWSKI	40	<i>Checkout</i>
NIKHIL SEKHER	44	<i>The Word</i>

CONTENTS



BRENAH ROSS	46	<i>Mother Nature</i>
NIKHIL SEKHER	47	<i>Second</i>
ALENA WOODS	48	<i>Into Stone</i>
ALENA WOODS	49	<i>Grandma's House (If She had One and Loved You")</i>
ANNA MITAROTONDO	50	<i>The Last Look</i>

ART

SAMANTHA PINCUS	(COVER)	<i>Where's My Sunday Paper?</i>
ANDREW RYAN	2	<i>Joy Abound</i>
SCOTT SAMUELS	7	<i>Venus</i>
GLADYS WU	12	<i>By the Grave</i>
ANDREW RYAN	26	<i>The Big Wide Infinite</i>
BENJAMIN ZANDER	27	<i>Sleeping Beauty</i>
BENJAMIN ZANDER	34	<i>Israeli Snowplow</i>
JAMIE FONZINO	39	<i>Ballooning</i>
KATIE GIANCASPRO	43	<i>Zippy</i>
SHANNON MCGOVERN	51	<i>Welcome Home</i>
ABIGAIL BURNS	(BACK COVER)	<i>Rainbow Pavements</i>



THE FIRST LOOK

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

This winter was harsh, but this spring came in so gracefully. Spring is my second favorite season and our picturesque campus makes the allergies all the worthwhile. The semester is finally coming to a close, but I am more than sure it feels like it isn't for the majority of you (myself included). I want you to take a moment to take a deep breath—actually, take a couple of them. If you are reading this now and it is crunch time, then you are taking a well-deserved break. If you decided to pick this up and the semester has already passed, we're more than glad you are spending some time with us during your summer vacation.

The pieces in this issue are some of our favorites from this academic year. Aside from being beautifully written or composed, they managed to touch our membership in a way that compelled us to bring them to you. If you know of any of the writers or artists featured in this issue, let them know that you appreciate the work they've done during this grueling year and especially during the semester. Without them, there is no The Lion's Eye!

And of course, I must thank my staff. From the general staff who were so diligent and dedicated in attendance this semester, to my Executive Board: Anna, Alena, Alyse, Danielle, and Julia. Without them, this entire operation would fall apart. Last but not least, I would like to thank you, dear readers. We make The Lion's Eye for you all to enjoy, so without you, our organization is for naught. Thank you for taking the time to pick up an issue and delve into it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Friedman". The script is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R".

Rachel Friedman
Executive Editor



VENUS
SCOTT SAMUELS

PANTOUM: HERO'S CYCLE

What light is left forgets
the question I had earlier spent
half a solitary dinner prodding
around the perimeter of my plate.

Earlier the question spent
its ample time delineating
how, as we round our plates' perimeter
we have light conferred on us, and loss.

In ample time delineating
a cycle in which we have
loss, though a lot of light, conferred on us
after rising above the confusion of emerging.

A cycle which we have all begun:
think what those young stuttering heroes become
after they rise above the confusion of emerging
so recently from childhood's partial gaze.

Just think of the young, stuttering heroes,
ill-made, ill at ease with the world around them,
since so recently from childhood's partial gaze,
and of the old ones who lead them, steady and sure.

At first ill-made, ill at ease with all around them
till they begin to work and toil and train
with the old ones, steady and sure, who lead them
to the place where the light will descend.

They begin to work, toil and train
sparing no bit of once ill-made selves till
they reach the place where the light will descend
and there receive every garland of life's grace.

Sparing no bit of once ill-made selves,
all for the effort of attaining that day
when all life's garlands of grace are received
while the old ones smile, step out and away.

All for the effort of attaining that day
the ways of the clay are lifted on high
while the old ones' smiles, out and away
remain a secret undeciphered even in light.

With the ways of the clay lifted on high,
all is solid, cut and clear – except
for the secret even in light undeciphered –
their shifting, unpinnable peace in leaving.

The solid, cut and clear are comfortable except
when you realize that they cannot hold
and then the shifting, unpinnable peace in leaving them
begins at last to gain sense.

Once realizing that they cannot hold,
and having gone round the perimeter of your plate,
what was beginning at last to gain sense dims,
and the little light still left forgets.

A BOUQUET

I had been sitting for so long
I didn't realize how badly I
had to pee, so badly that at the
thought of encountering you
in the bathroom a little
trickle let out and slid down
my leg, not yet I said not yet
and as I passed the boys
in the hallway, I rubbed my thighs
together in hopes of erasing any
proof any sign of any drop of anything
laying on my leg, aside from the
wetness I inevitably felt.

and in the bathroom my eyes, my
mind make an outline of where your
body laid that night I found you
crumpled like unwanted paper,
folded like messages that took up too
much space, laying like a pile of
forgotten letters amongst the black
of your thick sprawled hair, your
distinct tan vomit with chunks of
whatever you ate that day, whatever
you deemed worthy enough to give
home to in your stomach.

when the water hits, it is unlike any
other time any other moment in which
we allow ourselves to be wet and welcome
it, it's like you are there somewhere but I
am protected by the yellowness of the curtain,
the continuity of the pounding water.
I make out the shape of a hand from
a stain of excess hair dye left over from
the smudging of color after wiping
hands upon the curtain that thankfully
kept me from you.

and in between the moments of my
calculating how many times I assume
your silhouette is behind a curtain,
a closet, beside my bed when my back faces
you ready to clutch me, cling to me, kill
me like I could have saved you by clutching
you, clinging to you, killing the forces in
which brought you to my memory, my
recluse, my incessant yearning
for an everlasting shower—I remember
all the times in which I didn't
think of you.

as if water will wash you from
me, off me, away like it eliminates
the marks of day, of work, of toil—
the soil upon which you stepped
every day when you exited this
building and brought back to this
bathroom in times of needing a start,
release, anew.

as if water will bring you back
into my pores, my being like it rejuvenates
and saves and strengthens the
hold of tangled vines, the stay of
unfallen leaves—I feel you entering me
for the first time and it is not you
but who you are to me now, a fleeting
like sunshine, like rain—you are the
weather to me.

but here is where you end and
haunt me still and I am unsure as
to whether when I shower I want
to be closer to or further from you,
flung from you like scum, brought
to you like flowers, like notes you
didn't realize they left for you
in your notebook, like messages,
like letters.

you always save your letters.



BY THE GRAVE
GLADYS WU

UNCLE NICKY

If I think of heaven, I often picture that deck
With you in a chair tilted towards the trees
Taking the pistachios I cracked open for you
Three at a time, tossing your head back,
Taking them like pills
Nodding at nothing in particular
Calling me Buddy Boy
Yeah I remember

Denim shirt relaxed and faded
A watch I wear every day
Grey and Swiss, It always looked better on you to me
The cuts on your fingers from playing guitar
Though the poison makes you frail
The smell of your cooking
Compels me home
Scoff you make when
I am about to hear otherwise
And the grin
That lights any room with humor
I remember the sound you made the night you died
In your sleep
How unnatural-

The sun is out, in that moment before real sunset
When the light just begins hiding in the trees casting
Spotlights through the leaves
I hear the clink of ice in scotch glasses
Filled with coke and Bacardi rum
I never understood why adults liked rum

The outside speakers let out the light sounds of Spanish guitars
No one knows the Gipsy Kings
Or that song Mercury Falling by Sting
I wear a laurel of mint leaves
To ward off mosquitos
Yeah I remember

The newly coated white paint would squeak
ever so slightly as the lock clicked,
“You were supposed to be home
three hours ago.”
“Won’t you ever be quiet?” I hissed back.
But the only thing that shut him up
was lost key and a lock change.

The college years find
me sporadically walking through the door,
purpose in each step,
always met with,
“Are you eating?” from the fridge,
“Are you sleeping?” from my green flannel pillowcase,
“You look exhausted,
you’re doing too much,” from the doorknob
that responds to my calloused hands.
“Not any more than usual,” I answer,
and my rings clink with confidence against its metal body.

No longer in tees and sweats, but
blouses and jeans, boots that gleam,
leather and gold on my wrists,
“You look nice,”
says the coffee maker, always on, always brewing.
“Thanks, I have work today,”
even on school breaks.

A hug and a kiss from Dad,
an “I’ll miss you” and “drive safe,”
and the knob waits, for me to come back,
turn it again,
hear its creak.

“I have to go,” I say.
“I know you do.”

Brennah Ross

THE COSMOS

you left your coffee cup out
again last night,
pressed against the sky.

I knocked it over,
and out came the cosmos.
is that what you drink
when the sun is rising?

I knocked it over,
and there was
a half ring
of brown coffee residue.
a crescent moon
of deep thought
and contemplation.

the wrinkles above
your eyebrows
form constellations,
from years of
questioning
the world.

you left your coffee cup
out again.
last night, you were
no where to be found.

Jenna Brophy

DIFFERENCES

We used to be Queens versus the Upper East Side.

Somewhere on Fifth Avenue
you could hear the swipe of my credit card
victim to higher powers of fashion
always accompanied by her eye roll.

But together, somehow,
we were Times Square on New Year's Eve,
bustling and sparkling until the cotton candy sunrise
robbed the night of its vigor
and replaced in with abandoned streamers
and the empty sleepiness of a rooftop at dawn.

We fought like the preachers on the street corner,
yelling and screaming about something irrelevant.
Agreeing to disagree? We could never,
at least, not until the next hour
when we were cheerful Central Park again.

But time passes,
childhood ends and the real world begins,
and where there used to be two spoons
in one pint of half-baked Ben and Jerry's
there was open space
that can't be found in the city.

STORIES

The moon weighs more
than the sky can hold some days
when it towers big and full,
grins so close to the earth
that it seems only a couple
houses over, or just down the
road in Highpoint Park,
caught by the saving branches
of a maple before it could make
impact, and held snug – for now –
cat's in the cradle.

Those days even at night the world
gleams, the moon's good guiding
hands outstretched for travelers
to clamber up out of wary darkness,
the fear of which could take a man's
soul long before the thing itself took his
life.

On those days if you gaze down
on a town sitting soft beneath
moon-blotted horizons,
seeing its sprawling spread so small
calls to mind all the others –
makes you wonder just how many worlds
teemed, thrived, and died
within each one,
and what Plato would ever come
to transcribe all their stories.

Perhaps the traveler –
with a presence in all though
a home in none –
could etch them inside
himself, painstakingly piece
a stained-glass framework
coloring the blank moments
in his bustling strides.

Or perhaps the very
sky and the bright bulging
sphere it scarcely
retained. Yes, perhaps
on those days the moon
leaned in, listening,
glowing just a bit brighter,
beaming just a bit wider,
as each story murmured in.

Michael Perrone

ANNOUNCING AUTUMN

The metal bench creaks
As I sit down to watch
The last rays of summer
Hobble away.
Still, green giants tower over me, and
A rich blue canvas festooned with cotton balls
Towers over them.
Nearby, happy energy climbs, slides and swings, and
Dozens of miniature helicopters hover and buzz
Around our heads.
As our shield dances gracefully over us,
A cool spirit sprints past,
Announcing autumn.

CONCRETE

red blue red blue red blue red blue I
found you across my wall as the
vehicle drove past my window with
god knows who's body who's story
who's night of glory turned to shit
turned to the pit of a peach no more
juice no more meat just one hard bite
of awakening to the hardness of its
core.

then, no more.

then, no more?

you danced with flags in your hand
like you did in high school danced with
purple attached to tan sticks purple
like the color of your face beneath the
make up they covered you with to hide
your fall from the bridge purple like
no breath no response you choked me
when you said hello again beside my
bed with your purple your purple
flags.

then, they stay.

then, they stay?

yellow like morning starting off each day
with mourning all the hello's I could have
said to you though I am scared of you when
I find you in the black of the night of the
space in my room saying hello and laughing
why are you laughing I wish I saw you in
passing at least once before I found you
in silence in silence no laughing on the
floor.

then, you go.

then, you go?

leaving like snow no like slush mush
through me like hush move silently like
falling no sound taint me like dirt thrown
like splash gash no snow divide of
grass where did you go I am forgetting

that I had forgotten you though you mark
me like swollen eyelids like the droopy
redness of negligence like the depth of my
bags.
then, you see.
then, you see?
eyes open for the absence of words words
whispered behind doors like nothingness like
exchanges compliments the first handshakes of
true relationships secrets like first's like I never's
like once then again then again then again now
that you are gone I know of your scars played like
strings guitars music for the longing heart for the
love you missed when I thought I kissed you
goodnight.
then, you try.
then, you try?
I thought I always fought like black like gravel
like gray like concrete like cement like existence
its definiteness its solidness whole like the floor
you slept on loud like your name as it left my
mouth when you hummed to sleep peacefully
mmm ahh ohhh signatures of breath of yes I
am here like black like gravel like gray like
concrete like cement like existence but I cannot
speak.
then, you hear.
then, you wish you heard.

REFLECTING

January contention, behind which you'd hide.
Northern lips: chapstick-glossed lines that seemed to have cried.
Your Croatian complexion that, patently pale, couldn't lie.

About, your swooning down, fair hair
often darkened, and straightened too,
as this Hopeful would watch you do—
less adamant on going elsewhere.

Inviting me into your room, watching you,
how you'd apologize for not yet readying your hair;
'cause, I enjoyed being that close, so little did I care,
and it might be embarrassing if you knew how much
I loved to see you casually dress before the mirror.

PLACES I HAVE HEARD SHOUTING

I have heard shouting in an open-air stadium dotted with glow sticks
and at a championship football game where the home team was losing
but people were too intoxicated to know the difference.

I have heard shouting on playgrounds.
Shrieks of joy as children with dirty, sticky hands
swing from metal bar to metal bar.

I have heard shouting in hospital rooms
from the expected surprise of death
as it crept around the corner with steel toed boots.

Shouting echoes through life
like an explosion racing through a dark tunnel.
It doesn't stop until it bursts through a wall
and there is nothing left.

The first time I heard shouting was in the silence of my home,
pulsing like a heart.

THE GARDEN

We were born in the garden.
I awoke to the touch of a rosebush. Childishly,
I pricked my finger when I tried to pluck one,
and you laughed at my attempt at romance.
The next time, I took a scissor to the heads of seven mums,
and you told me I had to have French blood.
I hunted the wild rabbits who ate the dandelions,
but you stopped me, saying the garden was better at peace.
It was those summer days were we lay
under the oak tree, fitted between its roots,
hiding from the things outside the garden gates.
At times, squirrels would freeze in place
to scan the area for danger. We joked that
they remained our ever stoic guardians.
At night, the fireflies hypnotically danced
to the sound of your laughter.
And you told me,
with the stars as honorable witnesses,
that you'd come back every night for me.
And you did, you always did.

Do you remember the worst night?
We forgot to close the wrought iron- gate,
and a cruel beast savagely
tore through the garden. It
ripped up a bed of carnations to
kill all the rabbits you held dear.
Perhaps we created a fake peace,
and the moment we left our sanctuary
the world would be ready to swallow us whole.
So if I ever looked distant, know
that I wanted to etch the sight of
swallows cutting across an azure sky.
Know that I never wanted to leave.

When I heard that a child had seen us, together,
and that they had set hounds on you,
I returned to the garden where you and I were born.
In an hour they set the hounds on me,
I could feel their barks on the back of my neck.
The shadowy monsters burst past the gates,
yelping with a savage glee. The masters
watched as their hounds teeth sunk under my skin.
I knew you stood before this fake jury,
unable to explain why you loved me,
but still taking their violent judgment.
I just hope that if you ever had doubts,
you knew the moments before they forced you asleep
that I truly did love you.



THE BIG WIDE INFINITE
ANDREW RYAN



SLEEPING BEAUTY
BEMJAMIN ZANDER

ROUGH

I am rough
edges.
Not an 'around' on me.

My hands are flecked with
mica that peels,
peels away into blood
that blooms beveled bulges, soon
splattering into sharp pointy stains
on digits, to be
licked away by a rusted tongue,
nicked by adolescent war-play
and filed against fiery whetstone.

It adds bite to a barb-wired voice.

I am rough granite that refuses to
yields against the water,
attempting to polish in placating curves
with the acid that lays below its clarity.

But I do know that children only carry
the smooth pebbles in their pockets,
those with gummy mouths and
stable hands that are displayed in
glass mason jars on mantels for all to see.

I am rough
edges.
There is not a round on me

III

pressed,
like a wilted flower.
between the pages
of a forgotten book.
delicate and lifeless,
like the story
that cradles it safely.
waiting for life
to be breathed
into its dog-eared pages
once more.

HOUSE

The most beautiful house I ever died in was
pale yellow, like a water colored sun.

The decks in the back gave way to coastal views
that tried to pull me from my wicker rocker
and toss me into the ocean.

The earth didn't burn with electricity
so I could see the twinkling balls of gas suspended above me
while my sister played with the neighbor's Golden Retriever.

But at the end of each August,
we abandoned it
for steel towers and a sea of suits.

I haven't seen myself since I died in that house.
Pale yellow, like a water colored sun.

DYSLEXIE

We are sitting in the synagogue basement—a classroom with yellow walls and cubbyholes and the names of three-year-olds plastered on a class project. But at age eleven, we feel out of place, but we’re “reading” from our siddurs from left to right. We’ve done this prayer over and over and over again, but apparently something is still Not Right.

The Rabbi is making his Intimidation Rounds, opens the door to our classroom, then enters and looks at Brian. Tells him to turn the page and read. We all know why now but at eleven it was just a relief because it’s not me thank goodness.

We snicker at every stumble. Morah and Rabbi let us laugh.

FRAGMENTS OF A LOVER

What was it
about that day
I remember now
alone in bed on this winter morning with
eyes closed, pajamas on, messy hair, coffee brewing?

Was it the way you laughed at my beach umbrella
or how our little toes submerged in
the sand hiding from the sun?
Was it the way your smile felt
almost wistful after beers from the boardwalk,
or the how you held out your hand for goodbye?

What is it
about this winter morning that brings
you in selective fragments,
amalgamated in
flashes of sun
hovering seagulls
sultry air and glistening
sunscreens-covered hands
almost as a fading movie reel, played
fleetingly by the rich firing of synthases?

HIS HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE

A shrimp's heart is in his head.
How appropriate.
He will never have the moral dilemma
of "thinking with" one or the other,
and certainly it will be better protected
than one worn on the sleeve.

Does a shrimp even have a brain?
Likely not one that is able to feel
serenity while watching
the sun rise over a luminescent lake,
or euphoria during
a whispered conversation in the dark.
How unfortunate.

Yet, he will never have to suffer
raw anger in the midst of a fight,
nor pervading loneliness after
losing a cherished friend.
How fortunate.

But at least I will never experience
the unpleasantness of being
plucked and fried
pinched and dangled
ripped by incisors and gnashed by molars,
and the rest of me discarded.

Or does that just describe heartbreak?



ISRAELI SNOWPLOW
BENJAMIN ZANDER

A POEM IN RESPONSE TO EMILY DICKENSON'S
"BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH"

Oh, how polite this Death was to you—
He held the carriage door wide open,
made sure it did not hit you as you climbed in.
He assisted you up the stairs and allowed for
a trip down memory lane.
This Death was patient with you.
This Death let you pause and reminisce in the past.
This Death was a gentle euphoria, shedding His morbid exterior
Only for you.

I apologize, Ms. Dickinson, but
I am not acquainted with this kind of Death.
The Death I know does not hold the door—
The Death I know has no manners.
The Death I know puts his feet up on the table
and prepares to stay a while.
The Death I know knocks over the china
and disregards the perfectly pressed white tablecloth.
The Death I know wipes His mouth with His sleeve.
The Death I know lingers and draws black curtains closed with
unforgiving hands.

I apologize, Ms. Dickinson, but
I am not acquainted with
The Death that kindly stopped for you.

MOON ANSWER ME...

What do trees look like?
Bristles and pipe cleaners

What about roads and cars?
Movie aisle tube lighting

The mountains how do they lay?
They are the ruffles in the blanket

And how twinkle those little stars?
They have a poor sense of humor

How so? How so?
They feel labeled

Are they pretty?
Candles can be pretty

And your lover?
She tosses and turns and never sleeps

But she kind?
She can be

Then why love her?
She never declines a dance

And your brother?
He raging and radiant playing with his marbles

Are you ever jealous?
Of him, never

How come?
I have a purpose

Like a turtle?
That's a tortoise

Like dolphin?
That's a porpoise!

Is your mother ever mad?
It is in a mother's nature yes

Then of the future what do you know?
I can't see that well

How goes the night? The night!
The moon is down.

Jack Werner

THERE ARE NO WORDS

There are no words
or letters,
vowels or consonants
utterances or noises
that hum like we
did that night with dripping bodies embracing and motioning and yearning.

Yearning like it was
the first moment of the last time,
embracing
like our bodies ached with
delight from an ease that screamed only for more.

Motioning afterwards and grasping and clawing for winter blankets to fight
off the chills that creep up an
exposed leg.

But there are no
words for noises that are no
longer made. Music dies
when it is not recorded.

SUMMER FRUIT

Your smile is juice from a clementine,
Dripping from my lower lip and sticking to the
Small hairs on my chin.
Summer always had a way of making everything and everyone
Stick together.

I could cut you in wedges and you wouldn't even notice.
Your acidic veins are paper tendrils that reach out like
Child's hands, sticky and pressing to my scattered fruity limbs.
Those juice-filled, see-through walls that are ready
To burn through my fingers, like orange juice in a paper cut
When I touch you, when I'm ready
To bite down, ready to burst.
It's only because you were the fruit that I picked first.

But I find myself peeling you away now, like a
Residual sunburn. The blood orange skin on my back has
Just started to heal, with its softly bristled hairs and
Yellow diamond pores that glisten when I let them breathe.

When I let myself breathe.

When I learn that I am a fruit to be picked.
I am a piece of the world to be
Squeezed and sampled, bruised and battered
In lemon and cinnamon,
Ready to hope again, but
Never sugarcoating the truth.
Just making it sweet enough to bite into.



BALLOONING
JAMIE FONZINO

CHECKOUT

Juicy, pink slabs sit in a row underneath the smudged and scratched glass display case. A fluorescent light fixture overhead is illuminating falling streams of dust. The combined smells of floor cleaner and smoked ham sting the back of my nose as I approach the meat counter.

My regular guy with the bushy gray mustache isn't manning his station today. Some kid in his teens is doing God-knows-what in the back room while I pick out which cut of the cow I'll be eating tonight.

I wish I hadn't stayed up so late yesterday. I shouldn't be struggling to push a shopping cart but here I am dragging around this steel rectangle filled with cardboard boxes and plastic containers—so-called products necessary for my survival.

Wake up, drag myself out of bed, get dressed, eat, go to work. Repeat. I can't seem to break the routine. The hours at the office drag by, and yet I keep taking more. Masochism. There hasn't been much time to do anything else, let alone restock my apartment.

I don't know when I would have finally gotten around to doing this if I hadn't left work early today. Thursday would have been the third consecutive night ordering Chinese food. And the week before that it was Mama's Pizzeria. How many pepperoni slices does it take to cause irreparable damage again?

The kid finally comes out from the back and slaps a blood-red fillet onto a scale, then wraps it in thick white paper and attaches the price sticker.

As I walk away, the clack of my black leather shoes is accompanied by a chorus of distant, muffled coughs and shopping cart wheels skidding out of alignment.

A baby's high-pitched wail adds a soprano and an employee stacking boxes creates a bass-line.

My wheels screech to a stop. The song is cut short.

And there she was.

There he is.

Shit.

I instinctively start to pat down my hair to make sure it isn't acting out. I search for my reflection in the glass of one of the freezer units with an assortment of frozen vegetables inside. My face is as bright as the pre-cut beets, and I can feel my shoulders droop—my body like a limp bag of peas that can't hold its shape.

This old woman is giving me funny looks; maybe I should stop looking longingly into a display of various greens and get myself together. I walk farther down the aisle and allow the woman to get her food.

Why am I even scared? It's almost been seven months now. I apply some more lipstick and finish up in aisle 12. Ironically, I'm standing next to a display for tissues. The universe has a sick sense of humor—but I snag a box just in case.

Are my glasses dirty or is he looking good? Like really good. His hair is a little disheveled and his pale blue tie is loose around his neck but I can't help but feel a small smile spread across my freshly painted ruby red lips. I'm standing here waiting for him to look up from the floor and—

Oh Christ what if he's here trying to find the perfect ingredients to make his new girlfriend dinner? A little romantic night in with candles and wine. A crisp, white linen table cloth spread over his kitchen table with that jazz CD playing that he damn well knows used to be my favorite. Gag me. I'm too far away to see what's in his cart. I bet she's a vegetarian.

I pinch myself hard. This whole jumping to conclusions mess is what got us here in the first place. At the

very least, I'm glad my anger towards him has subsided to petty nervousness.

He finally looks up at me and I catch a glint in his green eyes. He immediately straightens his posture and the shimmer is gone. In fact, it looks like he's just staring blankly now. I can't tell if he's feeling terror or complete indifference.

What am I waiting for? Am I really going to avoid him again? I still can't believe I dove behind a rack of clothing at a department store three weeks ago just so he wouldn't see me when he walked by the women's section. My punishment for being a coward was accidentally snagging a \$150 sweater on the metal zipper of my purse and completely tearing it down the middle. You panic to avoid your ex-boyfriend, you buy it.

As I move closer, I see his stubbly jaw line clench and his grip on his shopping cart tighten.

"I can do this, I can do this," I silently repeat to myself as I smooth out the wrinkles in my dress. I continue the mantra as I approach him by the fresh fruit.

I certainly don't need eleven oranges, but here I am stuffing them into this plastic bag with the same concentration a surgeon has while performing a double bypass. Because right now these oranges are a distraction from what's right in front of me. Maybe if I look like I'm in a rush she won't come over here. Now I start frantically throwing green apples into a bag. Where did I learn to be so smooth?

She looks stunning. If she just worked an eight-hour day you would never know. Her skin is absolutely glowing and her hair is falling effortlessly down her left shoulder. Did she just get that dress dry-cleaned?

She's almost in front of me as I pick up a big, bright yellow banana. I should probably put this down.

"Hi, Jake."

It hits me like a punch in the gut. I want to topple over and throw up whatever's inside me, probably just coffee. Instead I stay standing, coffee safely in my stomach, and manage to let out a "hey Jess" back to her.

Here it comes. She's probably been waiting for months to tear me apart. Throw around some rather unpleasant adjectives, mainly comparing me to fecal matter. How I gave up on us when we had finally resolved some issues. How I gave up on her, when she needed me the most. I don't want things to get heated in the middle of a supermarket but I swear to God if she brings up Chrissy...

"You look great! How have you been?" She flashes a quick smile. What? How is she so okay with this?

I can tell my surprise has registered on my face because she looks at me now with her brows slightly furrowed.

I thought I was the bad guy in the situation, but now she's acting like everything is great, that everything is just fine. That's because it is fine. Get yourself together, man. You're acting like you're the one that got broken up with right now.

"I've been doing well. Working a lot more hours at the office now, you know. You should see how much I'm making these days." I laugh. Yeah, brag about your paycheck dumbass, that's just bound to get her to salivate over you.

She lets out a giggle, though, and I realize I haven't asked her anything about herself yet.

"So anyway, how are you? Still at the same job?" I ask her, relaxing a bit more now that this will be a civil encounter. I gently lean against a wooden stand full of packaged berries.

"I've really been great. Still at the same job but I actually just got promoted a few weeks ago to be the head of my department." She locked her almost-black eyes with mine then scanned the contents of my shopping cart.

"No way! That's amazing, really. I'm so happy for you. You've deserved that position for months!"

"I know!" she shot right back. "Can you believe it? Remember that one time at the Christmas party when Suzanne said I'd have to screw my way to the top? Well no screws, nails or bolts here, I did it all myself!" She laughed.

"I totally forgot about Suzanne, how is that crazy lady?" We're getting into tricky territory now. Remi-

niscing. Bonding over how things used to be. But it all seems so natural that I try not to question it any further. It's not like chemistry just goes away. We're bound to fall right back into things and have easy conversations.

I'm so lost in my own head at this point that I only catch the last part about Suzanne.

"...yeah so now she's stuck in Alaska can you believe it?" she says.

"I cannot believe it," I say. But it's true. I can't believe a lot of things that are happening at this exact moment. How she's standing in front of me, how her navy blue dress is perfectly draped over her body, how she looks at me and I realize that something has been missing in my life for the past seven months.

She smiles again and checks her gold watch, her favorite accessory.

"Oh my god! I actually have to get going. It was great seeing you!" she says.

We say our goodbyes and then she's off down an aisle where I can't see her anymore.

I straighten up from leaning against the berry stand. I really don't want to have to buy all this fruit I nervously threw into my cart, so I carefully place them all back in their original spots.

I take a lap around the bakery so I don't bump into her again at the checkout counters.

But the whole time I can't calm down. I can't shake this feeling. I want her. I need her. I don't know how I'm going to get over her.

That wasn't so bad, right? I handled myself well, got him to crack a smile. Maybe there won't be any tension between us now. Maybe if I run into him in the future, in a park or at a party, we can both be friendly and cordial.

I guess this is what it's like being an adult. In college, a boy switched out of the economics class we were both in after I told him we should see other people. Now, I guess I've reached a new level of maturity in relationships.

I wheel my cart to the checkout counter, and against my better judgment look around for Jake one more time. I hope he doesn't think I was making excuses to get out of here. I do have to be somewhere in half an hour.

He seemed like he was doing well, although he was a bit aloof. But maybe he's always been. You can't expect a man to change for you, no matter how much you wish he would. Maybe he had work on his mind. I can't believe, after all this time, he still can't focus on one thing.

I approach the cashier and place my items on the conveyor belt. As she scans them, an electronic beep echoes across the store. I pack the items into paper bags and place them back into my cart.

Before exiting through the big sliding glass doors, I stop. I really try to look around for him now. Just one last look. But he's nowhere to be found.

Breathe in. Breathe out. I am ok. I walk to my car and unload my groceries.

I hope he's happy. He seems better off this way. And hell, I think I am too.



ZIPPY
KATIE GIANCASPRO

THE WORD

In the beginning was the word,
and before that was the thought of the word.
The semblance of the thought of the word
loitered around the roof of my mouth. Now
the word screaming to be born,
spits itself out of my lips
so rudely that it has become a faked sneeze.
And you look on.
My heart thuds like a jackhammer on concrete.
I blame my tongue for my newfound speech impediment.
The poor thing fell to alcoholism and disrepair
when it failed its dream—
the world's first legless tap dancer.
I should actually blame my brain
because before the thought had come out
the brain committee in my skull was
seated in a circle poshly debating Downtown Abbey.
“My word, our host is in a predicament,” one said while sipping Earl Grey.
Another stood up and proudly declared, “We help him after tea.”
They cheered and hurrahed.
But I still clearly stand before you like a chimp with brain damage.
Though if I am honest before my brain
spent its free time pretentiously, pretending it had pedigree—
my parents were at fault.
I could spin a tale as complex as a spiders web,
of the life they lived and their hopes and dreams,
of moving to a new land with nary a loved one for support,
but instilled with the resolve to live the glorious thing they call life.
I could do that,
but since I am inevitably the best thing they ever accomplished
we will center their lives on the production—
Me: staring me as me.
Now had the migration patterns of my parents never intersected,
less star crossed lovers and more “I guess this could work.”
I would not be standing before you here,
staring deeply into your eyes like
a deer stares at oncoming headlights.

Which reminds me that feelings were a big issue,
pre- fake sneeze of course.
The emotions that arose in my chest—
my anxiety was jumping like a kangaroo on a pogo stick,
and hope in a bright future
if I released the word, my hostage.
Those feelings were clogged in my throat drain, and if ideas
didn't exist maybe I could've thought of something intelligible.
Forget constructs (even if the concept of memory is a construct),
matter was the building block of my misery at the atomic scale.
Why did we use nuclear weapons—
well political matters.
It matters not,
none of this matters.
I have decided to renounce the world,
The man angrily coughing behind me agrees.
This is the revelation I fondly
cling to as my only way out of this scenario.
I proudly declare that I can't declare
because my existence and existence itself,
is a myriad complex of scenarios,
spinning like electrons around a nucleus,
and my nucleuses comprised of DNA and/or positive protons
have happily decided that what the word I wanted to say,
much like myself,
is inevitably pointless.
So as you stand there, bored,
wishing you got more than your \$9.00/hr,
asking for the third time,
“Sir, would you like sprinkles?
Please speak up. I can't hear you.”
I bare my chest and said the word, “No.”
The titillating delight of speech,
more words trickle from my mouth like a stream.
“I don't care about sprinkles.”
“What about a cherry?”
Uh...
In the beginning was the word.

Brennah Ross

MOTHER NATURE

my first kiss was with the sun
it left hickeys on my cheeks
and dots wherever it lay

my first love was with the ocean
its salty waves left my mouth dry
and at night, when I closed my eyes
I still felt the movement of being carried away

my first heartbreak was with the sky
when I wanted beautiful weather
but it didn't have the time
I prepared the picnic
and it delightfully declined

my first mistake was with the full moon
when I let its second-hand light shine
through the windows to my bedroom
and then too easily obliged
it carried a breeze of summer
and took my peace of mind

I found the courage to ask the earth why
and the rain tried to drown me out
but then the muddy puddles told me
that's how mother nature cries

SECOND

Second place goes to the person seconds behind first.
Of course any child would tell second place Olympians good news.
First is the worst,
second is the best,
third is the one with the hairy chest.
It is my misfortune to say I have a very hairy chest
and that I deserve third place in every event—
Olympics included.
But for a second, let us muse of second.
Second is the biggest loser,
bigger than thirty-second because let's face it
it was only thirty seconds behind.
But does 1 always have to win?
Is the 2 always meant to lose to 1, too?
Ancient mathematicians certainly wrote essays on the concept of 1.
Then a lazy student copied it on a test,
realizing that putting 1 with 1 made 2.
The teacher still caught and failed that student,
thus 2 always loses to 1.
2 heads are not better than 1,
for those snarky readers snapping at my number theory.
For you see, 2 heads only beat 1 head,
when the 2 heads work as 1.
So $2=1$ and 1 cannot beat 1,
as well as 2 cannot equal 1,
therefore two strawman heads can't exist.
But don't feel bad, 1 may have won,
but first neglects its spouse because it likes to be alone.
Second on the other hand is a smooth talker.

INTO STONE

“In the room the women come and go, talking of Michelangelo.”

-T.S. Eliot

Michelangelo is a mixture of all the names and places she's ever heard,
And the facts that go along with them.

You become the way she mispronounces your first name.
Her tongue is like sandpaper that can etch away vowels and
The sounds that have carved their way into your figured soul.
A mouth that can lick the corners of your being,
With teeth that shine through a yellow fog,
And drink diet iced tea to rinse out the taste.

Michelangelo is a fact from her Snapple cap that she is too lazy
To search for, and see how unlikely it is that he counts the number of times
She smiles when she's walking towards him, and
That love isn't a contact sport, but something that is
Twisting muscles inside of your body.
You can see the subtle marbled veins in David's hand,
But he isn't reaching out to you.
Your soul can be sore without someone gripping onto you,
And it can be beautiful.
She doesn't see life like that.

Rome wasn't built in a day, but her opinions of everyone around her were.
But you are just a confessional in her Vatican city; you would keep
These secrets if she asked you to.
Her lips are the Parthenon and they crumble when he touches them.
They still are strong when they tremble,
With their glossed-over cracks and bleeding sheets of skin,
Her mouth is a block of stone that he wants to chisel into, but
The Michelangelo inside of him asks if he can see the figure beneath
The fleshy marble, and he's not sure
If he can,
Or if he wants to,
But of course he does.
Because Michelangelo is a cocktail of all the names and places she's ever heard,
She'd tell him it all if he would listen.
If she was drunk enough, she would.
At least, she would want to.
Of course she wants to.

Of course you will still come and go, talking of her with the little
She knows and cares about you; eye contact and a first-name basis
Has become the same as knowing who you are,
And life and people are as easy as breaking into stone, even when you
Don't know what is underneath.

You will want to look.

Of course you will.

Alena Woods

GRANDMA'S HOUSE (IF SHE HAD ONE AND LOVED YOU)

It's a place where clock hands grow from where you pull the weeds, and there are flowers that bloom when you ask them to. They question where you've been and tap their watches with the sound roots make when you snap them. It's like your perennial voice is deep water and you are loud enough to hear, small enough to grab onto and skinny enough to twist around seven times until circulations collide.

You only visit in the spring; there is always dirt on your feet when you leave.

The front door is rarely shut, swaying in the wind when it asks for you, and the door hinges are rusty now from patient tears. The ones that say, "I've waited for so long, and now you are here." The wallpaper wrinkles like laughing eyes when you touch it, and the grandfather clock tells you that you are getting older. He has counted the revolutions on his angled axis while he breathes against the glass and fogs it up, like an astronaut with a lack of oxygen. He touches his glassy face with child's hands, ones that started counting out the seconds from when you left, on fingers and toes.

He pulls his hands together and prays at the midnight mark, his tongue clicking with the sounds of seconds. Time tries to move forward, but there's no one here who can climb the stairs until they creak. No one to jump on the plywood until it cracks, and no one to skip over that step with swinging arms and a hug at the top. The house misses the way you could shake its foundations; it breathes in the concrete-cruled dust you trailed behind you.

It wonders when you will stay, when it can stop counting the days you are gone, and when you start being someone it can count on.

THE LAST LOOK

A NOTE FROM THE ISSUE EDITOR

Reader,

It seems almost too silly, ironic, and in a lot of ways perfect, that the only error in last Winter's issue of The Lion's Eye was the spelling of our secretary and my best friend's name. Since then, my friends and I have felt a lot of joy and have gotten a lot of amusement out of calling Julia, Jula, and in a way it has become a wonderful inside joke that we can all share with one another.

Moments like these are important to appreciate and treasure, because life is made up of lots of little jokes, ironies, and mistakes. Sure, Julia's name was spelled wrong in the issue, but now we have the story of Jula (perhaps the alter ego of Julia?) to look back on and incorporate into our lives. As cliché as it sounds, it is important that we learn from our mistakes, but also appreciate them and embrace them as part of who we are.

Now, in the name of starting a tradition, I leave you all with a playlist that I have been working on (for the second issue in a row)! This is another way for me to share creative work with all of you lovely readers:

1. Reflections- MisterWives
2. Other Side- Anberlin
3. The Boys of Summer- The Ataris
4. In My World- Avril Lavigne
5. Bad Blood- Bastille
6. Hurricane- MisterWives
7. The Mother We Share- CHVRCHES
8. Sweet Disposition- The Temper Trap
9. New Romantics- Taylor Swift
10. Shots- Imagine Dragons
11. Love Into the Light- Ke\$ha
12. You Get What You Give- New Radicals
13. Gold- Sir Sly
14. Dance Floor Anthem- Good Charlotte

I want to thank my fellow eboard members who are all responsible for bringing this issue to you. Thank you to Rachel, Alena, Alyse, Danielle, and of course, Julia, for all of your hard work, dedication, and contributions to this issue. And of course, I want to thank you, reader, for picking up this issue and making it here! Without you, we would not have The Lion's Eye.

Anna Mitarotondo



Issue Editor



**WELCOME HOME
SHANNON MCGOVERN**

ABOUT US ::

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SUBMISSIONS ::

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