

A Winding Entanglement

WRIT - 225 Portfolio

By Addison Mackenzie Suit

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Suggested Companion Playlist:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5qbhWZYkrw8ZsxuwWy23XB?si=cb0a3d236b8b4e74>

Introduction from the Author

These pieces have been selected from the course work of WRIT-225, a writing intensive course focused on story-telling, practice, and revision. Each of the following works have been inspired by a concept to be woven through poetry or prose. Each section will include the prompt and the new revised work.

“Bergamot” is revised with both points of view—the little girl stumbling upon the tree and the tree itself—each adding to the cultivation of this strange new world of escape, bitter, dark, closely held but at least it’s different. “Shells” is an excruciating depiction of the inner thoughts of an unsporting family, with the twist addition of her lover's perspective of the eggshell debacle. A list of an unbridled sensory experience is present in, “Your Hand in Mine.” Benir is a nation in my own fantastical world, Myzerious, and Ether and Calliope are ex-lovers, one desperately pleading for the other’s help, in spite of past catastrophe. “Glimpses to Hold Onto” strolls through my life, centering around several personal motifs I have been drawn to over the years. “Exposure Underneath” depicts a stage production—the final battle scene—roughly inspired by a scene in *If We Were Villains* by M. L. Rio. At the height of its revision, “Lavender” paints a scene of narration during a slow dreamy wade through apocalyptic aftermath. “Devour” imitates the personified Night’s desperate jealousy over the Day. The final work is a never before seen entry. “Can You Meet Me at Midnight?” is inspired by the song “London” by Starbenders and a link is attached to listen, but the video content was not considered when illustrating this poem.

My goals for this class were to explore, transform, and pursue a world of blossoming emotion. I hope you enjoy my efforts in creativity. Thank you.

- Addison

Bergamot and Fruitless Endeavors

Prompt: For your original work this week, write a poem of at least 15 lines or a short prose piece (up to 400 words) that is ekphrastic in nature. You may base your poem or prose piece on a famous work, a drawing by a friend--it's up to you.

Artwork by Madelyn Farland

Bergamot and Fruitless Endeavors

If time curled around me like the roots of a tree,
maybe I wouldn't feel so alone.
Maybe if the tears from my lashes fell like leaves, I'd be
celebrated like a season.
If the grain worked its way into my bones, I'd feel
alright with taking up space.

Haunted and unguided, winding around the branches.
Finding footholes—falling—on the knots.
Trampling, tripping, tumbling, over the trunk.
Hallowed out and sinking in,
Its omniscience is inviting.

The tree follows my gaze each time the moon reclaims its spotlight.
Brushing my knuckles against the bark brings a sharp inhale—
The brisk frost crackling in the air, stinging my nose.
Crimson wheezes on my hand,
stark, and out of place.

The wind crashes through my hair and whips around my clothes,



Wicking the blood away,
Sitting in the doorway,
I wonder where this goes.

Under the clouds of the once grainy sky, she stood on the highest hill in the field and looked at me.

Hallowed eyed with crackling bones, she danced over my branches.
Careful and considerate and respectful.

She picked up my leaves and wished them well,
Crooning when they fell to the earth,
Crushing the particularly crunchy oneness with laughter so they could return home faster.

My little darling girl, the observer the explorer,
Heart open and rain rolling onto cheeks.
Sweet and otherworldly.

I followed her gaze each time the moon reclaimed its spotlight–
In the dark of the night I made sure she was safe.

She reached for me and the bark nicked her skin,
The grass shrunk away at her gasp of the air.
She marveled at it for a moment.
I made her *feel*.

She sat within me,

In the little doorway carved out for her.

She crawled inside where the earth knows no bounds.

I never saw her again.

Original End Date: October 6th, 2022 7:59pm

Shells

Prompt: Write a flash piece imitating Meg Pokrass.

Shells

If I could break an egg correctly, I would, and then there wouldn't be any shells, and then everything would be fine. Everything's not fine. How can everything be fine when there are shells in my cake? If I stepped on a rat it would squeal and if I feed people shells they will cry. The batter is already salty enough with my tears—I should put some lemon in to balance it out. My cake is redvelvet. It is full of shells. I am full of despair.

My wife baked a cake, my wife baked a cake so poorly I wanted to cry. It was red and full of unwarranted citrus. My wife does not bake, but neither do I, so I asked her to try. Instead we *both* ended up wanting to cry. I am the woeful victim of her cooking catastrophe. Did I mention that the cake had shells in it? Deplorable really.

My mom made a cake. She is trying her best. I am proud of her.

If my daughter ever once listened to anything ever, she could have read instructions. She would have tried and put forth her best effort, but instead she made a cake—a disgusting cake—that I would have never served to anyone ever. It had shells in it. So many shells that it would imply the use of a dozen eggs, shattered and wasted and disgusting and terrible and an outright disgrace.

My lover baked a cake. She would not serve me a piece. She cried and cried and outright refused. I told her it could not have been that bad. I don't know why it was making her so sad. She tried!! Oh, how important it is for her to try. Her daughter sees that. I see that. Why can't she see that? Her daughter and I give her so much love. Why is she so embarrassed? I am sure her cake is not

that bad. "But it has shells!!" she wailed to me, bursting through my apartment door, slamming a barely cut cake on the counter. "So it has shells, my darling," I took her hands, "We will just eat around them."

Original End Date: September 29, 2022 6:52pm

Your Hand in Mine

Prompt: For this week's flash, write a piece that's 350-450 words. Specifically, create a list-type story using Holland's "Dragon Lady" as your model with several sections.

Your Hand in Mine

How it feels: soft with idle circles. Smooth with the painting of tears. Balmy with lotion. Trying to guess the shape based on the tracing of the back of my hand. Standing close together with an excuse. The pull of pivoting, attending to something else without breaking apart.

How it smells: a citrus candle burning at dusk. Fresh laundry cooling in the basket as the smell of the detergent fills the air. Sweet shampoo lathered through silken hair.

How it tastes: buttery chocolate chip cookies spreading over your tongue. Sugar creeping through the red glamor of candy. Fluffy sticky rice spreading over salmon, topped with your favorite sauce. Orange juice before you brush your teeth. A bowl of untouched clementines.

How it looks: silly. Two best friends running rampant and cackling over their thoughts. A daughter and her father walking through traffic, protected between the pavement and the trees. Lovers waltzing through a forest, leaping over sticks and leaves. Two siblings choosing to make time for each other, playing a game. Dancing in the kitchen by starlight, letting pancakes burn.

How it sounds: a cacophony of laughter in a frowned upon setting. Whispers and murmurs of shared secrets shared between children who mean well. The coffee maker stirring everyone awake. Your favorite show playing in the background, while drawing. Your favorite audiobook

playing, while planting crops. Your favorite song turning up on the radio. Words of encouragement sung sweetly from the depths of the heart.

How it *feels*: Intimate like seeing your best friend not wearing shoes for the first time. Stirring something warm and creamy on the stove and offering a bowl to everyone in the house. Sitting upside down on the couch, letting your perfect strands of hair and pressed clothing fall out of place. Your breath steadying in your chest after a much needed cry. Pure sunshine in the dead of winter. If a smile were conveyed in a touch.

Original End Date: October 6th, 2022 7:44pm

Original Revised Date: 8:47pm

To Ether, from Calliope

Prompt: Write a story about a character in trouble. Trouble them (give them something to try to overcome, for instance). Write the story in the form of a letter. The letter could be in the voice of your main character, or someone else, who is perhaps important to the story.

To Ether,

From Calliope

I am sorry that I left Benir, but I'm not sorry I left you. Please don't revere my letter as something to fawn over or use for the basis of your villain origin story. I am not here to pour salt in the wound and remind you of the tragic loss of me in your life.

I am writing to you because I need your help. It's not easy for me to ask this of you, but after I watched you burn down an entire village with no remorse, and your wings burned to onyx before my eyes, I knew you were the only one who could help me now.

I do not have the same desire for vengeance and justice as you do, but if the flame of your anger still sparks the stopwatch in your chest, I would enjoy your help and expertise.

Adalina was traveling with me and was taken for me when we were traveling through the crystalline forest. She was kidnapped by hunters and their magic overpowered my own. I need you and your bloodhound to find her and then shred them to pieces.

Trust me when I say, I know it's shitty to ask for you to help me find the woman I left you for. But I don't have any other choice. I am not an angry person, but for a moment that all encompassing spear of rage hit me, and I thought that must have been how you were feeling. If

you are still feeling it, I am so so sorry, Ether, but I am asking you to use it and help me. You are still the bravest man I know, despite your magic's unending thirst for violence. I am giving you an opportunity to use it for good—help redeem your soul.

I will always cherish the time we spent together, Ether. If you still care about me, please help me save her.

If you are willing, meet me at the Willow of Wyndgaurd at 9:18p.m. I will wait for twelve minutes because you were always late by twelve minutes.

With love and moderate desperation,

Calliope.

Original End Date: October 12, 4:15 PM

Glimpses to Hold Onto

Prompt: Write a poem of at least twenty lines, imitating the lyrical poems by Li-Young Lee.

Glimpses to Hold on To

Trouble wouldn't be so troubling if the wind did not sweep the stars from my hair.

Open and bleeding on the floor would not be poetic if it wasn't the type of things poems were written for.

Yet there I was, crooning, bellowing, mixing salt and iron.

There were times,

Times when the thorns cut into my palms and I still held on;

Times when ivy scratched my skin and I didn't think twice.

A time when an orange butterfly preened on my shoulder, deciding I was worthy of rest.

Crosses and hearts and eyes etched into pews where we could reflect, but not sit back on our calves.

Where prayer was most adored as if me begging from my own bedside was not the most intimate.

As if throwing and running and yelling through grit and sweat wasn't enough.

As if hitting and spiking and sprinting through spasms and bruises weren't enough.

Shredding legs and swinging fast was never a forte I held on too.

Throwing myself into every phone call and play date,

Bloodshot pinhole pupils gazing into the darkness chiding, "it's okay."

Sweeping back hair from your face and painting your lips.

Blossoming from the loneliest places and the most wicked thoughts.

With stars in my hair, spinning and weaving a halo of ivy—but not thorns.

—Thorns are His.

And as I plead in the dead of night for the grace of God,

The three angels sing to me,

The iridescent white glow showers me.

Breathe love in,

Breathe love out.

For the stars and the thorns and the ivy and the butterflies and the hearts and the crosses,

As music plays, breathe love in, breathe love out.

Original End Date: October 24th, 2022 10:18pm

Exposure Underneath

Prompt: Write a poem in the haibun form.

Exposure Underneath

On the stage, where heaven forbid my words leave the page, I watch you. This isn't rehearsal. Enveloped in velvet and pointy shoes our eyes meet. Dust from the set dancing in the lights, our swords glinting in the beams. Scuffing the mirrors reflecting starlight against each other. Swallowed by the universe, reciting words that are not our own, I see you. Our hearts, broken and weeping, underneath wigs and paint, are screaming.

This could not be real.

Exposed, clutching my one soul,

Begging to be yours.

The crowd guffaws at the first clash of weaponry. You tense, the contours of your skin pulling tight over muscle. Ferocity encapsulates your gaze—brutal, passionate, *angry*. Your displeasure fuels my twirl across the stage, swirling the scents of orchids waiting in the wind. Our lips push apart in a shared gasp as my prop impales you. I hold you stiffly in my white knuckled grip as the crowd forges into stone. My lips brush against yours, something sweet and acrid. You crumple to the floor.

This is our theater.

This will be our final dance.

You are begging me.

Original End Date: November 3rd, 2022 7:54pm

Lavender

Prompt: Choose a poem or short prose piece that is unfinished and you want to work on.

Rewrite the poem (literally re-type, or write it out again by hand). Instead of going beginning to end, go end to beginning. You may proceed word by word, phrase by phrase, line by line--you decide. Revise using what you learn from this.

Lavender

I know what it's trying to hide.

And watch the fog descend on the city.

So when I look out the window,

They're not real, they're far too devine.

When your blue eyes look at mine I know

Apples rot at the same rate of our souls, but

Manage or sweeten a bitter truth.

To claw as far from reality as we can

To lie as easily as we love.

The most human thing we could ever do

They never said we couldn't lie.

Veiled and catching light as a witness.

A sleepy haze drapes over the city as the clock creeps toward tomorrow.

Original End Date: November 8th, 2022 2:49pm

Devour

Prompt: Write in the villanelle form, noting the use of repetition.

Devour

Hold me tight within your grasp and devour me.
Understand that you began as the light but we will conclude as one.
Reclaiming the day at the sight of the moon, they will finally see.

Always looked at as everything I've ever wanted to be.
Filled with the stars, I have begun.
The waves will rise over the rock and the earth at the height of the sea.

Animals preen underneath the intertwining threads of the tree.
But flowers bloom in the wake of a new spring sprung.
When winter comes, I hate how they speak of me.

For you are the sunshine day coffee, and I am the vanilla night tea.
Still, I remain jealous of you and the sun.
Even with my darkness when they can be the most free.

I am the night with jealousy and all you are is daylight glee.
You sweep me way with your devotion until I run
Hold me tight within your grasp and devour me.
Reclaiming the day at the sight of the moon, they will finally see.

Original End Date: November 17th, 2022

Can You Meet Me at Midnight?

Prompt: Write a poem based on a song.

Inspired by "London" by the Starbenders

 [STARBENDERS - London \(Official Music Video\)](#)

Can You Meet Me at Midnight?

Our feet pounded against the pavement,
Running towards each other,
Lit by the crack of lightning setting off the night.

Breaking even with the sunset,
Crooning on the roof of where your lips first fell on mine,
Where your hands first got tangled in my hair.

Soaked through and drowning in the cascading glow.
Breathing for the first time,
Open and raw as you taste my soul.

Flying away together like stars wishing in the night
Letting the air ravish my lungs as the wind rushes through me.
Your car doesn't go fast enough.
The sugar honey drip of my perfume ebbing with the London rain

Original End Date: November 17th, 10:36pm

Final Words

Through my revisions, I felt myself gnawing at the core source material, polishing and picking at the sentences to fine tune the rhythm. To combat this, I focused on word choice, grammar, and style. Paying attention to what my peers noted in class was also crucial in ensuring I got my message across as it was intended. This class helped me develop better critiques, exposed me to some wonderful new writers, and allowed me to wander through completely new methods of writing. I am very thankful for the opportunities I had in this class and will carry everything I have learned with me for the rest of my writing journey. Thank you.

- Addison