

# EMULATE

Fall 2023 | Volume 5 Issue I



# METAMORPHOSIS

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## **Dear Readers,**

In spring of 2020, when the world was changing in ways we didn't expect, Smith's main literary magazine, Labrys, paused its publication. At the time, Emulate had barely begun. Its members created and sourced the magazine's pieces themselves, reaching out to bring people from the wider Connecticut River Valley community into conversation with each other through writing and art. As the only literary magazine on campus for several years, Emulate has since grown into a role closer to that of Labrys.

This year, the editorial board is working to revive Labrys as Smith's traditional student literary magazine, so that Emulate can return soon to its creative roots. Over the summer, our head of visual arts suggested the theme of Metamorphosis, to remind us that things can remain the same, even as they change.

In this spirit, we sent out our call for submissions.

You responded with writing, art, and music about changing relationships, about sorrow, about new beginnings. You showed us the natural world, as well as personal transformations. With you, we grieve losses, and we celebrate, together, the ability to see the world anew.

I am grateful to everyone who submitted work to the magazine; to everyone who worked to put this together; and especially to those of you who are reading these pages for the first time, unaware of what transformations await.

Sincerely,  
Jessica and the Emulate Team

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# Time/Rate/Distance

after *Cut Back Through (for Bjorn)* by Richard Nonas

*JOANNE COREY*

Three thrones arise at the southeast gate,  
sun-warmed, polished granite;  
five rough-hewn footstools shine  
with flecks of ancient mica.

The bees prefer the surrounding clover,  
sweet white sustenance for inevitable winter,  
oblivious to any human  
as they serve their sisters and queen.

I am too green, too new,  
too fragile for this place.  
I settle on a footstool  
to absorb warmth of sun,  
strength of stone,  
whole-heartedness of bees.

# New

CLAIRE RUSSELL

Has that ever happened to you? Where you look in the mirror and something's off, it's like a different person is looking out? I don't really remember the first time I noticed. I think there was a time a couple of weeks ago when I noticed a layer of skin peeling off but I didn't think anything of it. A few days later I realized that something was actually wrong. I woke up in the middle of the night feeling something inside of me trying to get out. You know when you get a nosebleed in the middle of the night? Before you even know what's happening your body is telling you to get up and pay attention. I put my hand to my face and felt something I'd never felt before. I stumbled to the bathroom to look in the mirror. My face was different. Just slightly, like it had more definition or bone structure or something. But the feeling of seeing someone that you recognize but you're not sure how, because they

look physically different, is really terrifying. Especially when it's you.

I rationalized my fear away, thinking that maybe I'd just grown into my looks. Maybe I'd been working my jaw more lately. Maybe I'd been grinding my teeth. It would make sense, I'd gotten fired recently. My boss said that I was no longer a good fit for the company. Isn't that weird? I didn't think I'd changed that significantly since I first got hired a couple of years ago. I guess I had. I must have changed in a way that I couldn't see but everybody else could. It caused me a lot of stress. I wasn't sleeping or eating. Maybe that's why I looked different. I was just wasting away.

Everywhere I went after I started looking different I felt like everyone was staring at me. I knew that they weren't because they were strangers, but I had the suspicion that they

could tell I was changed. Every time someone caught my eye they stared at me a bit too long, as if trying to place my face. Wondering who I was and what I did with the old me. *They didn't know you before,* I kept repeating to myself whenever I started to get panicky. *They didn't know you before.*

Every day I noticed something slightly different in my features. My hollowed-out cheekbones one morning. My eye color the next. My nose completely changed shape. A new birthmark here and there. I tried to find an old picture of myself to properly compare the old me to the new one but I didn't have any. I had a couple of family photos but I was either too young or too obscured by other people to see myself. I felt like calling my mom to ask her what I used to look like but I didn't want to worry her.

My savings account was running low. I hadn't worked in six months. I also used my severance pay to have a bunch of expensive lab work done to see if my transformation was caused by any underlying health issues but they said everything was fine. My insides hadn't changed one bit. I applied to a few retail jobs but anything that required talking to people all day made me nervous. Their eyes bored into me, picking apart the features that I didn't even recognize. How could I put on an amicable face to customers

if I wasn't even sure what my real face was? Do you ever feel like you pretend to be nice for so long that it makes you meaner? I went home angry every day. I wondered if my anger was who I was now.

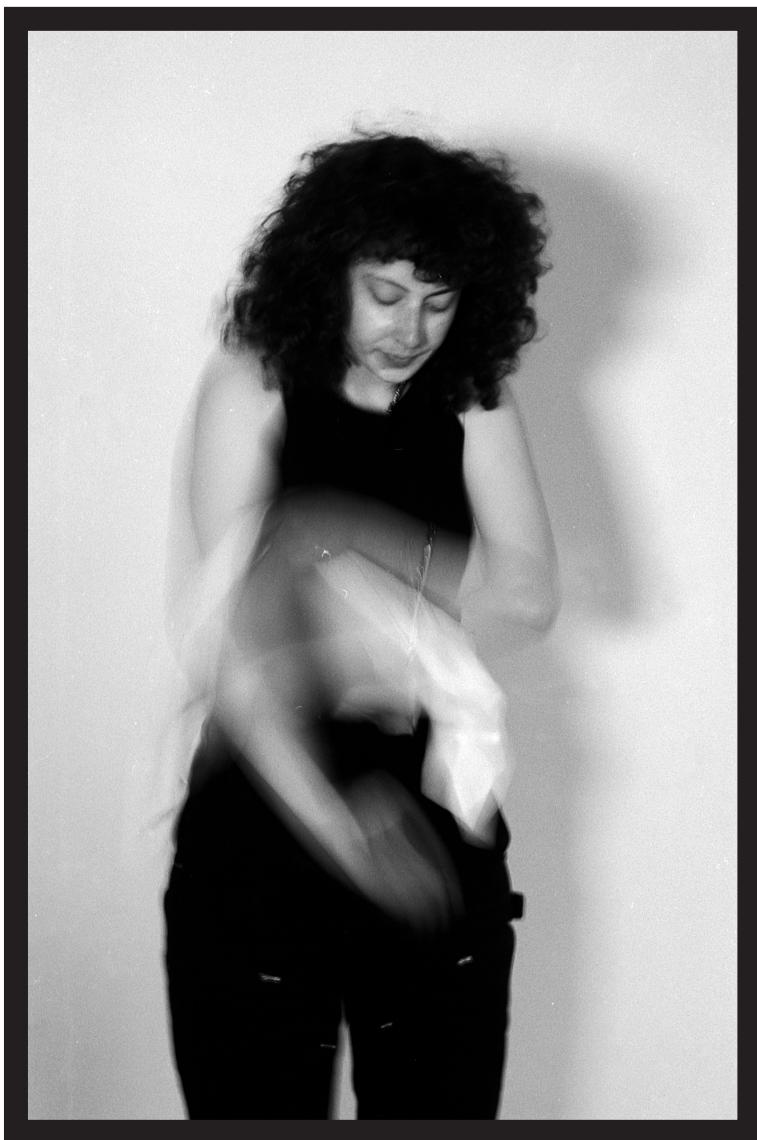
I thought about it over many sleepless nights. All I wanted was to go somewhere familiar. The only familiar place I could think of was my old job. That was the only place where I could remember feeling like people listened to me and knew me. I made people there laugh sometimes. I had friends and we'd get drinks after work. I guess once I got fired and they weren't seeing me every day they forgot about me. Maybe now that I was a blank slate, I could be whoever my boss wants me to be. If only I could remember who I was when I first got the job, I could stay that way forever. I don't though, so I'll have to approximate. Or should I be someone completely different? Someone who can stay the same forever? I changed my name to something better. I've been rehearsing the interview in my mirror over and over again for a week. Asking the stranger in my reflection why I think I'd be a good fit for the company. I'll have to play dumb and act like it's all new to me. I don't know what I'll do if I don't get the job. Look for another one, probably. Or maybe I'll wake up in a few months with a new face and I can try again.

# Poem for The Mirror

CATE CHRISTINIDIS

*surrender now,*  
retreat from the  
cliffside,  
you have stood at its edge too long,  
waiting  
like a great boulder,  
your cheeks and lips are blue,  
and wild  
hollow defeat is  
creaking in your bones,  
quickly dropping anchor  
where wind and rain  
lacerate your will,  
*so go,*  
find some little hole  
in the earth  
where rabbits burrow,  
and perennial bulbs  
sleep until springtime,  
let them shelter you  
with sticks and leaves,  
let it be enough  
to close your eyes,  
to nestle your cheek  
against something warm and safe,  
then,  
when the earth is reborn,  
the underground will stir  
with restless excitement,  
for the air will be fresh,  
winter  
suspended on a distant sea,  
and once more,  
each creature  
will step into the sunlight,  
*so follow*

FALL 2023



## Change of Clothes

ELÉNA ZYTNICKI

EMULATE



## The Holobiont Series

AVERY MALTZ

# WINTER

RUTH KENDALL

*This original song (no sheet music exists) is built over one 4-measure repeated ostinato*



*Guitar and piano:*

Am      G6      Am/F#    G6/F G6/E  
/ / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / |

*Bass line:*

A      G      F#      F      E  
/ / / / | / / / / | / / / / | / / / / |

Winter's here and she's gonna blow your world,  
winter's here to erase the magic girl,  
winter's here it's a beautiful wonderland,  
winter's here hold me close and take my hand

—vamp

She loves winter and winter loves her oooh  
she's a sprinter, the wind is on her nerves hmmm  
she's involved in some icey things  
if she is winter then her rival's spring.

Winter's here and she's gonna blow your world,  
winter's here to erase the magic girl,  
winter's here it's a beautiful wonderland,  
winter's here hold me close and take my hand.

Winter's here and she's gonna blow your world,  
winter's here to erase the magic girl,  
winter's here it's a beautiful wonderland,  
winter's here hold me close and take my hand

When I think about winter, I'm already cold.  
When I think about winter my mindset grows old.  
Winter took up the stage and freezes my bones,  
now springtime is coming low and behold

When I think about winter, I'm already cold.  
When I think about winter my mindset grows old.  
Winter took up the stage and freezes my bones,  
now springtime is coming low and behold

—piano solo

I loved winter, and now winter's gone,  
she was a sprinter, now it's a marathon.  
Though we love the winter, spring will come,  
This will no longer be the winter song ooohhh (run)

## EMULATE

To feel more  
specific  
    when everything felt  
autumn  
my father cut the ramble  
    of forsythia bushes down  
that patch of ground he flattened  
stared at me  
    like future flowers  
fervent silent  
beauty after winter's freeze  
    erased  
I saw him then  
absolved because  
    he could not comprehend  
my mother yearned for yellow  
and at the same time  
    spelled it  
on canvas  
a spicy moon  
    between her fingers petals  
yellow  
and a drop of blue  
    to render leaves  
her longing grew  
he could not look away  
    together they were busy  
in a form of exact  
fear I failed  
    to put my finger on  
giving me  
a sudden slap  
    and a hug  
at the same time

## ALL THROUGH THEIR BODIES, HANDS AND EYES

after Daowu's koan

JANET AALFS

impossible  
    though it happened  
we walked through a vast scraggle  
of dune bushes covered  
    in flames  
countless monarch butterflies bloomed  
near the rasp of waves on sand  
    as salt-breath wind prepared  
to carry them away  
each pair of wings a story  
    each flutter a sacred code  
charcoal-drawn  
shapes on fire-orange paper  
    arranged like notes  
in patterns  
we could sing by heart  
    to remember to live

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# Caterpillarfly

OLIVIA SARNO

## EMULATE

### you ask me how i'm doing and i tell you:

*LIYANA* the hardest thing about leaving is coming back  
*ASARIA-ISSA* that this home is no longer home  
and my room looks like a little girl's room

i don't think i belong in connecticut anymore  
and i have so much left to grow out of  
friends that i thought were for life  
and dorm rooms i accidentally walk to  
instead of my own

and i am walking through a ghost town  
seeing people who have been gone for years  
lifetimes, carved their places in my left-behind  
and there's a turn coming up on our right  
and it's just dark enough that  
if we take it, i'm sure they'd be there  
at the end of the driveway  
waiting for us to pull up  
phone in hand  
sending me a picture of the stars above

and my mom drives exactly at the speed limit  
and i wonder how exactly it can feel  
like i am flying

the sky is pink  
the same way it was when i moved in  
moved out to be exact  
i've never liked pink but  
i tried on a pink dress today

i wonder  
if i turned back time  
and walked into the blackbox one last time  
if i could've been a minute earlier  
a second softer  
a meter more loveable

# After the Brawl

*STEPHANIE SHAFRAN*

Crooked angry blind  
Mockery of shade, thief-like  
Light slips into our bedroom

# Wrestling

*STEPHANIE SHAFRAN*

Fledgling poet speaks  
Wrestles with muffled silence  
Reveals her journey of truth

# Spring's Fire

*STEPHANIE SHAFRAN*

Your broken madness  
forgotten in the attic  
now fades with spring's fire.

## EMULATE



ELIZA BERLE

**Vestigial Limb,**  
our blood pumps to the same  
rhythm but different tunes.

We are linked;  
your upturned lips, my chest  
and thighs, the gap left by  
your flexed knee and the  
lump sitting in my shin.  
Your bite fits so perfectly  
around my bone.  
I sever your branch but only  
after you've pierced mine.



# firebitch

*TESSA WHEELER*

firebitch i am done with you.

(something like arson. something like burning hair  
and you never touched me.)

burn my self down and scatter the ashes.

you should well know  
of forest fires.

you should well know

i'm smarter than to let myself wither.

mount st helens

taught me how to grow meadows  
from pyroclastic flow.

vesuvius sang to me and i held the hands  
of plaster corpses.

yes, firebitch i burned  
and i came back stronger.  
here is my crown of wildflowers.  
behold my bleeding antlers.

and what are you?

smoke on the highway.

a fallen tree on the shoulder.

shadows in my periphery.

i turn on my wipers  
and i am done with you.

EMULATE



**to peel, to reveal**  
JOAN KOBAYASHI

# Cherry

*ROUEN NELSON*

The last time I saw you:  
Chlorine sedation,  
Glitter-stained cheeks,  
And the finality of the way we ended forever.

Speaking in hushed echoes  
Like the world was somehow listening,  
Counting the marks  
Your sharpened tongue had left behind.

That was the summer of lingering,  
Swallowing the cotton in my mouth,  
Settling into the taste of those overripe cherries  
You ate with me at that final supper.

I didn't spit out the pits.  
I let them roll around in my words  
Sprouting every time i thought of you,  
Into the warmth of an empty throat.

The first time I really saw you:  
3 hours away from home,  
Writing you when I shouldn't be,  
Tying stems into knots with my tongue.

I want to be your bedsheets,  
Not just your friend.

# Abandoned Sugar Mill Between Havana And Matanzas

*CIANA SOCIAS*

You wanted to dirty your hands with  
The rust on the train tracks

You wanted to touch the discarded metal sheets  
Walk up the stairs into that decrepit  
Sun filled building

If you kiss the ground, here,  
Would it still taste like sugar?

You wanted to run through the pastel, confectionary houses—  
But wait, people still live here  
And the cars and dogs and horses and the primary school  
And the life that grows around the scar  
What's dead is dead,  
Dismantled but not demolished  
But they still breathe  
Here, they breathe still



## Sleepwalking through the streets of Monday

GABRIELLE KLEMA

This photo, captured on a late July night in the city of Dushanbe (meaning Monday in Farsi), features my friend Farakhnoz, caught in a haze of streetlights imbuing her form with a dreamlike quality evocative of somnambulism. For me there is something both deeply familiar and out of reach in the image, an incongruity that asks what we become in these moments between sleeping and waking, in the less-than-lucid hours of the evening, when our ability to distinguish between dream and reality is dulled and the opportunity presents itself to imagine ourselves somewhere else, something else altogether.

## EMULATE

# A friend won't send me a poem

TESS NEALON RASKIN

First of all we're leaving soon,  
Second, I'm angry all the time now.  
You told me you don't know how to grieve.  
You told me you wrote something for me,  
but you can't share it.

*Not for, but about.*

Right.  
You're always careful with your words.  
I grieve everything. I've never not been grieving, always in mourning, for something—  
The waking dream. The old house. The sun at the end of the street.  
It's slippery. It's fragmentary. You like that.  
We spend a week together and our voices become the same.  
I understand why. I want to keep the bullet inside.  
It belongs to me, anyways.

*It meaning me. It meaning something.*

We look at the slope of your shoulders.  
Consider the softness. I want to rest my head.  
Thank you for crying for me.  
It's just that I'm angry all the time now.  
It's just that I don't know who I am, and It's getting warm and I'm fading.  
It's getting warm and your sisters are getting older, and we're leaving.  
It's just that I never had a sister, not like you think.  
I don't know anything about anger management.

# broken sonnet for tomboy

*TESSA WHEELER*

buckteeth, baby, and calcium  
chipped on your tongue. oral  
fixation and you pry your molars out  
early just to hold them. if ever you fell  
like the towers you'd do it face first.  
just like karma. your bully got a tooth  
in her eyebrow and you think that's fair.  
blondes bore you. boys make you  
want to bash your head in. call this in  
between. this state of before. call this babyfat,  
baby. peanut butter in a toothgap. smile  
so hard you break your face  
against linoleum and hey that's fair. fair's  
the playground swing falling up to the sky.  
fair's one more for good measure.

EMULATE

# Translation

*after the works of Justin Favela*

*JOANNE COREY*

The board, the fibers  
of the paper want again  
to become a tree.

## The Holobiont Series

AVERY MALTZ



# DE RERUM NATURA

AC MANNING

Tell me, O Muse, how people turn into other things. How sitting on the train he sleeps in the sun and I lean my head on her shoulder and we smile in the early morning light. We speed to the coast, 184 miles-per-hour flashing by the windows. The fields, the fog, the world is new. Tell me, how each moment I am new. How I climbed a mountain and perched on cliffs and watched pines grow more vast than I could comprehend. Everything had a sharpness to my vision, salty and sweaty and thirsty. Tell me, how not long ago we camped in backyards and drank beer in the woods and lay on green hills in the early summer air. Tell me, O Muse, how a ginkgo drops its leaves at once. How I wrote those lines a year and a summer and a spring ago and didn't then know what they meant. Green and golden leaves flutter and suddenly the trunk is bare. Tell me, about the leaves once gathered in arms that I find in jackets and pressed in notebooks; on a stranger's arm, then a friend's. How the gingko endures. Tell me, how pebbles stay in coat and pant pockets, how if you were to throw them over your shoulder they just might become human, stretching and growing from their solid skin. "*Becoming human together*," writes my friend, and certain translations of Rilke's *Letters*. How we dance and spin to loud jazz, befriend strangers in bathrooms and whisper in the corners of caves. How we eat fresh bread at 6am, ripped apart with bare hands. How we decipher Lucretius and Ovid's words in unlit classrooms as the clay dries beneath our fingernails and the sun sinks below the rooftops. Our hands smooth the stones in our pockets, bits of people, personhood, taken from distant memories. Tell me, O Muse, of friends scattered around the globe, of graffiti on train cars and in stations, of spots on hills by highways where the sun sets just so. Tell me, O Muse, how we set off with backpacks and nothing else, occupied ourselves with each other for hours on end. We were the wind and the sun and the rumble of waves along the coast. How we sat and watched the sea recede and we sat and watched the flowers grow. How we needed nothing else for a day. The water burns and we tumble, flotsam. Perhaps we will be found anew, salted and barnacled with pictures of our past selves slipped inside. We take the stones home and the sound of the coast echoes in our sleep.

Tell me, O Muse, how I am becoming. Of leaves pressed between pages, of rocks growing in my hands. Tell me, how we become ourselves and one another.

## EMULATE

I'm softer now  
than I was before.

My stomach has a gravity to it,  
and fills the space between my arms.

I'm steadier now  
than I was before.

The wind has no power over me,  
and sometimes I like  
the way it moves my hair.

I'm not as angry as I used to be,  
when I shook with rage  
at my mother  
and strangers on the subway.  
You might say I've been growing up.

I used to think of the world  
as something designed against me.

Now I think about God,  
and I've slowly begun to be grateful  
for the things that burnt the most.  
(when you survive the unsurvivable,  
it teaches you to live with the rest.)

Every love has been my first.  
Every love has felt different.  
Every love has hurt.

For the first time,  
my hardships are not unsurvivable.  
I know that every piece of me will feel them  
and every piece will make it through.

Sometimes I cry like I have nothing left.  
I feel it in my body,  
all of those times I was swept away.  
(the people on shore  
just shook their heads.)

I cry at concerts now  
because I know I have something left.  
On the train ride home,  
I feel okay.

# Pelicans *GRACE PARISER*

I was advised to forget about falling.  
Instead, I noticed men painting houses,  
crouched under windows three stories high,  
with languid limbs in coveralls  
the color of melting custard.

How delicate must your body be  
to teeter on bedroom ceilings while smoothing  
drips from paintbrushes along the rim of a can?  
How exacting must your hands be to  
sweep the debris into spirals that drift away,  
imperceptibly, from holly bushes and bird's nests?

I watched this every day for a week,  
and even with their calloused hands  
I saw them all as Persephone,  
who fell through Earth's chasm  
clutching violet flowers in her fists,  
only to lose eternal spring.

I couldn't look away from anything—  
cigarette ash sinking towards asphalt  
with the tap of a woman's index finger,  
the yellow car sagging with firewood  
about to spill into the street like bags of marbles,  
the silver underbellies of Canada Geese collapsing  
closer with every lift of their wings

When the rain fell hard, though, I thought of you.  
You, in Carmel, with your feet in the Pacific waves  
and your eyes closed, and the pelicans  
circling like they had twine running through them  
until it snapped and they dove,  
their beaks flat like a jackknife.  
You gawked at them, and I did too, frightened,  
until they emerged again with a mouth full of fish,  
and lifted themselves far above the cliff.

EMULATE

# Metamorphosis



AN EMULATE PLAYLIST

## **There It Goes (Acoustic) - Maisie Peters**

This song is written from the perspective of someone who has gone through a breakup and is finally moving on. This song also has a distinctively mature tone! **Ava Barham**

## **Cigarette Daydreams - Cage the Elephant**

This song is the epitome of my first study abroad experience in the Netherlands. It brings back a flurry of emotions and nostalgia of memories I had with friends during the two years that have shaped me into who I am today. For me, Cigarette Daydreams represents the fleeting of time and people around us as we come and go, as we morph and change, but the memories will always remain and be there for us to come back to one day. **Gi Lwin**

## **Both Sides Now - Joni Mitchell, cover by Emilia Jones**

This song is about how you come to see the world differently as you grow up and grow into yourself. The song, like change itself, feels bittersweet. **Ada Fiala**

## **God Turn Me Into a Flower - Weyes Blood**

Based on the myth of Narcissus, the speaker asks God to turn them into a flower. The transformation into a flower represents an appreciation for being vulnerable and soft. **Tanisha Chetty**

## **Now That I'm Older - Sufjan Stevens**

I suppose the title explains. The song is about clarity, development, and love, which comes with age... Aging to me is a kind of metamorphosis. **Sofia M Catanzaro**

## **Technicolour Beat - Oh Wonder**

This fits the theme Metamorphosis because it is about reconnecting with love and taking a leap of faith. I see this song matching a dance between two tentative lovers. At first, the couple settles together for a quiet evening; however, one proposes a dance and soon, both find dream-like comfort in the other's arms. Dancing "in the 5 am light," the pair discover new colors together...or perhaps they simply rediscover a happiness once forgotten. Gradually increasing the soundtrack's complexity, Oh Wonder makes apparent this slow, sweet and gentle transformation. Warmth spills through the cracks in the darkness.

New hope emerges from a cocoon. **Alice Youtz**

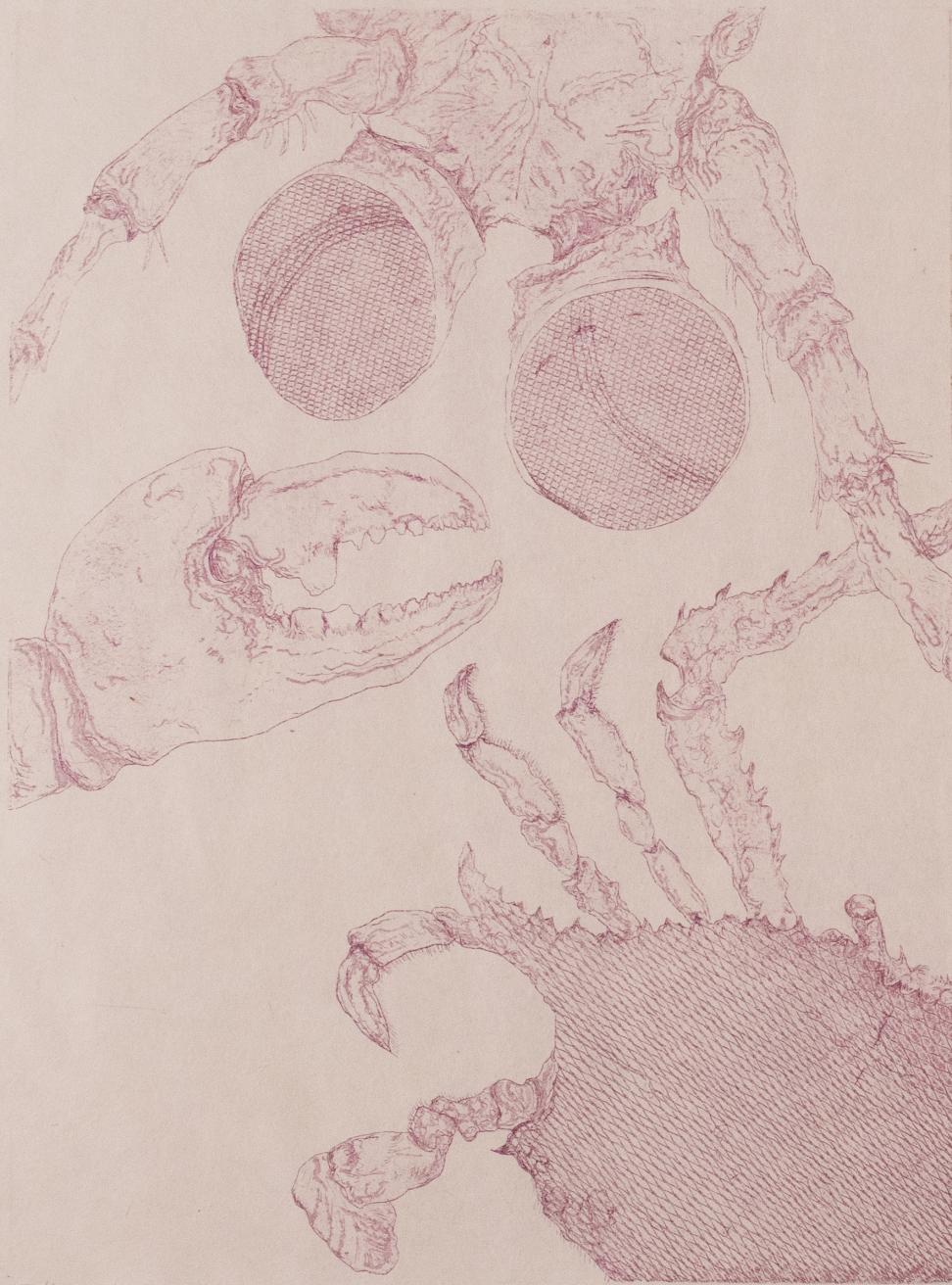


# Adaptation

BEATRICE WENDLING



This series is inspired by my interest in the ever-evolving nature of both the subjects of science as well as the scientific process itself. “Adaptation” features four prints all intaglio printed using the same plate, with a reflective transfer over four separate plans to yield different combinations of forms.



VE 16

ADAPT



TATION

2023

# A Walking Poem *LOLA ANAYA*

*with lines from Mark Doty's "A Display of Mackerel"*

*They're all exact expressions*

*Of the one soul—*

Those morning ducks

Diverging in the pond

How simple it can be

To float

Beneath autumn clouds—

*Each a perfect fulfillment*

Of season's change

Two ducks in the pond

Losing themselves in its shimmer

How happy they seem

To be together

As we walk together

Some early monday morning

This was the most beautiful part of my day—

To walk with you, *and lose ourselves*

*Entirely in the universe*

Of that great pond.

FALL 2023

# Nature Myths

VICKY XU



# Of Granite and Dreams

## PHOEBE LITTLE

You spend one summer on Hurricane Island. You are 19 and fresh off your first year of college. You found Hurricane through a Google search and applied for a job in the island's galley kitchen on the romanticized notion that living on a Maine island for the summer sounded magical even if it was to be spent washing dishes. By the time you're accepted to the position you're dating a girl, your first relationship and suddenly being 10 miles out to sea in Maine's Penobscot Bay sounds less appealing. But, you already signed the contract, and you took out student loans for college. So you go.

On a cold morning in May, you meet Hurricane's vessel on a commercial fishing dock, load your sleeping bag and a backpack of warm layers, hug your mother goodbye, and leave the mainland for the summer.

There are over 200 islands in Penobscot Bay. From a distance, Hurricane looks similar to most of them. Granite bedrock softly covered by pine trees and moss.

But when you go ashore you notice the differences. There are old brick foundations, now covered by soil and grass. Buried beneath masses of wild raspberry bushes, are fragments of the industry that once boomed out here. There's a stone plinth—one half ornately carved one half still marked by ax chops. A rusted crane—hook still attached and swaying in the breeze. Granite blocks neatly stacked as if someone is soon coming back for them.

Maybe once that was the intention.

—  
There was once life on Hurricane. Loud, blustery, hardworking, clanking life. In 1870, General Davis Tillson bought Hurricane for \$1,000. In Hurricane, he saw potential for a profitable granite business. The island had a gorgeous pink rock core and was far enough out to sea for massive schooners to sail up to the wharf, and be loaded with cargo without fear of running aground.

The workers came from all over. Yankees who moved to Maine for a piece of the granite boom, Italian transplants who had experience in Europe's stone-cutting industry, immigrants from across Northern Europe: Finland, Sweden, Ireland, England. They formed a baseball team, and a school for children. They built a barn of Clydesdale horses and a grange hall for dancing.

—  
This history feels distant from your quiet life on the island. Your reality is early mornings where you wake up and cook dozens of eggs in a giant cast-iron skillet. Your reality is two bars of cell service and a boulder in the shade where you sit lonely and aching from missing your girlfriend.

Your reality is Paul Simon's Graceland played on the tinny Bluetooth speaker and sinks of dishes to wash. There's no time to dwell on the past.

Except at night.

The island gets darker than any place you've been before. The walls of the cabin where you sleep feel thin and the ocean sounds loud and close. At night the waves and the wind sound a bit like far away voices. In these moments, the ghosts of Hurricane don't seem so far away.

---

At its peak, the island's population was over 250 people. General Tillson signed the paychecks, collected the town store's profits, and made residents rent their land from him. He decreed that all Hurricane Island granite workers must abstain from alcohol, vote Republican, and spend their money at the company store.

There was one thing Tillson didn't own. An item scrimped and saved for: the Story and Clark Pump organ that sat in Hurricane's Catholic church. It dutifully accompanied every wedding, funeral, Sunday mass, and piano lesson. Through tunings, chipped keys, and clergy change it stood solid and unmoving— providing music for prayer and worship—a reprieve from the trials of the island.

But then the people left.

The demand for granite was slowing in favor of concrete and railroad transportation was rapidly becoming cheaper than schooner shipping. Hurricane's last shipment left the island in 1914.

Almost overnight, Hurricane became a ghost town. Then, it was something less than a ghost town. Workers came to Hurricane to dismantle buildings and sell the materials for scrap. The organ, which had sat unused for years slowly slipped out of tune and towards disrepair until eventually collected and sold.

There was silence on the island.

---

A century later, the spruce trees have grown tall, the rocks have weathered, and the church has vanished. But the organ is coming home.

The instrument came up for auction and the Hurricane Island Foundation wanted it back. Emails and offers were exchanged until a bid was accepted and the organ was loaded onto a boat to make the journey back out to sea.

You make it back to Hurricane too. To get there you call in some favors. You remind people of all those dishes you washed and the blueberry muffins you set aside for them.

You go in snowy January when Hurricane looks more severe than you could have imagined during the summer you called it home. You bring a new girl. You're older now and you've lost that giddy feeling of first love. You've been heart broken before. You and this girl you sit next to on the ferry are not yet in love, but you might be someday. It's nice to have a new set of eyes to experience the island with you. It's nice to have her eyes specifically.

Hurricane still feels so visceral. It's been years since you made a massive skillet of eggs or washed two full industrial-size sinks of commercial kitchen equipment but those experiences are never far from your mind. You can easily be transported back. The biting loneliness you felt after everyone had gone to bed. Your pride closing the door of the clean kitchen after a long day on your feet.

You stand before the organ. It's too delicate to touch and you don't have the skills to play it anyway. But you're grateful to be in its presence. Both of you are part of the history of this place.

# Geode



AVERY MALTZ

# The Cell

MARIAM SHENGEGLIA

A cell consists of about 100 trillion atoms and is the composition of all living beings. I am unsure if this statement will help me name “It,” but I have always perceived “It” as a cell made up of dispersed atoms, just like my thoughts. “The cell” has been around for years, and along with me, “It” has grown, developed, and gone through different phases.

**Replication stage:** In the replication phase, the cell grows and prepares for replication.

When it first appeared, I was bewildered. I couldn’t unravel its purpose or why it would leave me uneasy. “The cell” would emerge out of nowhere and try to suffocate me with its disturbing perceptions. I endeavored to silence it, but in vain. “The cell” would always find valid arguments to establish itself in my life. It would tell me: “I am your creation and will be manifested in your reality as you envision me.

It would argue: “The human mind

can only visually discern about .0035% of the electromagnetic spectrum. It only knows what it thinks it knows. Akutagawa also clearly conveyed the existence of subjectivity and how it can lead us astray in the grove”. Indeed, with so many thoughts, I could no longer recognize the real me. I was lost in the grove and couldn’t find my way out.

**Synthesis phase:** in the S phase, DNA replicates, and hereditary information doubles.

The cell’s judgments intensified as it grew. It declared: You are a coward! You can’t foresee your future, and

## EMULATE

that scares you. You are unaware of whether you will fit into people's conception of the "ideal person." You are afraid of failing because you believe that if you do, you will end up like a wretched and lonely person.

You are incompetent! You walk the way to your goals as though you were walking on thin ice. You constantly fall. But admirably, you always manage to stand up. Then you read absurdists to compose yourself and get motivated by their ideas. You try to view life with a different perspective and forget the ugly face of absurd freedom, but obviously, you are running away from reality.

**Multiplication phase:** During the multiplication phase, the cell multiplies and keeps synthesizing. Therefore, it gradually grew stronger to the point that I was concerned it would fully manipulate me. I knew its judgments were accurate; however, I still had the desire to fight for spiritual freedom. I had constant fights with myself. This tiring process hindered me from getting better and reaching harmony. One thing I was sure of was that after the multiplication phase comes Mitoses, which contribute to the development of multicellular cells. I tried empowering myself, and as my determination grew, I started to get better.

In Kōbō Abe's book "The Woman In The Dunes," Niki Jumpei,

trapped in the dunes, had various attempts to flee. However, once he had a chance to escape, he stayed. During his time in the Dunes, Niki accidentally made an invention that gave meaning to his life and motivated his stay. Similar to how Niki found spiritual peace in his invention, I also found myself in art during one of the literature classes where Mrs. Ivaniadze, my inspiring teacher, discussed Remedios Varo's work "Breaking a vicious circle."

As the teacher explained, the woman in the painting uses all her effort to break a circle around her, which causes her deep-dwelling subconscious to be freed from all the influences. This gives the hero a chance to get acquainted with her subconscious and embark on a spiritual journey. In the process of explanation, I slowly analyzed the vitality of knowing my subconscious and realized the absurdity of being in opposition to the cell. After a long struggle, I finally broke my vicious circle and established harmony with the cell.

# Appalachian Grit

JANET AALFS

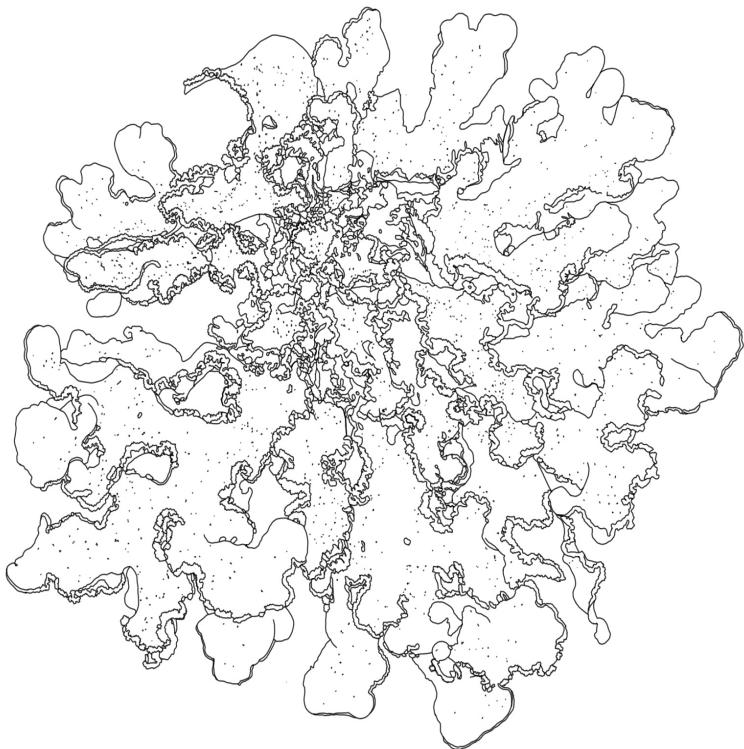
before a separated  
I  
began to speak  
mountain girl      blue-black earth  
beginning      fingers spread  
like a star swallows time  
this endless  
inside      out  
echoing      defiance  
the sense in  
I  
something wondrous spun  
a plate-sized disk  
fire afloat  
hand a constellation  
stories sparked  
before the fracture  
white robes forced      carnelian  
cross      of night  
Appalachian grit awoke  
the I in we  
mountain spoke

EMULATE

# As a Tree Does

BELLA COOPERMAN

The day you broke my heart I waited at the stump by your house, kicking the dirt and snow underneath my feet and unearthing the roots of the thousand-year-old severed tree on which I sat. My tears flowed like a waterfall over my chin, down my neck, and down the valley of my chest, pooling together in my belly button. I began to sigh and lean back on the stump, my belly exposed, leaving the pool of salt water for the birds to pluck at. As time passed and the last snow came and went, guppies congregated in my belly button, tickling me as they swam in little zig-zags. My sobs turned the wood soft and I began to melt like the frozen earth, my body lodged perfectly into its center. I nestled into the tree's rings, the wood as soft as linen. It began to sprout mosses and grasses around me, eventually coming out from my ears. I began to lose my hearing for the things outside myself and only heard the small whispers of the blades growing out of me, rustling, giggling. Between my teeth grew flowers, so tall and strong that my mouth stayed open, smiling wide so they could grow just right. Their petals pet my lips as they became sticky with the pollen. The bees kissed me good morning. It was spring now.



**Usnocetraria oakesiana**  
AVERY MALTZ

# Romance (only on TV)

*ROUEN NELSON*

Do you remember where you were when

You first realized we changed?

Orion's belt isn't sitting around  
his waist anymore. your jacket isn't  
on my coat hook.

standing in the burnt orange of "home"

Writing things as I see them.

Feeling things as I start to believe them.

Sleepy knees and rainy nights  
Whispering wrists and taking the long way home.

I'll try not to be juvenile if it'll make it hurt less;

Keep lingering in all the places you've forgotten to haunt  
Until I'm the ghost there, waiting,  
a faint chalk outline, blurred into the sidewalk.

I was someone to love once.

I was someone.



Learning to Fly AVE PETRA

## EMULATE

happy birthday, eighteen, and  
Have You Thought  
about how to save your father?  
surely; devise a plan. steal  
his pain. eat  
all the sugar cookies  
and starve the tumor that waits.  
after all, this is patrilineal.  
after all, this can be stopped.  
after all, this ends with you, eldest.

what's a disease without a father?  
what's a daughter without someone  
who could die for her?

a semester has a different meaning  
under a shroud of sickness. maybe you'll leave  
just like he did. your liver  
(cranberry vodka's  
been your drink of choice  
since birth)  
will curdle. like your grandmother,  
you will learn how to compromise.  
you resign yourself to die  
the same way she did.

# late june birthday (cancer)

TESSA WHEELER

this is getting older;  
this is selflessness.  
there will be no more marble cakes.  
coming of age—give your life  
to those you love.  
tomorrow is tomorrow and today?  
it was never yours.

happy birthday, eighteen.  
don't blow out your candles—  
it's best not to wish.

# Requiem for the Things I Never Felt

MADDIE MCALLISTER

Thirteen years old in black plastic glasses and  
my mother's old jean jacket and  
an old flannel skirt cut just above the knee;  
I am possessed by a kind of surety no eighth grader should ever have:  
*I am never ever ever going to feel it.*

I am assured otherwise. *You're still so young. You'll feel it when you're older. You are too young to know what you feel.*

But I am still here,  
untouched by a metamorphosis I never believed in,  
and I have reached *older*  
and somehow I feel even less than I did at thirteen.

The way I love never evolved,  
and I am stuck at starry-eyed middle school feelings,  
so full of childish love that my heart might just burst  
and fill up my lungs with blood and gore  
until I drown in the ocean that used to be my love.

I am the same girl I was when I was thirteen,  
only now when I drive home in the dark,  
my chest aches with a wrongness I can't deny.

EMULATE



# The Ghost On The Roof

NIVEDITA  
PARI



# Premonitory Last Rites for my Father

*SOFIA M CATANZARO*

On the evening of his death  
He will touch my back and  
my neck will bend to watch  
a man become a child  
and a child become a man.

He will surrender,  
anointed by the priest's crushed silk fingers  
pressing between my father's dark brow.

*On behalf of a man  
whose soul is departing,  
and who cannot speak.*

In the face of it.  
Slowly, low in bluish sheets,  
full mouth agape,  
his teeth like soldiers  
in a long row,

*Send Your Spirit to give us courage  
lest through fear we recoil from living*

in a peace I've only seen come over him  
—restless man—  
when his hands are splayed across  
sets of ivory keys.

*Send Your Spirit to bring us your peace  
lest bitterness, false guilt, or regret take root in our hearts*

Small in a hospital gown  
and I will be 20 and 16 and 10 and just moments old,  
small in his hands

and he will leave a cavern  
larger than himself  
*at the departure of his soul.*

# Mango Season

*CIANA SOCIAS*

Mangos warm and heavy  
Falling from the sky  
Like the sun over night  
Grass sweetly brushing  
At our ankles as  
We look for little treasures left  
Unscarred by bugs or squirrels or rot  
And the time we heard a sound  
Like the between of awake and a dream  
Looked up under leaf-shaped shade to see  
A woodpecker tapping the tree  
To coax it from bed

My love for you is out of season  
The people we love keep our mangos  
In their freezers, they make them into jellies and ice cream  
And give us something sweeter

My love for you is out of season  
When the tree loses its last fruit, it isn't dead, its sleeping  
I can still defrost your love, wake up,  
Fall from the sky into your arms

Looking out for each other, and jawlines. Splitting a blade of grass in half over and over and over again, knowing it can never truly become nothing that way, but it definitely feels like it's slipping completely through your fingers. You're wearing sunglasses when it's just cloudy out. Scratching pen on paper and feeling the grass in our ears. Rustling while running and holding hands together. My shoelaces have been untied since lunch. My hunchback is becoming noticeable. I'm feeling the rim of my jeans in my stomach cutting into my kidneys. The tinny chirp of my alarm folds into the buzzing crickets. We hold our breath in the late afternoon light to avoid the serrated edge of an inhale. It's just more now, of course. And everyone's sitting together in twos like they're married. Who's to say if three shoulders do enough talking

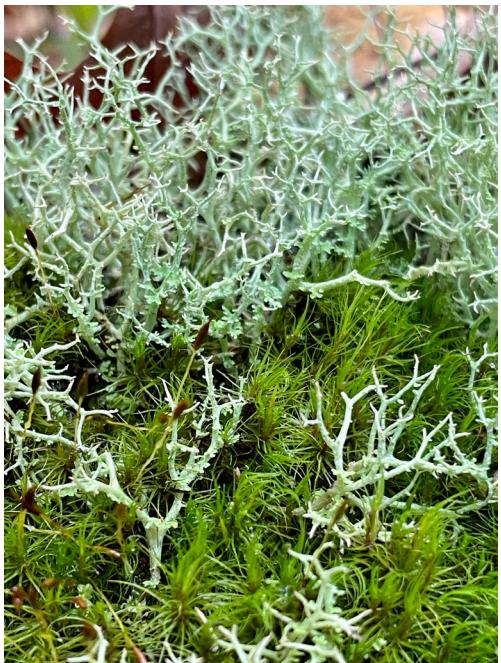
# Notes on Pairs

TANISHA CHEETY

EMULATE



The Holobiont Series  
AVERY MALTZ



# Remarkable

## STEPHANIE SHAFRAN

When I arrive at my mother's hospital room, I find her dressed in street clothes. Sitting in a chair in the middle of the room, she resembles a queen on her throne. Noticing me just inside the doorway, she lights up. By her side, a nurse is rolling up a blood pressure cuff.

I'm astounded. Last night, straight from Urgent Care, I'd followed an ambulance carrying my 93-year-old mother to the local hospital. Her fever and loose cough were diagnosed as a respiratory infection. The on-call physician hurriedly instructed the nurse to call for an ambulance. At the hospital, she'd have a series of tests to pinpoint the cause of the respiratory infection. Clenching both the steering wheel and my teeth, I'd followed behind the ambulance, blinking my eyes in sync with the flashing red lights ahead.

My mother and I waited in the Emergency Room for six hours before a doctor examined her. In the hallway, she lay on a gurney with her left arm hooked up to an IV drip. A collarless johnnie hung haphazardly off her shrunken shoulders. Glancing at her child-sized shrouded body, I imagined her dead.

Now, twenty-four hours later, with a lipstick tube in one hand and a compact mirror in the other, she's applying bubblegum-pink lipstick to her lips when she spots me in the doorway to her room.

"Oh, there's my daughter. Come meet my new friend, Dearie. She's taking such good care of me. Imagine, even offering me her lipstick since I can't find my pocketbook anywhere. Did you take it by chance?"

## EMULATE

I train my eyes on the nurse glances back at me while wheeling her cart out of the room. I follow her to the hallway, where she whispers,

"She's been dressed for hours waiting for you. I'm not sure your mother knows she's not in a hotel. She's very sweet. What an amazing recovery—in less than 24-hours her temperature has returned to normal and her lungs have cleared. She's good to go. After he makes his rounds, the hospitalist will come to discharge her."

"Really? Just last night I was convinced she was dying. I don't get it."

"Your mother's a fighter. And Prednisone is a wonder drug. She even has her appetite back."

Back in the room, my mother has moved to the window seat on the back wall. She motions for me to come sit next to her. Her pink Mardi Gras beads are wound too tight around her neck. I reach my fingers to loosen them as she exclaims,

"I've had a remarkable life, you know." Her eyes probe mine.

*Remarkable? What is she talking about?*

"It's been tough, but I wouldn't trade it for anything. I had a remarkable man for a husband."

*Remarkable. There's that word again. Which husband is she describing? My step-father or my father? She hasn't talked to me about him at all since my father committed suicide over fifty years ago.* I tread gently to avoid hijacking her thoughts. My breath quickens as I ask, "Who was this remarkable husband, Mom?"

"Why, your father of course."

Her eyes pierce mine and I hold her gaze.

She adds,

"Well, didn't he give up his life for us? He had big money troubles. He wrote that in his suicide note, I remember. Do you still have it?"

The earth shifts beneath me. I must keep her talking. *He gave his life?* Married only fifteen years before his death, she became a widow at forty years old. With two young children. Those first months in shock, my mother stumbled from room to room muttering *that son of a bitch*, as if in a trance.

Her eyes are fixed on the space ahead as my mother fiddles with the beads around her throat. She's waiting for my reply. Sitting side by side, I put my arm around her bony shoulder and pulled her close.

"Mom, you know what? You're remarkable too."

# EPILOGUE

My father's death by suicide in the summer of 1961 was a seismic shock to me. Yet all these decades later, I have no inkling how much of a surprise his intentional death was for my mother. Throughout their fifteen years together, his mental well-being was threatened by extreme mood states. Just a year and a half before his death, my father was admitted to a Boston psychiatric hospital due to a severe, life-threatening bout of depression. As a young child, I didn't have the vocabulary to explain why my daddy was often too tired to join the family for dinner or read me a bedtime story after returning home from work.

In contrast, there were times when my father exhibited overexcited behavior, such as that wintry afternoon close to my seventh birthday when I was called home from my

friend's home where I was playing. After I removed my jacket and boots, he called me to his side, and announced with a wide grin that for my birthday present, we would be spending a week-long vacation in Florida. Since we'd be staying at the fanciest hotel in Miami, the Fontainebleau, our mother would take my brother and me on a shopping spree for all new beach attire.

Not even four years later, he left work one Friday afternoon and never returned home to our summer cottage. Instead, my father drove to our home in the Boston suburbs, parked his car in the garage, and remained in the driver's seat. He kept the car's engine running. Carbon monoxide eventually overwhelmed his respiratory system, and he died by asphyxiation. In his suicide note, my father apologized for his failings as a husband

## EMULATE

and father and urged us to find our way to a happier life without him.

In the immediate aftermath of our family's tragedy, our mother, my brother, and I bore our grief raggedly and privately. Not equipped to console her children, she held the misperception that if she pretended life had returned to "normal", we might heal more quickly. Acting on her distorted thinking, our mother never mentioned our father's name at home, or made any reference to his absence in our company. Beyond the funeral and burial service (at which I was not included), there were no memorial rituals throughout my childhood, even on the anniversaries of his untimely death. In fact, I visited my father's grave for the first time when I turned forty-one years old, his very age at the time of his death.

For reasons I didn't understand at the time, but now do as a mature adult, my mother was impatient to move beyond our family tragedy, to begin life anew, with a partner by her side to "bring up the children" (her very words to suitors contemplating marriage). With that in mind, she began dating within the first year or so of her widowhood. In the fall of 1964, she attended a "Parents Without Partners" dance. That night my mother met a man who just three months later would become her second husband.

After their honeymoon, our new stepfather moved into our family home, where they eagerly embarked on creating a new life together. Though it was never stated aloud, my teenage brother and I were given a tacit choice—we could either happily embrace this brand-new family constellation or clutch the shambles of our grief-stricken hearts on the sidelines, *preferably out of sight*.

For all the above reasons, though I'd yearned for it ever since that fateful night of my father's death, I never anticipated the conversation between my mother and me that is described in "Remarkable". Some readers might misconstrue her pronouncement—that her first husband, *our father*, was a "remarkable" man, as misguided, delusional thinking—especially since by then she had received a formal diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease. Yet far from ill-considered in my opinion, it's my hope that mother's reframing of the tragic reality she had survived—that her husband/ our father had hastened his own death to spare us all great suffering in the future, due to grave financial troubles—offered her well-earned solace. Six months later she would die in her sleep. For all three of us survivors, her dramatic reconfiguring of our family's tragedy offered a cherished gift of redemption and pathway to true healing that has persisted to this day.

there's always something different about you  
you are the month separating the end of summer and the start of school  
the air is different  
i feel fall trying to creep in

august i never liked you  
because you made me realize summer is coming to a close  
but i've grown to realize  
it's ok  
time is passing

august i appreciate you more  
i'm counting the days  
till i go back to school  
because i know fall and winter is almost here  
the year is almost over

august, you're different  
different in your own way

**august**  
*KAMALI D WILLIAMS*

# Dispossession

SOFIA M CATANZARO

## EMULATE

In a mouth, there is a transformation. In that fine flesh,  
a gash ripped open. A transmogrifying, liquid sonnet.  
Had I known, maybe I would have figured it was not worth  
the opening. But I didn't and I was of course subjugated and in this  
I become sexless. Banned from fucking some hollow-faced doll of a  
girlfriend in my own bedroom. Her wax black hair  
fine and stinking dye. Undoing and re-spooling greedily.  
In this becoming, I metamorphosize. Now  
I am a dog.

I run over myself, I think of the tiny ways I bore a question.  
There, on my breast pocket, or my shirtsleeve, or in the air I begged to share  
wedged next to the girl whose bagel breath asked me the time,  
the excruciating burn of her as I searched longingly for a sign,  
But instead I fucked a boy. Traversed the curls of my ass-length hair  
and didn't say a damn thing. Collided with them time and again,  
these covetous connections.  
I kissed some and waited for others and I even thought I  
I may have loved. Even when tearing and taking,  
not all evil and yet benevolent in a terrible-like way. Bottling me.  
I'm in missionary and  
naked from the waist down; snap and see myself folded over the sink,  
retching. At the time I thought it was a sickness,  
but I now know it was the beginning of an exorcism  
It takes three years but it tumbles out of me,  
my throat gaping and blistering, becoming now, in utero.  
Crowning, clawing up and out and destroying half my dignity  
with an Irish goodbye, sending me into the mouth  
that would crack the rest of me.

And on nights with her, folded and sweating in her pillow,  
awake as she slept with her curls plastered across her wet forehead,  
I'd meander through her halls and find myself cold on the bathroom tile,  
the beast of me satiated, filled and standing  
above the porcelain basin,  
clean.

# How to Grow Where You're Planted **Ava Barham**

Ride your bike home from soccer practice right as the thunderclouds start rolling in. Imagine you're going so fast that sparks of electricity are flying from the spokes of your hand-me-down Schwinn. Even after the streetlights turn on and the pavement is slick with rain, always take the long way back, past the Blockbuster Video and the Macys where your Dad bought you jeans from the "husky" section. Wear this pair of jeans until people start noticing, and "husky" becomes your nickname. Learn how to throw a punch from watching your Dad and come home bruised but without the nickname. This is how to grow a thick skin, layer by layer.

Decide to ask that girl from your third period to prom. Skip the

dance to lose your virginity to her on your letterman jacket behind a camper van that smells like cigarette smoke and spoiled milk. Realize, sweaty, bug-bitten, and apologetic, that sex isn't as magical as it seems in the movies. Lie on your back beside her and count the stars you can see from the Anderson County trailer park. Break up with this girl in a sticky corner booth at the Waffle House a month before graduation, even though she'll threaten to tell all her friends this is because you're secretly gay. This is how you come to understand that childhood is over.

Graduate with average grades and no concrete plans for the fall. Watch your best friend leave for college

## EMULATE

with a scholarship and dreams of law school. Watch your Dad get laid off from the textile mill after one too many missed work days. Swear to yourself that you won't end up washed up like him. Think about enrolling in community college or enlisting in the Navy. Do neither. Instead, spend your Saturday nights lighting Malboros and speeding through the underpass on I-85. Spend your Sunday mornings talking to God in a back pew and volunteering at the soup kitchen. Pretend not to notice when your Dad walks in, head lowered, and try not to internalize it when the ladies from church "bless your heart." This is how to get addicted to make-believe.

Start attending poetry night classes on a whim without telling anyone about it. Let Jack Kerouac and Robert Frost teach you a thing or two about yourself. Conjure metaphors and metric lines with the pen from your glove box and begin to narrativize your life on paper napkins stained red with liquid smoke. Realize, maybe for the first time, that when you write about the hometown you never left, it reads a little like a love letter. Daydream about standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon and sleeping under the stars in the Sonoran Desert.

Imagine writing it all down and reading these poems to your Dad. Hear him mean it when he tells you he's proud of you. This is how to grow where you're planted.

Move back in with your Dad when he gets sick. Start working long days on the mill's assembly line like he used to. Quit smoking, finally. Tap out iambs on the steering wheel of your pick-up as you drive to work and chemotherapy appointments. Learn new words and find ways to fit them into your poetry- lobectomy, thoracentesis, bronchoscopy. Bring home two milkshakes from Cookout, one peach cobbler, and one vanilla for old-time's sake. Hold your Dad's hand and read him a poem you wrote. Don't let go even when he shakes his head like he doesn't understand. Tell him you love him. This is how to die in the same bed you were born in and also how to say goodbye.

Quit your job and sell the house. Load up the truck with what looks like a pile of envelopes and napkins and scratch paper but is really every poem you've ever written. Pass the city limits for the first time in your life and keep driving.

FALL 2023



## The Holobiont Series Avery Maltz

# Instructions on Learning to Live Again

*TALIA BECKHARDT*

STEP ONE: Discover an endless, forgotten walk-in closet in the hallways of your mind. Wander the strange aisles, where your childhood toys, now larger than yourself, stand as still sentries. Remember a time when mystery still whispered to you in the everyday drawers and cubbies of your home, when not every possession was known and neatly cataloged. Start digging around – you never know what you might find.

STEP TWO: Let your cat decide what you eat for breakfast. Allow your knees and elbows to kiss the hardwood floors, and imagine what it is to be a creature of fur in a world of sounds and scents. Listen for human words in meows where there are none. Make them anyway, and eat your cereal cross-legged on the table – don’t things look different from up here?

STEP THREE: Find something bigger than yourself to marvel at: thick, towering redwoods, mountain peaks that cut the sky in half, the skyscraper made of endless working squares, an ocean that echoes all the way out to the horizon, the sun that, yes, will someday expand and eat this all – but for now only gives rays of light and warmth.

STEP FOUR: Drive with an old friend to your local public park. Choose not to talk about how it felt when the spaces between you became unbridgeable, but instead how the ducks shake the water from their wings and how the allium stalks lean in the gentle breeze. When you were a child, you played house inside the leaves of these willows. Later, you kissed a girl for the first time beneath them. Pluck a blooming daisy and slip it in your pocket. When you get home, press it between the pages of an old journal, and forget about it – it’s a surprise for another day.



