



The Lion's Eye

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UNTITLED
kimberly iannarone

The Lion's Eye

Fall 2016

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*“Above all, take a chance. Sing, like blood
going down the vein.”*

— MARY OLIVER

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“All you need to paint is a few tools, a little instruction, and a vision in your mind.”

— BOB ROSS

THE FIRST LOOK

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

I've been waiting a really long time to write this message to you; it's a day I have looked forward to for awhile now... basically ever since I walked into my first Lion's Eye meeting donning my "I Only Date Superheroes" sweatshirt from Forever 21. Freshman year me wanted to become the executive editor and impart all the literary wisdom I learned throughout my college years onto you.

But here's what I've got: Writing. Is. Hard. Like really hard. I almost take two Tums every time I sit down and start a new poem. But I like to think that those stomach-churning, acid-reflux-inducing anxieties are just those creative cocoons starting to hatch. Do you know what I mean? That cliché butterflies-in-your-stomach feeling when you're onto something great. I live for that rush. But no one ever said it was easy.

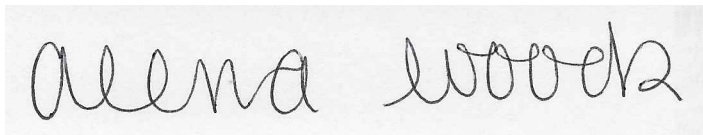
Inspiration has struck me at the strangest and most inconvenient times: when I was babysitting and only had the back of a People Magazine to write on, walking back from a party and typing absolute nonsense into the notes section of my iPhone, trying to fall asleep... you get the picture. I'm sure you've been in a similar situation, where it feels like you've got the next epic poem on the tip of your tongue, but just wish you hadn't been on the toilet when it happened.

Well, here's what I've learned: take those moments and run with them, sprint with them, skip with them, and never let them go. Put a stack of Post-It notes where your bathroom wipes usually go, keep a pen on you at all times and don't be afraid to use anything (or anyone) as your own personal notepad, using your discretion of course. Just get those ideas written down somewhere and whatever you do, don't throw them away.

Because one day, that guy on the subway who wouldn't stop talking to you about his pet cockroach could be the inspiration for a character in your book. Please document those moments. I hope you keep every scribble, scrap of paper, and wild idea you have and use them wisely.

Writing may be hard, but living in a world without your voice and talent would be unimaginable.

Best,

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Alena Woods" in a cursive, flowing script.

Alena Woods
Executive Editor



HORSE
andrea elfers

kelly vena

SPELLBOUND

Give me your wounded; I can heal their ills.
I spin miracles like tailors spin thread.
I cure bleeding, sneezing, quaking with chills—
believe it or not, I can show you the dead.
Very few can handle the magic I spawn—
I bend the rules as blacksmiths do metals.
My power is strange, running dusk to dawn;
it's gained from people, pencils, even rose petals.
All it takes is a wave of the hand:
I swirl words on paper—an artist mixing paint.
Not witchcraft, yet some pieces are still banned;
I can't say every writer is a saint.
Some claim our magic is fading away,
but we're just thinking up more words to say.

kelly vena

BOOKMARK

Gently clutching these
Pages, your heart touches mine.
You hold a place there.

kyle siegel

DESCENDED FROM TABOR

"Listen to your drum and your drum only. It's the one that makes the sweetest sound."

-Simon Sinek

Confusion's whistle comes like the impulsive shaking of a snare drum
when those who raise their eyebrows at labels of 'fatale' sigh the correct note;
less than twenty, greater than five.

My head is that snare drum, convulsing out of a nervous
system working without a mind to paint the lines guiding the strike.
The taste of water chokes, pouring over the worn plastic spilling onto
the beads burning my back, hate-filled symbiosis because without them
the music would just be a headache,

there's no way I could possibly change that tuning.
Not with my arms meant for halves
(the larger it boasts, the smaller its body,
the harder it is to play)
and my hypothesizing about their inferiority complex,
repugnantly terrified of how I swore
I'd never be one of those compassionless fucks whining
about how I'm a goddamn snare, why won't you listen?

We're all blindingly cognizant my screech is a violent lullaby circulating
perimeter after perimeter of the vision layering the walls around my kingdom
STOPLISTENINGTOTHEHARDWARETHEY'REDIVIDEDANDTHEREFOR
REDISHONEST

INTHEIRABILITYTOPROVIDELEGITIMATE-

click

click

fwop

The snare is off
the room is desolate and
I'm reminded that we're all hollow with a chest wound fitted for a
double-edged sword.

emily miller

SAINT PAUL'S *BIENVENUE*

Welcome to the home of the governor
and the chancellor
and the first President of the United States.
Did they have psychics in 1776?
Could they have foreseen the visitors?
Scrambling to grab dropped names
and when the wind blows the right way
there's water, too, for kids
to swish their hands around in,
new artists working in collaboration with the commissioners.

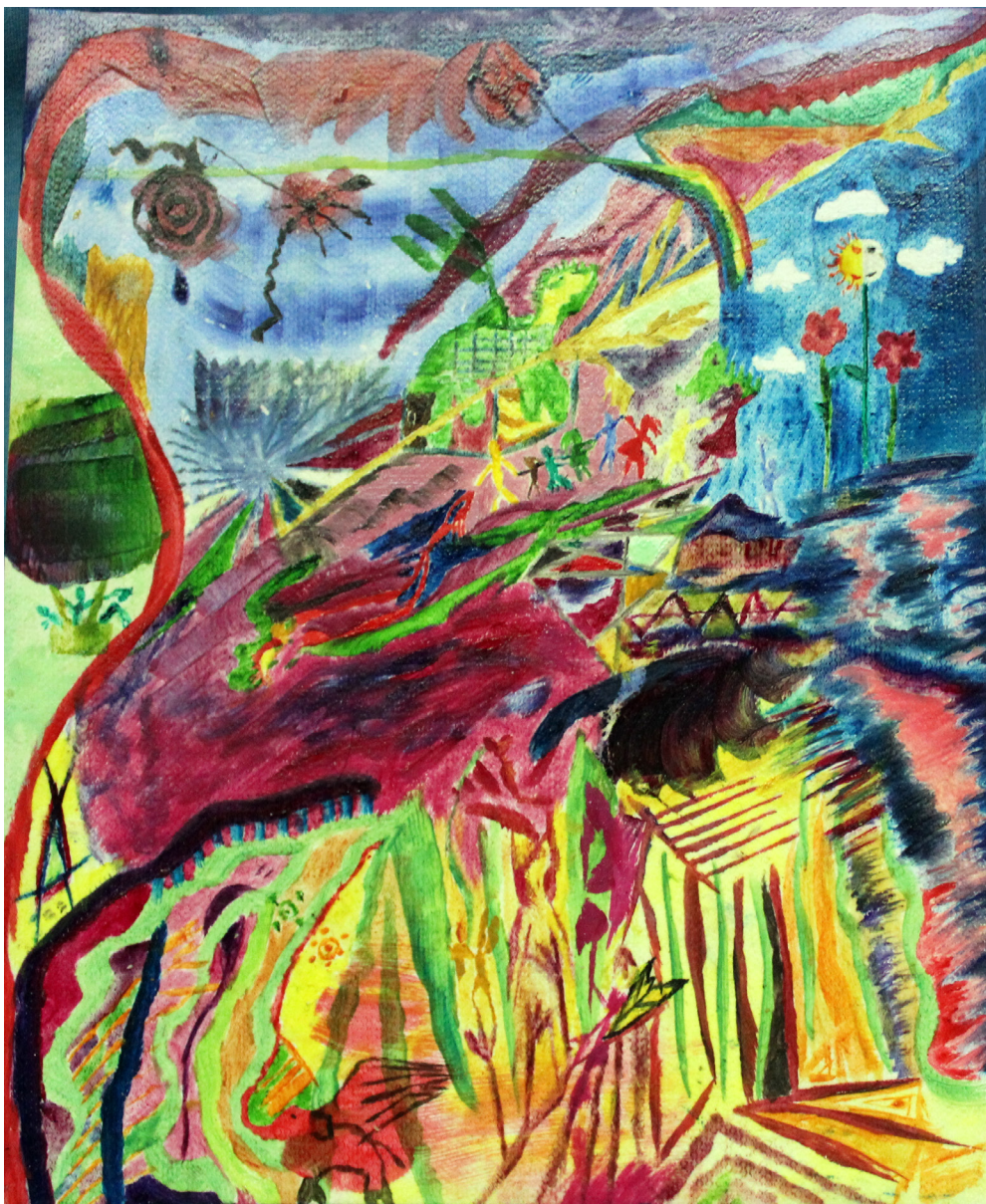
People using memorials like living rooms.
They're built for remembrance and service to the public
so they're being put to use.

You can write ten times in a book that it will never be forgotten
but ten dollars says in ten decades the only ones who will have learned
are the ones keeping their voices under the rafters and the organ,
holding the roof up with solitary song.
The sign outside: *Bienvenue*. Welcoming, inviting more.

Since the most morbid of statues will be built from the ground up,
who's going to remember when it went from up to ground?
When it's taught in schools
kids will learn but they won't understand
how it felt for the survivors and the victims and the bystanders
and how a landscape can be created and destroyed.
The air feels different. We feel different.
So we'll be reaching hands out to hearts blindly again
waiting for someone young to take hold and understand,
hoping only faith can predict the future.



MAILBOXES - WELLESLEY COLLEGE
ally marcino



PLAY GROUND
ravin mehta

PARKING (AN EXCERPT)

Logan pulled beside a thick-trunked oak tree and yanked up on the emergency brake of a borrowed Volvo station wagon. She let out the most frustrated sigh of her twenty-four year life.

She habitually ran her fingers through her unkempt curls and rubbed the swollen bags beneath her eyelids. Her curls and bags grew larger. She grabbed a sun-bleached baseball cap and dirty canvas bag from the passenger seat and stepped out onto an uneven sidewalk.

Stretching her legs, coming off of a scenic but tearful six-hour drive, Logan oriented herself in the most populated city in Vermont. She squinted to read a nearby sign: TWO HOUR PARKING / MONDAY THRU FRIDAY / 8 AM-6 PM / ALL VIOLATORS WILL BE TOWED. She locked the car, cracked her back, and lit a cigarette under the brim of her hat. Logan's sunglasses disguised her dread.

It only took her best friend's little sister, Celia Webb, three semesters at the University of Vermont to stop attending class. A month later she changed her phone number and deactivated her various social media. At the time, Jane was still alive and she wasn't worried about her ever-pioneering little sister. Her parents might have been worried, had Celia not told them to stop making weak attempts to contact her.

Now, two years later, Celia's distraught parents, ever absolving themselves of their own parental responsibilities, begged Logan to conjure up Celia for the funeral.

Logan had two hours' worth of parking to reunite with a person she hadn't seen in three years. Two hours to explain to her best friend's little sister how, and why, she no longer has a sibling. Two hours to fulfill the wishes of two parents mourning two daughters: one lost to suicide two days earlier, and one lost to Burlington two years earlier. She had two hours to reunite a broken family with one fewer member.

An indigo sky illuminated a peeling painted sign reading *Pearl Street Liquor*, right next to *Lake View Pharmacy*. Another sign in front of the liquor store read, "Yes, we have maple creemees!" with an expressive cartoon of a soft-serve ice cream cone wearing sunglasses, licking its lips, and drinking a beer. On the brick wall between the buildings, there was a graffiti outline of the state of Vermont. Burlington was labeled: *MAD SUS*. Three homeless-looking men sat on the ground beneath the artwork, leaning against the brick façade, slugging Labatt Blue tall boys through toothless mouths. One of them didn't wear shoes but made up for it with necklaces. He sat, holding his rounded stomach and jawing about 'getting his money from that bitch *on time* and *in person*'. He eyed Logan suspiciously.

He was obviously the cool one in the crew.

Logan knew Burlington was supposedly a city, but based on her twenty minutes of looking for parking, it seemed more like a collection of rural people who got lost after dropping too much acid on a trip to Whole Foods. She imagined that the people who chose to live there spent their time drifting around town, entering cafes with signs boasting ‘*No Wifi*’, trying to pretend like they don’t have as much money as they do. She could tell that there were pockets of wealth, marked by tastefully painted gingerbread trim. There were also plenty of homeless people. If she weren’t mind-numbingly depressed and terrified, Logan might have actually admired it. It swallowed up her best friend’s sister and cost her more than a tank of gas.

Stretching her short legs in long strides, Logan walked downhill towards the last known address of Celia Webb. Tall oak trees lined the street, half of them sprouting lime green leaves of May, and the other half pushing themselves to do the same. Pearl Street rolled exponentially downward with each intersection and traffic light. It shrank to a point in the distance, meeting the gray and white water of Lake Champlain. Across the lake, the Adirondacks dissolved up into the sky with increasingly pale layers of blue. Logan looked up from the address on her cracked iPhone to see the alleged home of Jane’s little sister. But, standing there, she struggled to imagine Celia Webb living there.

Logan tried to picture the Victorian home as she imagined it was meant to be seen a hundred years ago: warm and well kept, with a strong wooden roof heaving against layers of New England snow. Apparently, once-thriving industry can leave behind whole towns of disintegrating period architecture and misplaced young people.

Now, in the relentless sunshine of May, 22 Hungerford Terrace appeared weathered beyond repair, assaulted by carelessness, and forgotten by concern. Its skeleton shrank down into itself like the collapsed lung of a once-star athlete. A lone bike wheel hung, locked to the naked rafter of a sagging front porch, severed from its body. Several cartridges of wasted Pall Mall reds dotted the stoop and half-smoked cigarettes grew from the window box-turned-ashtray. The cigarettes mingled with neglected fallen leaves from three, seven, ten seasons ago. It was hard to tell. Logan added her finished butt to the urban college vignette.

She rapped on the door with Spring-pale knuckles and waited.

God. Is it too late to ditch?

Again, she knocked.

The sliver of a ghostly pale, shirtless man in a beaded vest appeared in the window next to the door. After unlatching several locks, he greeted her at the doorway.

“Hey man, can I help you?”

His bright eyes were squinting and red, adjusting to the sunlit stranger on his stoop. Logan shifted her weight in her shoes and plunged her hand into her bag. Eventually, she presented an old photograph of Celia clutching a lit Sparkler and a half-melted Scribbler.

“Hey, it’s nice to meet you. My name is Logan Foster and I’m here looking for someone,” she says, handing over the photo. Her voice gained momentum.

“So I was actually wondering, do you happen to know someone named Celia Webb? I feel like she might live here or maybe she used to. She probably looks like this, but like, ten years older, I think. I’m sorry I don’t have another picture but this was in my apartment and it’s actually pretty important that I—”

He fingered the edges of the photograph with dirt-caked nails. Suddenly, he flashed a surprisingly white, approving smile. Logan thought that maybe he once had braces in some wealthy suburban elsewhere.

“Fuck this is hilarious. I low key love this. Thank you.”

The suddenly attractive stranger tucked the photograph into the waistband of his gray Champion sweatpants and pushed his greasy, ash hair behind muscular shoulders. He moved aside and gestured for Logan to enter.

“Right through here, dude. I’ll go grab her. It’s nice to meet you, by the way,” he added with dewy eyes and a firm handshake. “I’m Nicky Z.”

He led Logan through a dirty hallway to a light blue room with tumorous piles of items on every surface. On the television, Bob Ross’s *Joy of Painting* played with subtitles. *I think every tree deserves a friend. Don’t you?* Nicky offered Logan a seat on a stained, gray sectional, surrounding a grimy, glass coffee table.

Where am I?

A mop-headed boy was curled up on the far end of the couch, snoring and wringing the life from a throw pillow. The coffee table was covered with several issues of National Geographic, a dirty white t-shirt reading “Billionaire Boys Club”, three partially-consumed mugs of coffee, a resin-caked bong, a scale, and four mason jars’ worth of pot and cocaine.

“Keep your voice down, though,” he said before disappearing up the stairs, “the baby just fell asleep.”

MY CASTLE IN WEEHAWKEN

There is a castle in Weehawken, sloping downhill on a sweaty street adorned with bicycle chains and the urgency of urban America; right on the corner of a failed grid system and unpaved sidewalks. On the bus, a mother tells her son that it is a library with a dragon living in its rusty brown tower, trying to burn up all the world's books. Its basement is my first apartment, the one that ignites my own kind of copyrighted light and breathes through the must. I peer right through the woman who took my window seat as we pass Hauxhurst Avenue. On this night, the skyline is the erased markings of a Prismacolor red pencil on the seams of clouds.

And I am buckled tightly into the evening.

We are all a part of this mass exodus; New Jersey transit buses are arks separating natives from suburban noisemakers. The ones who clog the pores of Port Authority like blackheads: with our inflamed egos and lack of direction, who contribute to the overcrowding of a city they do not belong to. Mouths always open, gaping and pointing upward, catching cigarette ash and profanities like flakes of disintegrating snow. This place where dragons burn our fairytale books and fly the remains back over the Hudson River.

We all belong to our own aerial views.

I keep my eyes on my castle in Weehawken and wonder how much it would cost to exist on the outskirts of a heartbeat.



UNTITLED
kimberly iannarone

THE CARTOGRAPHER

He charts a map
deep in my skin,
his fingers waltzing
across my back
in paths and rivers
and city blocks and destinations
that I can never reach
because only he can see
the lines that lead there.
So what's the point
in branding me
with this tattoo
when he's the one
who has to suffer
the agony
of seeing what he's done?

INKBLOOD

The last time it crossed my mind to pick up a pen and write about you
your hands had never seen my skin
your eyes had never touched me farther than my lips

I'm not sure how words sound now
coming from a body that you molded

Do they taste the same
Do they rhyme differently

When I was green I think the whole world looked like you
and every word tasted like your name
but I can't see the color blue anymore
except when I feel it breathing down my neck

You never put your hands around my neck
but I still feel them there

I think my words can feel them too
and I think I can feel the fight they have to make
to squeeze through my constricted throat
grappling for a foothold against the indents of your fingers

I cough out red words onto a white page
and see them take a naked, curled-up form

They are so scared to be seen
They aren't sure they want to be touched
They don't think they deserve your touch on them

I don't know what to do with them on paper



POWER
rachel turan

THROUGH THE MOTIONS

Running in straight lines,
Just as the crow flies,
Steadily passing parallel powerlines.
Low-amplitude sine waves,
Carry their currents,
Held up by perpendicular poles.
The junction,
At the upcoming intersection,
Then shifts direction,
Bringing you past ranch-style homes,
With green pastures,
In lieu of downtrodden ghost towns,
Tagged with graffiti.
Transiently-
You survey the land,
From a comfortable seat,
In an iron steed,
With a one-track mind.
Scanning the outside,
All you find,
Is that you have lost yourself,
On the way.

HUSH, BABY, HUSH

A heart grew inside me. I felt its beating against the inside of my stomach, swelling me as it grew. It was only a temporary heart, though, and at the end of nine months it left me, climbing out from between my legs. I looked at it, all bloody and red the way hearts should be, and felt emptier than ever before.

Doctors smiled and exclaimed their delight at the heart they had extracted from within me. I writhed in discomfort at its absence. There wasn't a single beating inside my body, no thrum of life any longer. My heart began to scream.

"Give it back, give it back," I begged, a delirious moan.

"We just have to take vitals and make sure your baby is healthy. We'll bring her right back as soon as we're done," one doctor said, a fake smile hiding murderous intentions. She couldn't be trusted. None of them could be. Just me and my heart.

"Where's the father?" one of them asked another.

My heart's creator was a topic that sent me spiraling into the memory that there was no escape from. The darkness seemed to permeate every inch of the alley that the shadow man had dragged me into, and he seemed to blend right in with his black clothing and black heart. He had his hood pulled down low, letting shadows cover the rest of his face. Except his eyes, those cold, dark eyes that stared into my soul as he took me. He stunk of cigarettes and skittles, a smell that would come back to me at the strangest of times, like it was just lingering in my nostrils since that night, waiting to hit me all over again. I remember the coarse pavement scraping against my bare skin, leaving scratches up and down my legs.

Most of all I remember his voice. So coarse and deep, as if it had come straight from the night itself. He told me not to tell and I hadn't. "Hush, Baby, Hush" he'd whispered as he pumped me full of emotions, skin slapping against skin, his violent poisons surging inside me and taking root, growing into something more. He was a shadow man, he could be anyone or anything, and that was how I knew I could never tell. If I listened to him, if I hushed myself the way he wanted, then he would stay in the shadows where he belonged. But the second I opened my mouth and told, he would be there. It would do no good to tell.

I died there in that hospital bed waiting for them to return my heart to me. My body went cold and stiff, the way dead bodies do, but the doctors flitted about the room, never noticing my post mortem decay. Nor did they notice the miracle that occurred when they brought the living part of me back into the room and placed her into my arms. Life returned to my limbs and blood began to pump once more upon contact of her shiny new

skin to my ragged soul. She stared up at me with these wide brown eyes, almost entirely black, that were not my own. She was a shadow girl, a shadow heart forced in and out of my body. I hated her and loved her just the same.

“What’s her name?” the doctor that had given my baby back to me asked.

Lilith, I decided while staring into those dark, dark eyes. She stared solemnly back into my own eyes. I wondered what she saw there.

Doctors came and doctors went. They all wondered with their judging eyes the origin of my little poisoned heart, but I wouldn’t tell. I just looked down at Lilith and whispered “Hush, Baby, Hush,” sharing the secret with only her. Sometimes I watched her little mouth shape into a smile and I knew that she knew. I smiled, too. It felt good to share my burden with another, even if it was another that was a part of my burden.

We returned to my house, that was once a home, but was now just a house. My baby was part shadow, but there were no longer shadows in my house. After meeting the shadow man that gave me this shadow child, I kept all my lights on, even when I slept. I hoped that this would not only keep him away, but that it would keep Lilith from her shadow side. If I doused her in light always, there would be no place for the darkness to take root. A house is no longer a home when it is no longer lived in, only hid in.

So me and my dark heart hid. We hid when it was morning and when it was night. We hid when we heard voices and when we did not. We closed the white blinds, so no one would see. And we crawled around the two-bedroom house, ignoring the voices that once belonged to friends. Sometimes they would call things like “Jess, are you in there?,” but Lilith would smile and say to me “Hush, baby, hush” and so I hid some more.

Was I in here? I questioned myself when Lilith wasn’t watching. She was always watching with those dark, demon eyes. My heart had left me and turned into a shadow, but was I in here? Sometimes I thought I was still stuck to the pavement in a shadow-filled alley, naked and changing. We are born naked and I was born again in that alley. Who was Jess? She was me once, but like a house is not a home, I am not her.

So, I sat in the bright lights of my house, hiding from all the shadows of the world. My heart had grown into a being of its own and I no longer trusted its intentions. There were days when she just stared and stared at me with those knowing eyes. Those eyes didn’t belong to a child. They belonged to a man, a dark and dangerous man, one who would creep upon you in the dark and force his darkness on you, in you. Not my baby, not my baby. Sometimes I looked at her and saw more shadow than girl and I wondered if his part of her was winning. I thought that since she was my heart and felt what I felt that I could save her. Maybe I didn’t feel enough happy things, maybe I didn’t love enough.

It was days like those that the image of my mother’s disappointed face would fill my mind. She was so close and so far from me now. Her body was no more than ten minutes away, but her heart lay way beyond my reach.

When she saw the dark heart expanding from my stomach, her eyes turned cold and she withdrew from me, believing in the sin she thought I had committed. In my mind I screamed for her to know that this heart was not of my own creation, that the shadow man had come in the night and took what was never meant to be given. The words could never leave my lips, though. What can you do when you have to hide and hush yourself just to keep him from coming back?

Then there was a storm. Outside the whole world became covered in a shadow. The light flashed, striking down, the sky cried out, it's boom echoing throughout the world, and the rain poured down, all nature's attempts to scare away the darkness. They gave it their all, but eventually darkness won and the lights went out.

I sat in absolute silence, frozen to the concrete once more. Behind my eyes I saw him and when I opened them there was no light to wash him away and he was there, too. He was in my living room and I was alone, but no! Lilith was there, too.

I ran to her, the shadow man chasing behind, but when I reached her room he was gone. I leaned over her wooden crib and what I saw made urine trickle down my leg. There was no Lilith, no heart, was there ever a Lilith? No, just a shadow child with her shadow man eyes! Those eyes, those eyes tore into my soul and ripped it to shreds. The shadow man had never left me. He was not only a part of my baby, my heart, he was my baby! He grinned and whispered, "Hush, baby, hush," as nine month old tears poured from my eyes.

I gritted my teeth and did what I should have done from the start. I grabbed him from the crib and dragged him with me to the bathroom. I turned the faucet and began the slow filling of the tub. There wasn't much water because of the power outage, but it was enough, he was tiny.

I put him in the tub and held his head under. "Hush, baby, hush! Hush, hush, hush, baby, hush!" I screamed as I held him down. I squished my eyes shut, not wanting to see those eyes, waiting, waiting, waiting for it to finally be over. This part of me, this heart of me, must die, die, die. It is him and he is I and the baby must die, die, die.

Suddenly, brightness filled the back of my eyelids. The power was back on. My baby was in the tub. My baby was not a man, she just had the eyes of a man. A warm heart of her own beat inside her chest and I knew that she was not me nor my heart either. I released my hold, pulling my poor creature born of hatred from her death. She cried. She broke the silence following me around for so long and cried. The sound shattered me as I rocked her, moaning in time to her cries. It wasn't her secret to keep, it never had been. She was not my heart, she was a girl and he, the shadow man, had taken my heart from me. I thought she was my replacement, but I was

wrong, so, so wrong.

It was time for me to break the silence, too. I carried my soaking baby and my drained self to the phone attached to my kitchen wall and made the call that should have been made nine months ago. So many numbers to call, so many choices to make, but I needed to start with getting help. My mind had been broken and my baby paid the price. I wouldn't let myself lose her, but I wouldn't hurt her any more either. I'd get help, help for me and help for Lilith, whatever that might be. As the phone rang I whispered down to my girl, "No more hush, baby. No more."

THE GENE POOL

If you have been exposed to certain negative environmental factors or if you were just unfortunate enough to dive into the wrong gene pool as a fetus, you may be at risk for cancer.

If my father did not dive into the wrong gene pool, especially with a splash that sent ripples racing through the water—green heartbeats across the screen of a pixelated monitor—he may not have had to sit on his mother’s front steps on alternating weekends waiting for his father to pick him up.

He tried to fight it, but it was from the gene pool that my father inherited the American predisposition to leaving.

His sister learned a long time ago that it was no use even packing. She didn’t believe in saviors, in saving, in being saved. She ran away in high school, but you can’t dry off the dripping water from the gene pool: it sticks to your skin like slime, like certain negative environmental factors.

She died young.

YELLOW T-SHIRT

Dad, I loved your shirt
The yellow one with the pocket
And torn hem

It smelled like you
I think it was your deodorant
You've never liked cologne

I wore it every night
Sitting in the dark
Listening to the recording you made me

I never let Mom wash your shirt
I feared it would fade
And I would lose you

I missed your muscled arm
And hugging it on the couch
We always watched Robin Williams

I hated your job
But you were my hero
You were fighting for us

Almost every night
I dreamed your death
Petrified of every nightmare

I gave you your yellow shirt back
It fit smaller now, your arms were so big
I wanted to season it before you left again

It was R&R and only lasted 2 weeks
You left again for another six months
You gave the yellow shirt back

You missed snow days
Beach trips
And the family camping trip

But most of all we missed you



THE ROCK FACE
liam kealy



SUMMER
liam kealy

kelly noll

USS ARIZONA

We woke up with the sun to catch a shuttle boat to the sunken battleship. A mausoleum-white block straddled the wreck and, from a certain angle, the platform looked as if it had buckled under the weight of the American flag. Over a thousand men were decomposing in the water beneath it since December 7, 1941.

65 years had passed since the bombs descended. The ship was stubborn in dying - pieces of salt-rusted metal, flecked and peeling, still stuck above the water. Peering over the edge, we saw oil oozing up from the depths like a bleeding wound, clogging and coloring the water with rainbow hues. Instead of staunching it, we built an observatory to watch the wreck's labored last breaths, struggling between air and water, life and death - an American tomb for those who died too soon.

kelly vena

QUARTER MOON

The yellow crescent
overlooks America.
Washington's smile.

ECUATORIANA

I know what you want to see
When your pale hands run the knife across my skin
You expect streams of Red, white, and blue
Chunks of charcoal grilled burgers
Residue from 4th from of July fireworks
To come pouring out of my veins

You expect me to claim America
But my skin tone screams Latina
Cut me open and marvel
At Strains of multicolored wool
Covered in Gold shavings
Rescued from Inca temples

Watch me as cups of misty water
Cupped out from the Rio Guayas
Spill out out me on onto your floor
Pieces of clay shingles from the houses
That rest on El Cerro Santa
Cut me open and I promise
Ecuador will gush out of my veins

SUMMER RECIPE

Start with 2 teaspoons, bad decisions. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of obsessions with movies that portray romantic relationships in completely unattainable, unrealistic ways. Combine with 22 oz. of ocean air, salted to taste. Include several lost Chapsticks, cherry-flavored. Stir in 1 tablespoon of generalized anxiety disorder. Add handful of stars sliced carefully, chilled in freezer, then 4 sprigs of unrequited love for New York City. Whip in freshly squeezed lemon juice.

Mix vigorously in one bowl. Dilute if too concentrated. Serving size: three. Keeps in fridge for up to one week.



SPOONS
rachel edwards



ON MY MIND
elysia jones



SHAPING MYSELF
rachel edwards



UNTITLED
kimberly iannarone

BACKWARDS

You know that theory	yoU knoW thAt theorY
that our reflections	thAt ouR refleCtions
are just there	are juSt there
to prevent us	to prevent us
from falling	from fallinG
through the mirror	through the mirror
into the presumably horrible	into the presumably horrible
world that they live in?	world thAt they live in?
I think about that.	I think about thAt.
Because what if	Because whAt if
we're the ones	we're the ones
blocking them	blockinG them
warning them	warninG them
preventing them	preventinG them
from drowning	from drowninG
in this hell,	in this hell,
the world we live in?	the world we live in?
What if ours is	WhAt if ouRs is
a million times worse? I bet	a millioN times worse? I bet
the world	the world
my reflection lives in	my reflection lives in
is full of celestial flowers	is full of celestial flowers
in purples and blues and pinks	in purples and blues and pinks
we can't even imagine	we can't even imagine
and backwards people	and backwards people
and backwards words	and backwards words
and I bet	and I bet
she loves it there	she loves it there
loves reading her backwards books	loves readinG her backwards books
and kissing her backwards	and kissinG her backwards
boyfriend and	boyfriend and
painting backwards	paintinG backwards
pictures and looking	pictureS and lookinG
through her mirrors	through her mirrorS
at me,	at me,
living my backwards life	livinG my backwards life
and wondering about hers.	and wonderinG about hers.

PENNSYLVANIA

Wedding on Pennsylvania mountaintop.
It rains, the wind flows.
Mist in the valleys around us, the blonde bride smiles.
We are under a roof mingling like a lake.
The fire casts drowsy dusk shadows, beyond us the Poconos yawn.
A girl. A flame in her mind.
Been in my life awhile as a shadow on the wall.
How they step into the light.
We talk like water fills a body.
Words walk like it's Sunday.
Ballroom a rocking boat, we share rum. We are psychonauts.
She is reckless, effervescent. Her laugh challenges the world.
Our bodies are alight and we dance in the midst of strangers.
How love says hello in the night.
How flowers bloom out of dust.
How spirits twine legs like threads.



LEAF BLADE
ravin mehta

BATHTUB

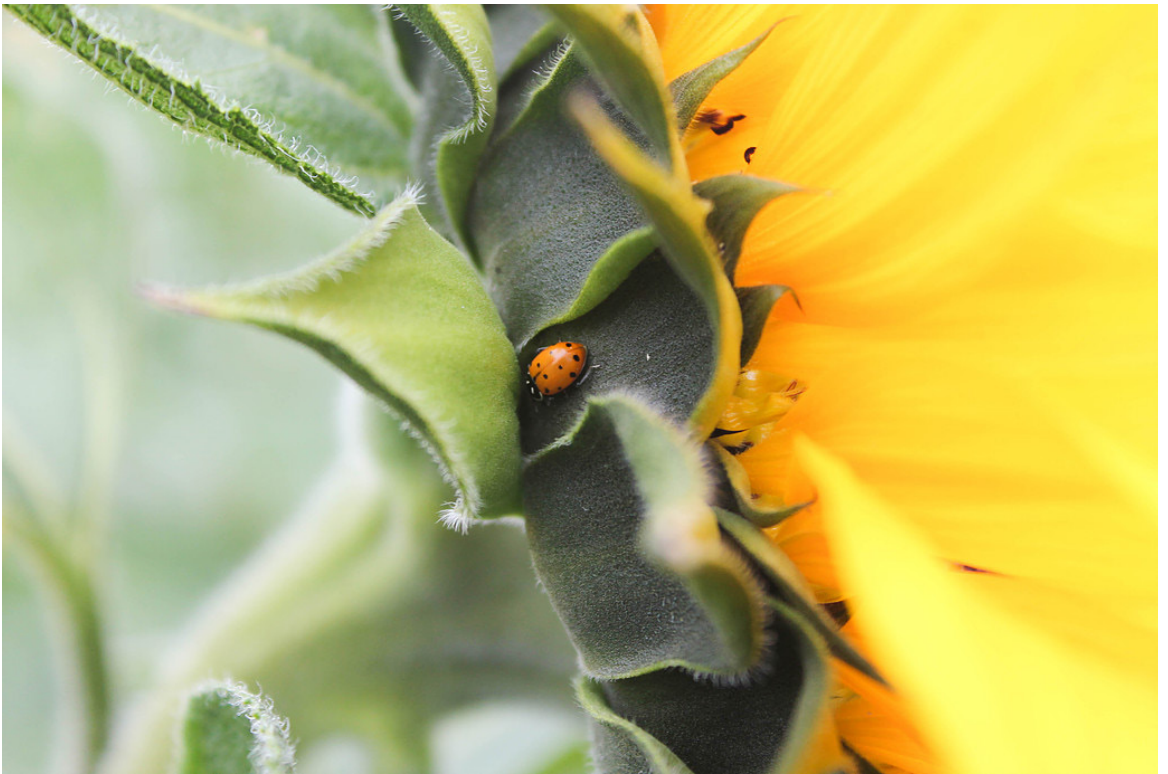
I was an upturned tire shell in a bath of working parts
looking like artisan sandpaper but feeling more
like a bronze Pandora
repurposed for transit tokens.
Inside the bathtub: the innards of the tvs you took apart
looking for a gold crucifix
or a new pair of glasses or a new fabric pattern for your insides
and I'm laying on top arms crossed and focused
on the plastic pinpoint pains pressing my back
like a stucco wall past
or a misleading childhood poke
thinking
that if I turn to look they'll disappear
and leave me with an empty porcelain portrait of Eurydice
not hoping but expecting and not wanting but waiting.
Now these pokes feel like the tin can saw blades
of last year's Thanksgiving
where everyone drank the preserving syrup
and their lips bled from singing psalms.

There are days when I wish the sun were a camera
so that I could have something to perform for
because you seem to dance
on crimson clovers without bending the stems like
a musicbox lullaby or resetting a bone or a backwards car crash
or a perfect replica.
In the bathtub when the power blinks out
and the curtains start flashing
red and black
and white and blue
The tiles tilt upwards and
make a circus tent memory bank or a blanket fort
for saw blade nostalgia
bleeding rockets to the moon.

The faucet spins from hot to cold
mechanical not organic
not synapses but pipes and levers
and not instant but causal
like the waves in the ways you've said:
we are the totality of what we have yet to do

not an ever-growing heap of having happened.
like the hot water heater
where boiling beats stagnancy,
crawling pipes and mixing
and making time for the change to bring spring rain
in from the out
and wash away the timey film spores
from last year's Thanksgiving slides.

New fiber optics
Light not blood and glass not tissue
Replacing your veins



LADYBUG - TRANQUILITY FARMS
ally marcino

THE LAST LOOK

A NOTE FROM THE ISSUE EDITOR

Dearest Reader,

I've been a general member and loyal contributor to the *Lion's Eye* since my freshman year, and now as a junior I'm honored and delighted to have been elected to the position of Issue Editor. I was a bit nervous about taking on the responsibility, but it's been an extremely rewarding experience for me, especially because I have the privilege of working alongside such kind, wonderful, and dedicated friends.

I'd like to thank my fellow executive board members — Alena, Alyssa, Cynthia, and Danielle — who successfully made it through some chaotic obstacles and were always willing to offer a helping hand to get this *Lion's Eye* issue completed (even if it's a little late, for which we hope you'll forgive us); all of our general staff members, for taking an hour each week to help us decide which pieces were the right fit for publication; everyone who sent in submissions, even those that weren't accepted this time around, because without contributors we wouldn't have this wonderful content to share; and you, dear reader, for picking up this magazine and taking the time to appreciate the creative talents of our TCNJ students.

Fall 2016 was a hectic semester for me and I know it was a rough time for many others as well (especially due to current events), but I'm so proud of our little organization for producing such an amazing magazine in the midst of it all. There's a sense of loss, heartbreak, and despair in many of the pieces, but there is also hope, wonder, and color. Through art and photography, poetry and prose, there is aloe growing in the desert, creative expression and healing sprouting from the hurt. I'm constantly in awe of the creative community here at TCNJ and I'm honored to be able to share a piece of it with you through this magazine.

Until next semester,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Noll". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small asterisk at the end of the name.

Kelly Noll
Issue Editor



DESERT ALOE
kelly noll

ABOUT US ::

The *Lion's Eye* is published biannually by the students of The College of New Jersey with funding from the Student Finance Board. The magazine provides an outlet for creative expression, publishing student short fiction, poetry, prose, photography, illustrations, graphic art, and more. To learn more about The Lion's Eye visit our Facebook page, TCNJ Lion's Eye Literary Magazine.

The *Lion's Eye* is co-sponsored by the Alpha Epsilon Alpha chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the National English Honor Society, at The College of New Jersey.

SUBMISSIONS ::

Although the deadline for our next issue has not yet been decided, submissions are currently being accepted. Please send all submissions via e-mail to tcnjlionseye@gmail.com.

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