



ERATO
2016 Edition



Journal of the Arts and Literature

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Fleeting Thoughts
Savanna Jones

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Editor's Note

Erato 2016

"So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."

- *The Great Gatsby*
F. Scott Fitzgerald

One thing I struggle with when I create something is moving past the flaws that no one really notices besides me- the creator -and accepting the bigger picture as something worth all the effort. This applies to pretty much everything: school, artwork, this edition of Erato. Eventually I call it done- good enough -but I still dwell on it for all the wrong reasons. It both deters and fuels improvement. For this reason, I think it's important to keep your perspective on something true to what it is at the core - be open to change your perspective on it instead of getting stuck on flaws or stuck on features you put on a pedestal.

This edition of Erato follows this idea. The artwork submitted is presented in a way meant to change your perspective on it. Nothing about the artwork itself is changed, but the space around it has been modified to enhance it (or maybe distract from it - it all depends on the eye of the beholder). Framing these pieces of art in this way, I wanted to make art from art. Because art to me is the presentation of something that matters to the artist, and the effort and time these artists put into these works- these pieces I pedestalize perhaps more than I should -and the stories I hear in them matter a lot to me. I hope it'll matter to you too.

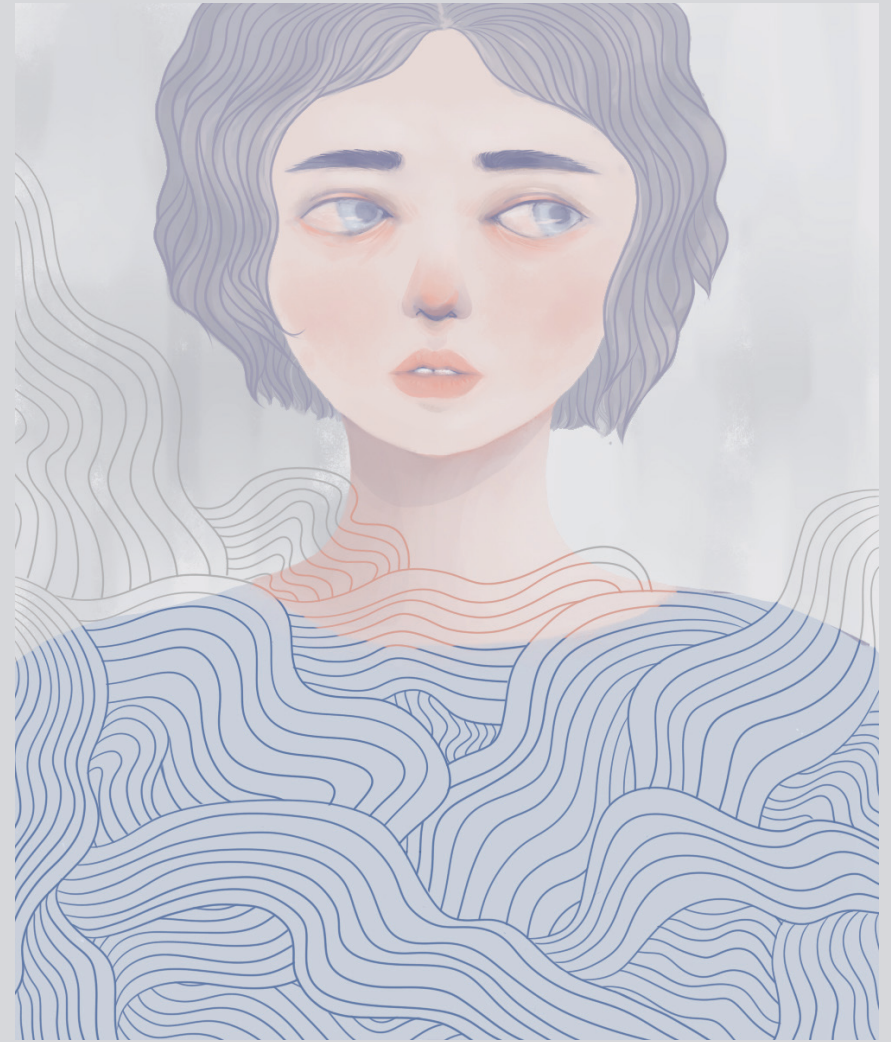
Katie Blask, Editor-in-Chief



Tech Tower
Sterling DeSantis

The Sea
Iris Liu

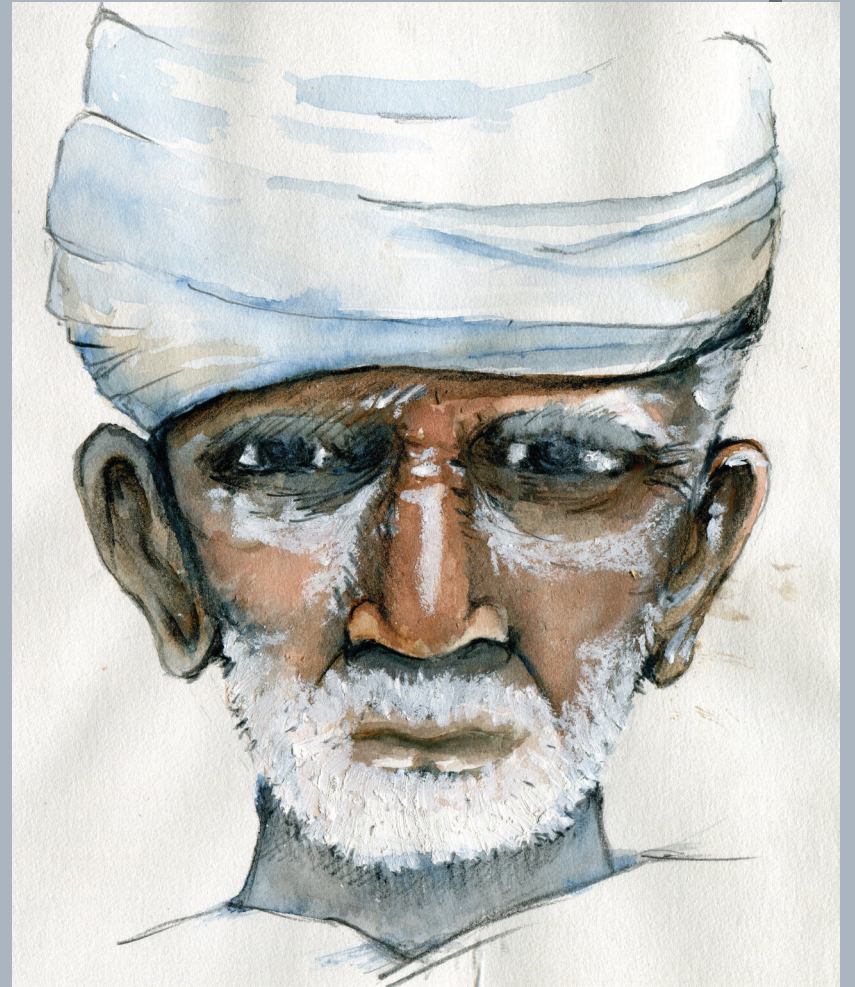
I have never seen my brother;
save from the boxed photographs— buried under tartan coats,
turned facedown,
a cautionary tale whose shouts still
trail the banister, waving handprints on the fridge,
an absence felt only when mother braids her wheat hair,
twined with gray, absentmindedly, by the window,
the house all too silent.
Me, at four, peeking into
the empty room,
the smell of stasis
covers as stiff and unused as clean napkins,
the slightest indentation of where you
should be.
But sometimes I do
understand you,
the sea beckoning, the
crashes and surges just beyond my window
whispering secret songs
and I see you when I dream
like a disembodied ghost
you in a rowboat just a speck in the
sea,
knuckles salt slick and the
tha-thoom of your heart finally matching the
tireless boom of the surf,
arms burning like glistening pistons,
screaming sinews, your mind like an em-dash,
salt on your tongue
 in your eyes
 in your lungs
until everything and nothing is the sea,
and the waves rush in,
and the waves rush in.



Fog
Da-In Ryoo



Neuschwanstein in January
Brooke Beatty



Indian Labourer
Dhyey Desai



Napoli
Zac Zachow



Exploring Wahiba Sands
Janel Gale



Identity
Fatima Jamil

The Proposal

Anand Chaturvedi

It's time. I'm going to go over to Tina's house, tell her parents I love her, and ask for her hand in marriage.

"It's time," I said. "I'm going to go over to Tina's house, tell her parents I love her, and ask for her hand in marriage."

"You've been saying that all day, Rajan," said Monu, slouched on the only chair in our apartment.

"If you leave now, you may still be able to catch the seven-thirty. Need I remind you, that is the last train to Colaba."

This deadline, enforced by the Municipal Authority of Mumbai, finally compelled me to hastily get dressed and scuttle off to the nearest railway station.

As usual, the seven-thirty arrived at eight; and as a result, it was already half past nine when I knocked on Tina's door. As I stood there, bouncing nervously, I noticed a stain on my shirt. This would not go unnoticed by Tina's father, who had been a colonel in the Indian Army. I am quite certain that he had men shot for less. I tried to calm myself down, reminding myself that I had an ace up my sleeve.

The door suddenly opened. "Good evening, Mr and Mrs Patel!" I said, putting on my most charming smile.

"Come in, Rajan," said Tina's mother. "Why are you here so late? Did you forget your textbooks again?"

"Hello, Rajan," Tina's father mumbled from under his moustache.

"I have something to discuss with you both," I said, my voice sounding a few notes higher than usual.

"What's wrong, Rajan? Come sit down." I sunk into the giant sofa, and the words tumbled out.

"Well...I..I like..I want to...Could I marry Tina?"

"What!" bellowed Mr. Patel, his moustache quivering.

I repeated myself. They stared at me as if I had asked for their kidneys.

Four minutes of mutinous whispering later, Mr and Mrs Patel returned to sit in front of me.

"So," said Mr Patel, "you think you are in love with Tina?"

"I am, sir. We love each other."

"Bah!" said Mrs. Patel.

"We have been in love for two years." I continued.

"Pah!" proclaimed Mr. Patel.

I averted my gaze and looked at the coffee table instead. The book on the table, titled 'Rifles: A Deathly History' seemed to me an unfortunate bit of foreshadowing. Conspicuously absent from the table, however, was tea. As any respectable groom-to-be knows, tea (or the lack of it) is the ultimate indication of success or failure.

"Rajan!" roared Mr. Patel, "Let me tell you a story. When I was in the army, we used to have a tradition for new recruits. Do you want to know what it was?"

I was not particularly interested – but being an astute observer, I recognized the question as rhetorical.

"When the new recruits went to sleep on their first night, we dragged them out of bed, and took them three miles away into the Gir forest. The Gir forest has more spotted leopards than any other area in the world. Now, do you know what smell the Indian spotted leopard loves more than anything in the world?"

I confessed that I was not well-versed in the finer points of the Indian spotted leopards' interests, but I was deeply passionate about the subject and was willing to learn.

"Leopards love the smell of coconut oil. We would douse the recruits in the oil, then leave them stranded in the forest. The next morning, they would come back terrified – and we would make them do the same thing the next night, and the next. We did this for a week. Marriage lasts for much longer than a week, Rajan. I don't think you are cut out for this."

I could see my opportunity slipping away. If Mr. Patel had his way, Tina would marry some young lieutenant who tamed elephants on his lunch break. It was high time I played my final card. "That's a lovely story, Mr. Patel," I said nonchalantly, "I'm sure my father would consider it for one of his upcoming movies."

"Movies?" Mrs. Patel parroted, her ears twitching in anticipation.

"Yes, yes. My father is Ramesh–"

"Ramesh Bhatt, the movie producer?" Mr. Patel said, his eyebrows rising six inches higher than their natural dwelling.

I sagely nodded.

"Ah!" said Mr. Patel.

"Oh!" declared Mrs. Patel.

"Now!" remarked Mr. Patel.

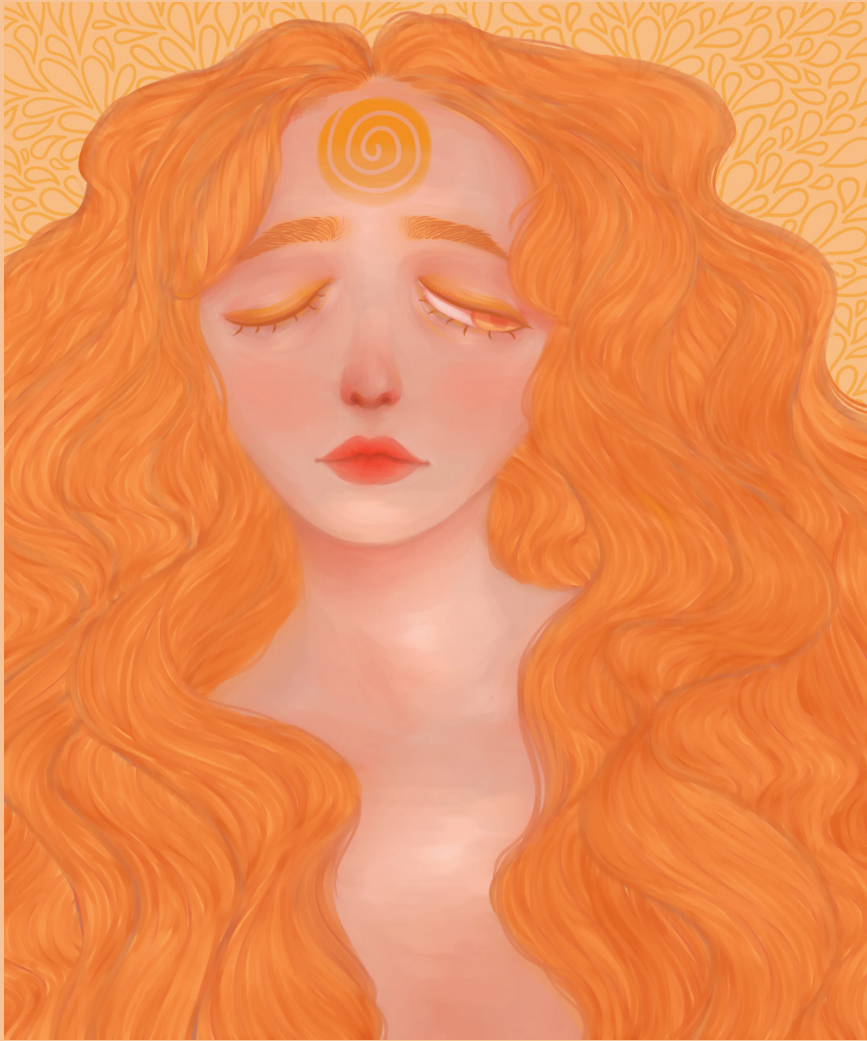
"Well!" added Mrs. Patel.

"Would you like a cup of tea?"

Mumbai Lifeline

Dhyey Desai





Sunlight
Da-In Ryoo

Syria

Keertana Subramani

A sleeping infant bursts
Like a water balloon filled with red ink.
The bomb that destroyed the house was
Deployed by the responsible father
Who decided that dying with his entire family,
Was the best future he could give them all.

A boy of nine, with a shivering red face
Spotted with dry tears, marked with
Bloody wounds and scars of a lost mother
Stands outside a worn down, disease stricken
Refugee camp, holding a rifle fueled by rage;
He's training to kill.

The sun still rises every morning,
Though it never feels warm in Syria now,
The outside world still laughs, works, sleeps
In peace, disregarding its dying
Brothers and sisters. The (selfless? humane?) world
Doesn't do much beyond pitying-
It wouldn't revive the dying nation
With the kiss of life (it knows resuscitation).
It's too busy, there are other priorities-
(So, sorry, no time).

Downtown at Night
Judy Dickson



Freedom
Priscilla Pun



Cactus Works
Sonia Muhammad



Mourning
Kaitlin Burke

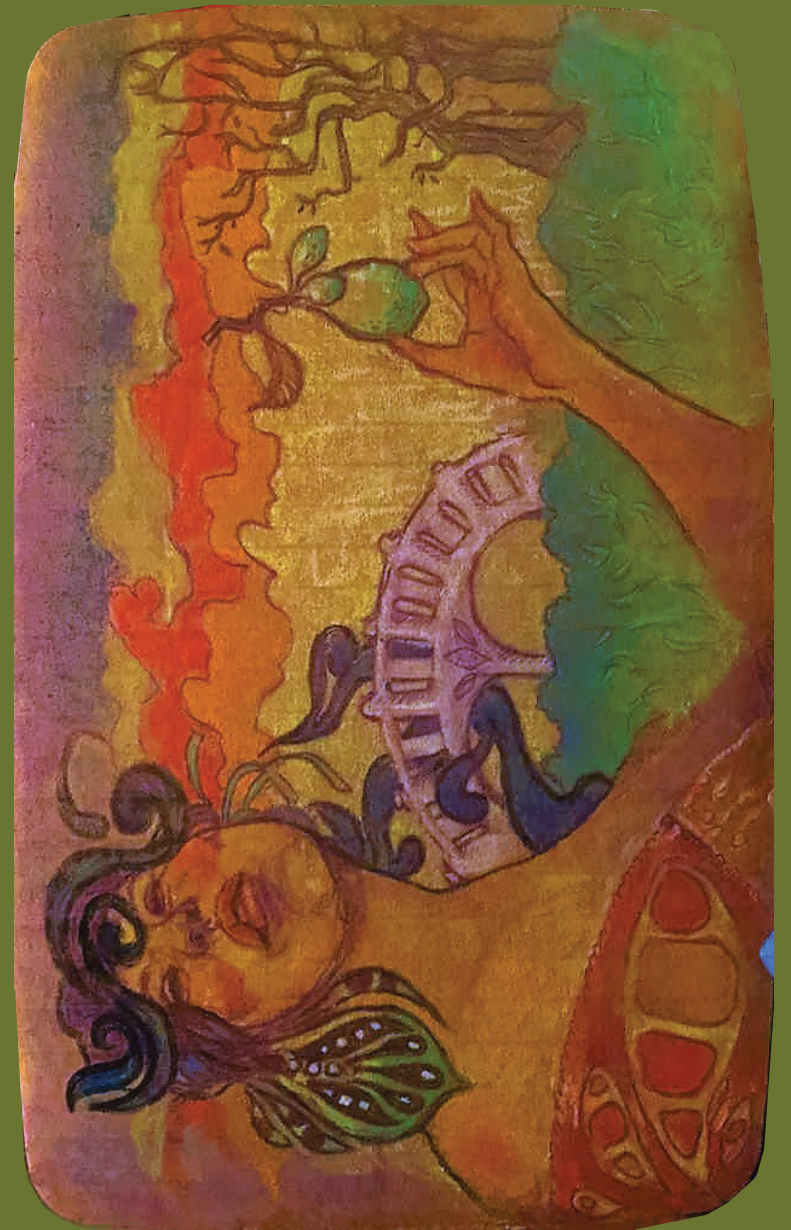
Love Him Not
Tre'Saun Thomas

Buying bouquets of Belinda's Dream roses,
comforts her cheek with puckered lips,
and serving charred cinnamon buttermilk pancakes—Love him.

Burying her bright blue eyes beneath bruises,
chokes her voice to whispers,
and wilting remains of Diana into worthless—Love him not.

Gets Me Every Time
Eric Cook

There is no addiction like
That of a woman's smile.
I find my own state of being tied to its
Existence as those red lips curl upward.
A perfect allusion to Snow White's apple;
Poison, fruitless at killing but extremely alluring.
Triggered by a compliment or a sweet gesture,
It draws me in but doesn't let me go far,
Forcing me to come back time and time again.
I travel far and wide, out of my way,
Blind to the lilies and azaleas in the pasture
That surrounds my path and only focused
On the roses ahead of me
Whose soft, silky petals simultaneously steady
And provoke anything caressing them,
But the roses bear thorns.
Thorns that prick and stab those that
Brush against them without explanation.
Yet we always brave the abrasive
Thorns to breathe in the sweet aroma of the rose.

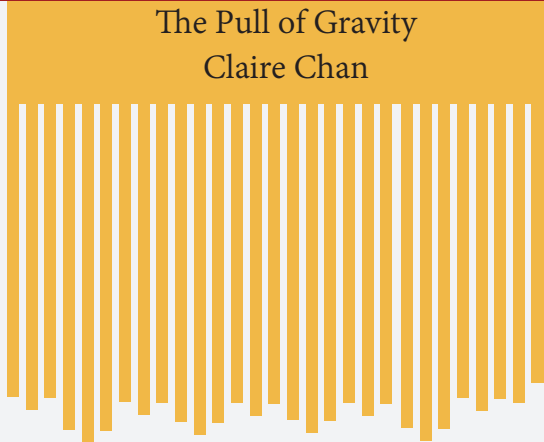


Forbidden Fruit
Joy Zhang

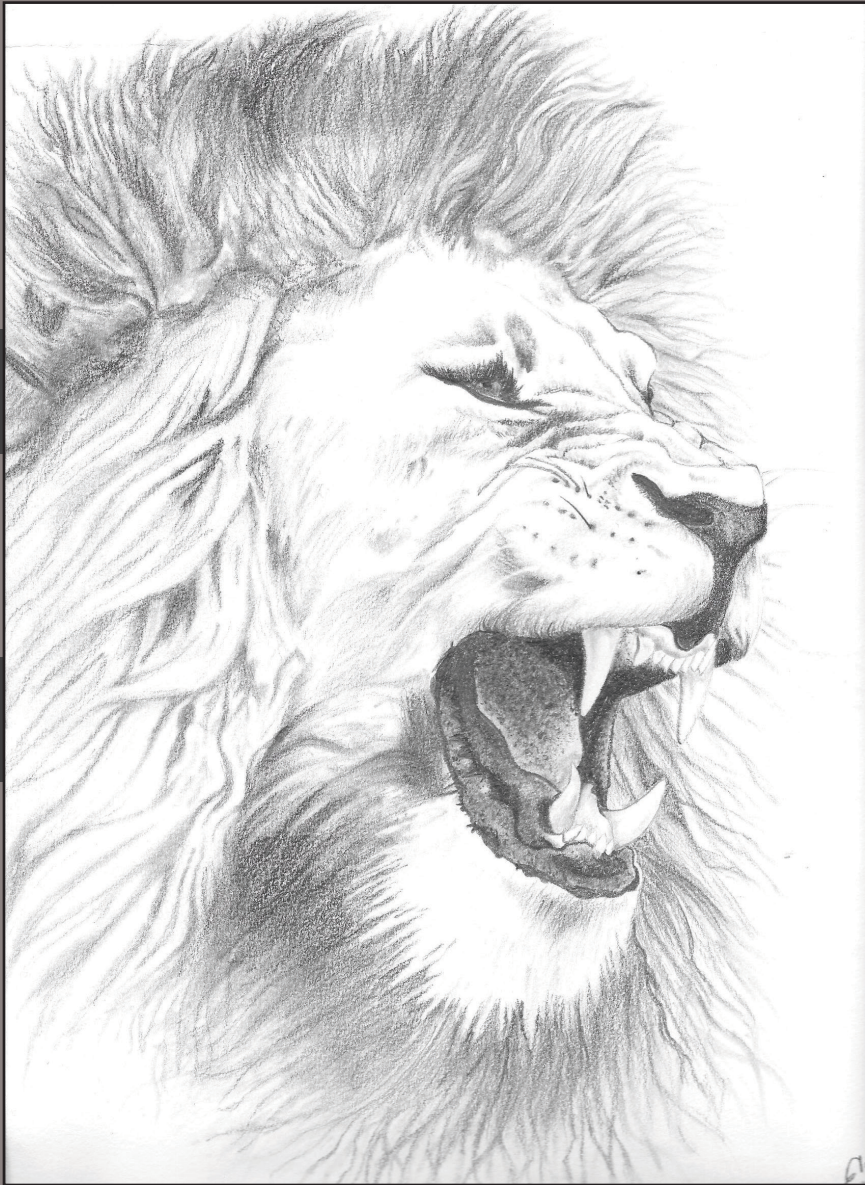


C.C. 2016

The Pull of Gravity
Claire Chan



Solace in Sarajevo
Olivia Lodise



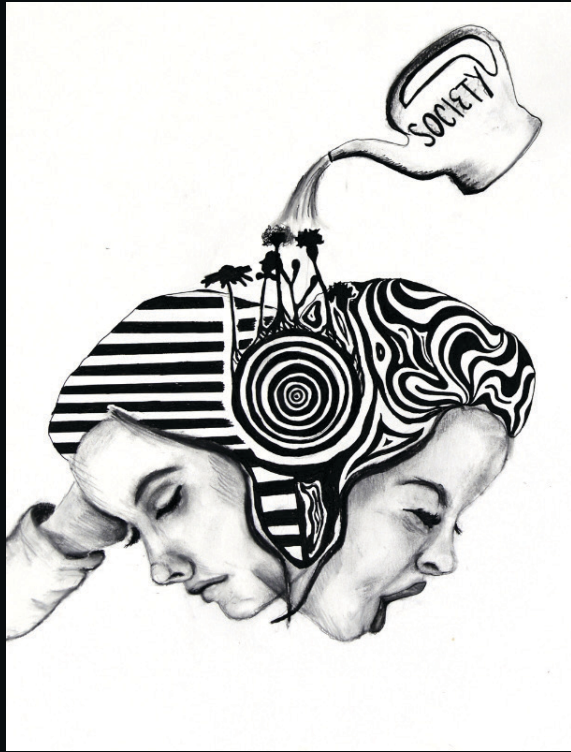
Lion
Erin Gwaltney



More Than Meets The Eye
Alex Ford

The Roots of Mental Illness: Society's Stigma

Taylor Beck



Pretending Grace Oberst

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That nothing makes you afraid
That your hands don't sweat when you walk past a queue of people
(they're just standing there, is all)
That your heart doesn't quiver when you answer "Here!" during roll call
And you can't tell if someone called your name so you just stare blankly
But what do you do when you cannot leave the room to get a drink of water?
So always, fear is your fated enemy.

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That you don't spend hours agonizing over an email
Phone calls are so much worse, but you're not a coward
So you pretend that you don't always wonder
Does everyone secretly hate you?
That you don't avoid going places if you have to travel alone
Because if you look lost, people will stare and judge you silently
So always, fear is your fated enemy.

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That you don't have trouble walking or talking or eating
Even if you're starving, but you can't swallow your food
Because all of a sudden you're full (of panic and dread)
That you don't spend sleepless nights tossing and turning
Even if you're exhausted, but you can't seem to stop thinking
Thinking that maybe it would be better if you stopped talking to everyone;
So always, fear is your fated enemy.

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That it's easier to make decisions than to climb Mount McKinley
Because you would rather starve than choose what food to buy
And when someone asks you a question, your mind goes completely blank
You feel the weight of everyone's eyes bearing down upon you
But no, you're just "dodging questions"
You're a confident person who always knows what to say
So always, fear is your fated lover.

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That you don't need to ask people if they love you (to feel loved)
Because you're overly attached and that's clingy and redundant
And it is your fault that you didn't go visit your friend
(Because you just don't care enough about her)
Even though the thought of it makes you sick to your stomach
But now she hates you, it's too late, you're the worst
So always, fear is your fated enemy.

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That you don't walk around with an ironclad mask
Because you can't tell anyone—and who would understand, anyway?—
Unless that person is your therapist (whom you can't afford)
Because you're taught to hide your weaknesses,
Your weaknesses, that make you less of a person, So tell me
Why are you complaining?
Someone else's torment is more painful
And you're not allowed to ask for help, no way
Because that means you failed to solve your own problems
So always, fear is your fated enemy.

When you have anxiety, you're supposed to pretend
That you don't.
Because it's not real, and why
Can't you do what everyone else can do
When letting the waiter take your order
Is so easy?
You're just shy, you need to man up
(it's your fault)
Because there's no excuse for staying in your room all day
Even if you have to cry a waterfall before you leave
So always, fear is your fated enemy.

When we have anxiety, we're supposed to pretend.
So always, fear is our only friend.

Satellites, As Opposed to Real Stars
Alexa Graham

Not one of God's, one of ours
Substitute beacon to pass the hours
Blindly lead from here to nowhere
Proudly pretend to be somewhere
Shine, antipodean star, no twinkle
Hang immute through time, a wrinkle
Win the staring contest, no blinking
Miss the point of space, no thinking
Paint the sky with white pretenses
Pine for heaven's real defenses
Dare to break the silence, hear it
Beep and kill the concord, clear it
Futurably failing piece of space trash
Formerly funded national debt cash
Stagnant, not a creature stirring
Cogs and drainpipes, lifeless whirring
Plated steel, moronic ticking
Jaded peal, robotic tricking
Quarter step from cellphone towers
Substitute beacon to pass the hours



Over Vegas Hills
John Butchko



Union Oyster House
Andrew Dai



Cubic Vase
Josh Terry

While Mom Naps Tre'Saun Thomas

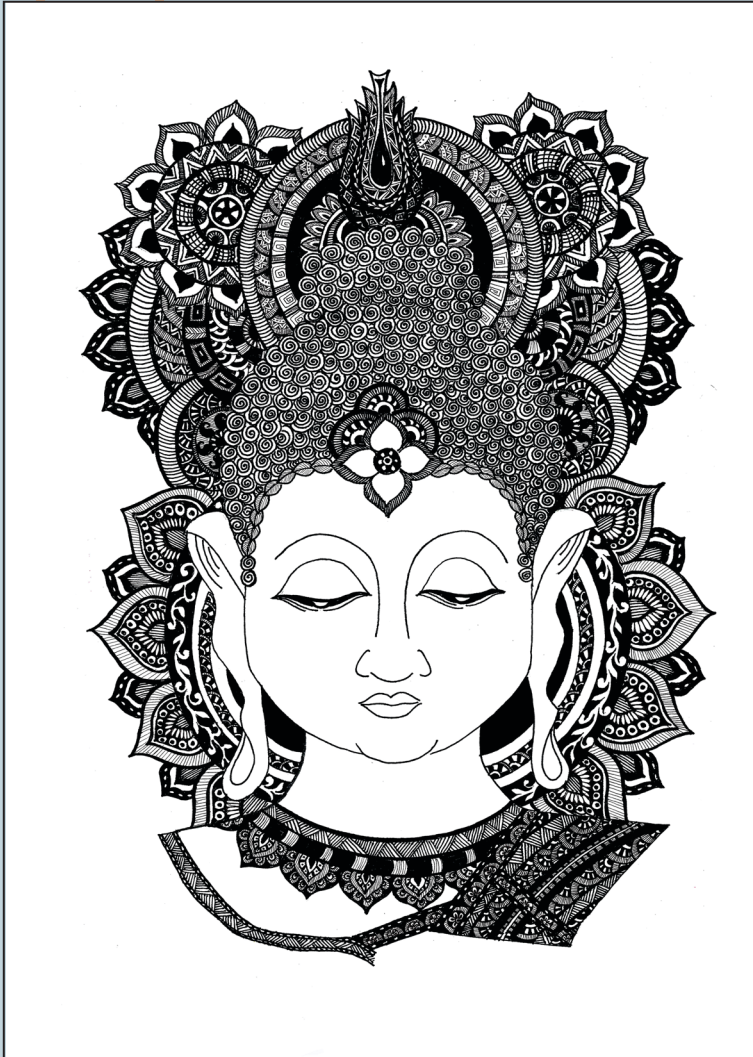
He'd *never*:

monkey-around with the garbage disposal and create a floribunda of newspaper and paint,
trailing clusters of color across the white carpet
and staining his finger prints on the glass table and TV;
Crayola giraffes on the wall,
with grass for them to frolic;
eat two entire boxes of Thin Mints girl scout cookies before dinner,
leaving a puddle of milk and crumbs on the floor;
or play Batman in the hallway,
breaking mom's aquamarine and violet Optic Rib Vase,
that she got at a garage sale, in celebration of her proposal to dad,
which chipped, when dad found out she was pregnant.





#TheSoulDeepSeries
Dimond Gooden



The Buddha
Lakshmi Ravindra Babu



Innocence
Aparna Iyer



The Last Light
Brighton Trugman



Birch Trees
Julia Denniss



Shadow of the Sun
Rebecca Scheel



Distance
Krishan Patel



The Planting of The Lord
Lucy Squires

Saudade

Iris Liu

There is a sort
of immortality to being seventeen,
to being green and indefinable
under the
light of a dozen sodium beams,
the spray like a dappling April mist--
stars, just inklings, beginning,
to wreak paths of atomic brilliance and devastation.
and though you may clasp my hand with fervid promises of forever in
your young bright eyed ignorance,

I know,

there will be a goodbye, patiently waiting at the threshold- for one day,
or for a trillion.

It may be a jarring, jagged sort of goodbye, or one that closes the
door so quietly you do not notice that they ever left,
at once heartless and softly silent as new-fallen snow-
and I know, that promises are fragile, tinkling-china things that we are so
marvelously able to forget.

But do remember, if just for today, the way we stood in the fountain,
the dusk settling around our shoulders like a king's mantle,
the way the bashful spray brushed across you like a pale summer rain,
and there was only you,

and me,

and forever,

stretching out, out, farther than our eyes could ever hope to see,
past the sun that glittered its mirage goodbyes,
hands holding
our oh so mortal hearts.

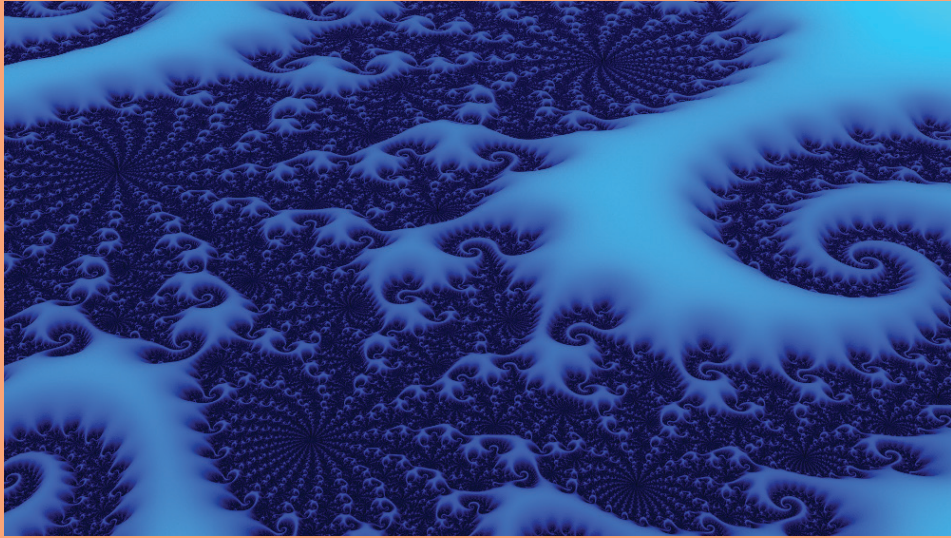


Airplane
William Flournoy

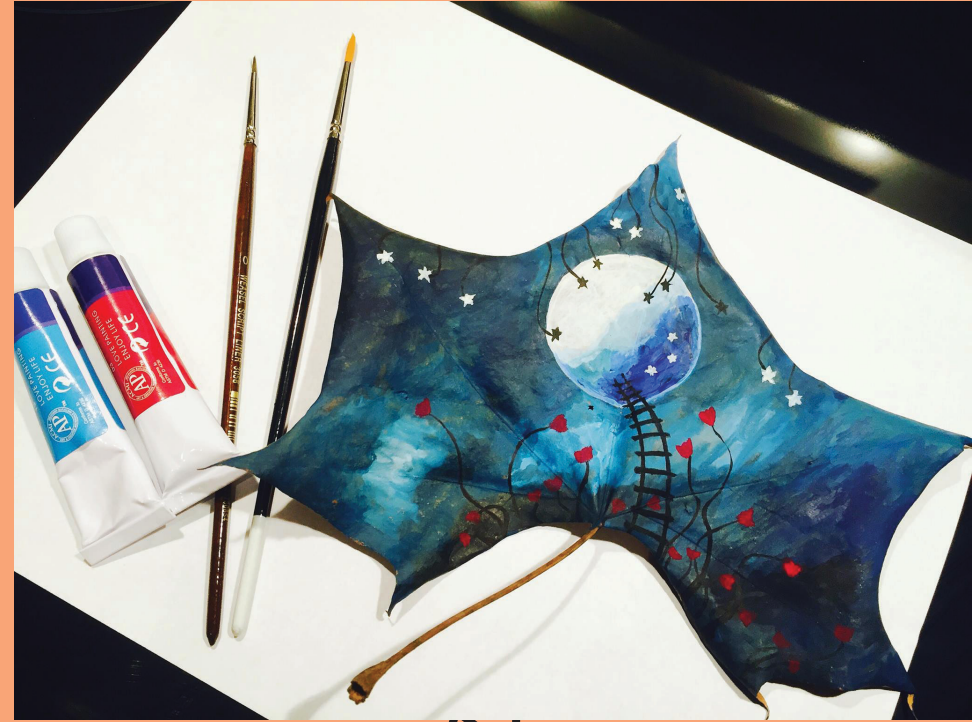


© Erin Gawron

Riomaggiore
Erin Gawron



Blue Swirls
Chris Pollard



Hope
Ankita Lamba

A Realm Hidden in Plain Sight Mahdi Al-Husseini

If you were stranded on a newly formed, volcanic island outside of shipping channels and air transit routes and only possessed a brick, a jar of petroleum jelly, ten solid gold bars, and a tire, what would you do?

Isolated on realm of earth within watery abyss, but not forsaken. Beauty of a magnificent volcanic sky rise, conserving hefty anger within a bellowing stomach. Carrying omens of the higher to a new land, guiding a personal journey forwards. The young, immature boy set off to tie down his camel.

He carried: one approximately standard size (225mm by 113mm by 65mm?) reddish brown brick with a rough yet sturdy touch, ten blindingly shiny gold bars slightly thinner than the brick and unnecessarily stamped with the uncanny clarification “solid”, a glassy smooth mason jar (650mm by 330mm by 330mm, as disclosed by an imprinting at the shoulder) filled to the cap with Pale Daffodil yellow petroleum jelly, and a pitch black, tar smelling, rubbery, monster truck tire with inside diameter of about two arm’s lengths. The boy confines these gifts to a seemingly safe spot up top with protection from the elements, freeing himself to explore.

The boy now sits at base of this new patch of rock with a profound sense of liberty. He begins to ponder intensively, contemplates reflectively, even smile gratuitously. As the sunset draws nearer, the boy prepares to commit Maghrib, his fourth prayer of the day. Kneeling in faith while placing his forehead atop the wet rock, he listens to the ocean and hears jubilant cheers of its many children. He listens to the wind, proudly blowing its powerful gusts across the appreciative skies. He listens to the calm and subtle wash of constant waves upon this new patch and realizes that he is a guest of this new patch, inasmuch as this new patch is a guest to the watery abyss. The boy lies down to sleep in peace, having found love for a fellow companion whose journey has also just begun.

There is so much beauty in our world, an entire life behind things set out by some mysterious, yet benevolent hand. So much, that we may glut trying to hold it all in, but we must let it flow through us like rain, like waves, like wind. And then, you will feel gratitude for every moment.

While saddened that the eyes of so many fellow journeyers are unaccustomed to the beauty that surrounds them, so unable to understand the language of the world, the young, immature boy has hope.



Banner Peak at Sunrise
Dhamma Kimpara



Dirt and Grime
Spencer McCray



The Rainbow State
Wanda Chen



Xiaoliang Zheng

Do u wanna build a snowman
Xiaoliang Zheng



River Hideaway
Julia Faherty



Southeastern Winter Wonderland
Reid Passmore



Passage
Zachary Hicks



Red Bug
Savanna Jones



City Trails
Alykhan Lalani



Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay
Kyle Woumn

As A Dream
Tre'Saun Thomas

Alone when you're awake,
and left longing by empty gazes during the day—I wait
for your head to mold into your pillow and our eyes to magnetize;
while the Sun bleeds into the ocean sky, rippling violet that gusts and
splashes lavender across the tall, wheat-colored grass,
before we sail with sighing smiles in solidarity,
until morning caresses your eyelids and you awake.



Mother and Child
Joy Zhang



Vintage Taxi
Wanda Chen



Quiet
Joy Zhang

The Complacent Lauren Gardner

I listened to those lies and wiped away the urge to care.
It wasn't my line to hold highly-esteemed principles after I had let my
panties be wrapped around and ingested by the covers at the end of the
bed.
Who could possibly believe my insanity was rational and that the
slightest of tears were actually the dripping of my bitterness that was
localized in my empty eyes?
His eyes were blood shot and the door was cold.
I ran without looking, walked to the center of the room, and tried to feel
something.
He took me to the basement. He pretended to care as he licked his lips
and let her cradle his head artfully...
She was plain. He was plainer. I pretended not to know. I pretended not
to care.
He licked those same lips and leaned towards my face.
He pretended not to know. He pretended not to care.
I wanted attention is what was said, is what was murmured as he
consoled me and leaned in for a kiss.
They all thought it was funny. They all thought I was daft, but I was
highly liquored and my clothes were not unbuttoned.
I wouldn't sink. I would swim.



Alma Mater
AJ Noh



Bobby Dodd Fireworks
Gray Mitchell

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Preksha Kukreja

Interested being in our next issue or becoming part of staff?

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