

zimmer

POETRY MAGAZINE

fragility



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KNOW ABOUT zimmer

At Zimmer, we celebrate creativity and expression through poetry, short stories, flash fiction, odes, and short pieces of fiction. Our magazine provides a space for writers of all backgrounds to share their work, connect with fellow creatives, and inspire one another.

We strongly emphasise our a focus on apolitical content with a primary goal of providing enjoyment and entertainment. We invite readers to immerse themselves in the joy of storytelling and the power of words.

We started as a tiny 1 person show in July 2023 and are expanding and enjoying the journey.

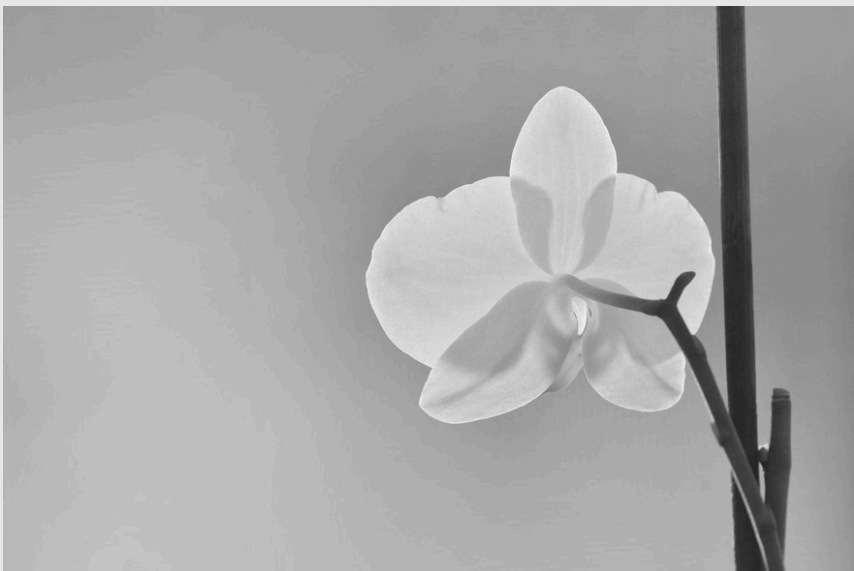


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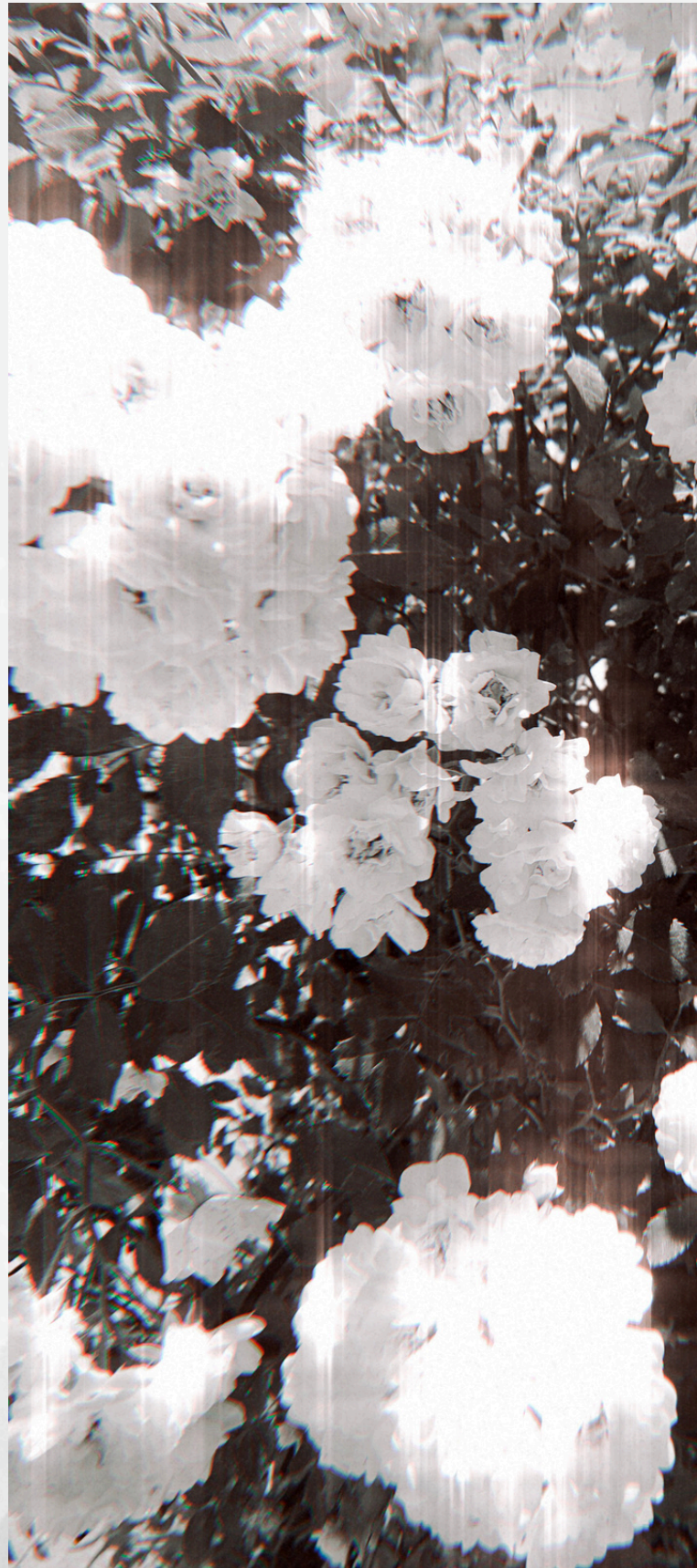
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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Zimmer Readers,

Welcome to the second issue of our poetry magazine! It's hard to believe how quickly time has passed since our inaugural release. The response to our first issue has been nothing short of heartwarming, and I want to extend my sincerest thanks for the love we have received.

This issue builds on our commitment to showcasing the power and beauty of poetry. We've curated an even more diverse selection of voices, styles, and themes, all exploring the intricacies of identity and the human experience. Each poem is a unique lens through which we can reflect on our own lives, confront challenges, and celebrate our shared moments of joy and sorrow.

As we continue this journey, we remain dedicated to fostering a community where creativity can flourish. We believe that poetry has the power to connect us—across cultures, experiences, and emotions—and we hope that these pages serve as a sanctuary for those connections.

In this issue, we explore the theme of fragility—an intimate reflection on mental health, vulnerability, and the delicate balance of our inner worlds. Each poem grapples with the complexities of our emotional landscapes, shedding light on the challenges we face and the resilience that emerges in moments of uncertainty. Through these poignant pieces, we invite you to embrace the beauty in fragility, recognising that it is often in our most delicate states that we find profound strength and connection.

I hope this issue resonates with you, sparks your imagination, and invites you to explore the beautiful complexity of life through the art of poetry.



Heidi Kevin

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF







WE ARE HIRING

SOCIAL MEDIA
FEATURES ARTICLE WRITER

GET IN TOUCH WITH
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Kelp Girl

ELISE YVON

I hang dead fish from my hair
so that people look at them and not me.
I made a mirror out of seashells
but they cracked, my reflection turning to sand.
I tried to escape back to the sea
then the safety nets barred my way.
I surrendered all my money
paying the fisherman for his boat,
but lightning split my boat in two
thus I was stuck, wailing on the beach.
The hermit crab offered me shelter
so I killed it, crawled into his house and hid.

Underground Rave

ELISE YVON

Underground rave

An osteopath had a factory plunged into the earth,
a sensational doctor cracking children's bones,
knuckle's snapping to make them shine like glowsticks,
pushing away the all-encompassing darkness.
These small feeble things had perfect limbs
to access itty-bitty screws that went missing.
The doctor's hands more toxic than exposition
to phosphorus concoctions fellow children delt with.
The children complained it wasn't bright enough,
still getting compressed, losing limbs with hydraulic hoses.
So the osteopath cracked their necks and pretty skulls,
heads turning into ablaze lighthouses, wires replacing phalanges.
Their heads full of bolts and screws couldn't crack
anymore, joints burnished from the over cracking,
in a clicketing clacketing fuckedy mess of clicks,
factory blooming under children's glowing bones.



UNDERGROUND RAVE

Written By Elise Yvon

Interviewed By Lucy Matthews

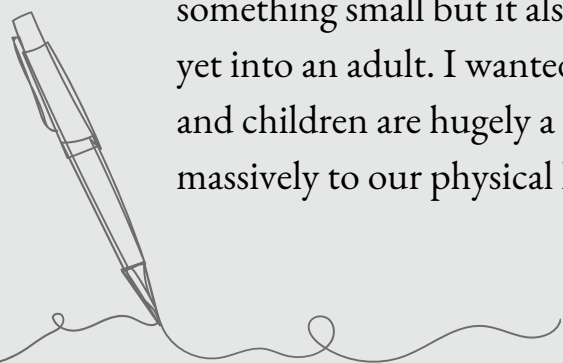
A fragile commentary on consumerism.

Elise's underground rave consists of doctors cracking the bones of children and a mechanism built on the labour of youth. Painting a picture of a party revolving around the exploitation of those we are meant to nurture and look after the most, I was compelled to ask Elise why she had conjured up this title in regards to the exposure of a child's fragility.

E. I had written the poem and thought of the title afterwards. Glowing robot children in a factory, it is humorous when going forth with this title. I knew that people would immediately think of something else when hearing it and I liked that satirical element.

Elise's range as a poet was impressive, twisting the placement of children within factories during the industrial revolution into a commentary on fragility. Whilst fragility is recognised as an emotional state of being today, Elise was inclined to tap into the past and look at how the manipulation of youth can conjure up a physical fragile picture of industrial abuse.

E. During the industrial revolution children were put to work due to their small stature, yet they still got hurt instead of adults because of this. They were utilising something small but it also involves the dehumanisation of someone who isn't grown yet into an adult. I wanted to paint a picture of the most fragile elements of society and children are hugely a part of this in the world we live in. They have contributed massively to our physical labour efforts, and continue to do so.



Using the way society has treated young people across history as poetic inspiration meant that descriptions of youth could be pushed to the extremes, guaranteeing our discomfort as readers in hearing a child's body being manipulated in this way. It seems Elise was fully aware of her role as a poet to address the uncomfortable and take pieces of history to learn about the perceptions of those around us during that time. It was a storylike approach to a time where this had been the norm. The juxtaposition of dangerous labour carried out by youthful beings irked me, and it served as visceral ammunition for Elise, whose call out to readers at the end through the tongue teaser of a finale clicketing, clacketing fucked up mess of clicks *see last verse*.

E. I really wanted my writing to mirror that of a machine, as it draws up so much strong imagery that really takes you there and I wanted it to feel like you were in the factory yourself. Children are still being exposed today on a huge scale in the face of consumerism, and I don't think people realise the scale of such. I wanted this poem to face this square on. On the bigger scale, it represents maximising things that are beneficial to us, but at the same time this has always come at a price. Instead of focusing on a single child I spoke of children as a whole, this was done purposefully. Each child does have a story to tell but for this poem I wanted to use the mass grouping of manual labour to really make readers think about the act of purchasing, and how it is all built on the exposure of youth.

Elise's poem hinted that the result of this mass purchasing comes at a price today, resulting in the permanent dislodging of fragility within childhood. This was reiterated by Elise when asked about whether the compromising of fragility results in a permanent state of brokenness.

E. The robotic children in Underground Rave are less fragile due to their robotic states, however they are still children under the surface. They now face being broken down and rusting as machines, conjuring up a new state of fragility. They are still children underneath it all. We see this today with the process of ageing but I just wanted to take it to the extremes with this and put it in a completely futuristic setting and test the boundaries of what we know about the fragile nature of children. You may be really strong but events happen which threaten your fragility, even if you are a robotic child dedicated to consumerism.

Elise's depiction of stolen fragility reminds us as humans that there is always a higher force that can reduce us into a fragile state of being at any moment, even if you aren't working in a factory as a robotic child forced to produce on a mass scale. It poses the question, do we try to run from this fear of the most fragile parts of ourselves being exposed, or do we accept that a peaceful existence isn't attainable without ever being vulnerable in this way? The role of poetry in forcing us to look at fragility in this way should not go understated. Knowing that a poem describing osteopaths manipulating robotic children has the power to force us to look inwards at our relationship with fragility is the true gift of poetry within itself. It shows that even in our most fragile states, we are only one poem away from relating to an Underground Rave of partying production line robots. Fragility's broad depiction should truly be regarded as a comfort today when we feel at our most vulnerable.

Perfect

AZRAEL APLIN

Red ribbons flowed from her head
Like a scene of
Lusciously intoxicating waterfalls
Off a setting sun

Perfectly positioned
Center Back
Not visible when facing
Her seemingly cheerful
Olive kissed cheeks

Smiles thrown across her face
Like they were
Permanently played
With needle and thread

And no one saw
When those fibers were snipped
And the colors fell
Greyscale

For no one ever

Looked back

Relapse

AZRAEL APLIN

It's as if i can feel the loneliness
Seeping through my skin.
Agony boiling within my blood,
Knocking upon my bones to let in.
The sorrow keeps collecting in my lungs-
And though i wish to weep,
Despair clings to my throat
For a silence it wants to keep.

I've never been pained at the thought
of an empty room.
Yet the desire of this abyss
For me-
Consumed.
And i know not what to do,
To rid my existence
Of all this gloom.

Daisy

by Charly White

I look at the delicate daisy
at my feet
a bit worn by the world
and so timid in her fragility
though I doubt she ever questions
her stability or worries how many days
she may have left here, at my feet
to smile up at the sunshine
she wilts, a little more
and continues to glow
and before I leave, I must remember
to thank her, this delicate daisy
at my feet
for all of her strength
that she his gifted
upon me.

DAISY

Written by Charly White

Interviewed by Lucy Matthews

A commentary on the role of nature in uncovering fragile aspects of ourselves and embattling through moments of life where we feel at our most fragile by looking to nature as a guide.

Occasionally as humans we are forced to reckon with our own internal conflict through our natural surroundings. Nature has a way of bringing to the surface aspects of ourselves that we refuse to confront or address. For some, it won't be a state of adurance, nature may just act as a catalyst of inspiration. Charly White's Rupi Kaur-esque style poetry is a demonstration of this. Using the innocent nature of a Daisy to reflect on her own relationship with Fragility, 'Daisy' showcases how digging deep into the eternal fragile nature of a flower can bring up hard truths about our own relationship with expressions of fragility.

C. I think my natural connection with nature has always acted as a driving force behind the poetry I write, especially when it comes to this one. I don't really see a 'why' behind what inspired me to write from the perspective of a flower, but I don't think inspiration always needs to be justified. I saw the daisy on the ground and it was as simple as the flower itself.

Charly alludes to the importance of using nature as a comfort blanket when it comes to the harder aspects of life, acting as a life boat against the heavy waves of fragility that humans face. The soothing simplicity of Charly's words reflected the subject nature, and it shows that stopping to thank the nature that stands before us when struggling to accept the more fragile parts of ourselves is an act of defiance in the face of vulnerability.

C. I usually carry my notebook around with me and it is always exciting to see what comes from this based on how I am feeling in the day. Developing different ways of writing is what I enjoy most about poetry, and I have specifically always enjoyed Rupi Kaur's poems. I think that as humans we can be so hard on ourselves, and poetry really helps me to de-center from all this negativity when going through it. In this case, it was the daisy before me that acted as the jolt, and the flower became the centre of the experience I was going through instead of the burden of emotion that had been taking up so much room before.



“

Daisy reads like an extension of a Rupi Kaur poem, a poet known for her ability to take some of the most simple aspects of life and plunge them into deep existential poetic endeavours. Her writing has been lauded as digestible therapeutic prose for the everyday battles of life, and ‘Daisy’ truly encapsulates Kaur’s writing style. Contrasting the fragile statutory nature of a flower with the harsh everyday human living can feel like you are doing an injustice to the flower, but just like Charly says, using Daisy’s fragile nature as inspiration within our darkest moments is a form of acceptance within itself.

C. I see fragility as a cycle, and it truly is a wonderful thing that something as simple as the daisy on the ground can take me out of something so suffocating. I think it really helps come to terms with aspects of life which we find hard to digest, and like I said in the poem, despite wilting there is still a glow about it. I think we can learn a lot from this.

There is a feminine undertone to the nature of the poem ‘Daisy’, and it forces us to assess our own relationship with expressions of fragility, and how it is often shunned as something that can only be comfortably expressed by women. The delicate quality of the flower blooms strong amongst the flurry of everyday life and perhaps this encourages us to assess the strength of women today and how they are often misinterpreted and understood. Where they may be perceived as delicate can actually be hidden resilience, and despite the juxtaposition of a Daisy embattling through the world, you can find meaning by looking at this in relation to womanhood.

C. I see fragility as a cycle, and it truly is a wonderful thing that something as simple as the daisy on the ground can take me out of something so suffocating. I think it really helps come to terms with aspects of life which we find hard to digest, and like I said in the poem, despite wilting there is still a glow about it. I think we can learn a lot from this.



Charly’s translation of fortitude found within a flower was extremely impressive, and it shows how humans and nature can work together to learn from each other. Despite being united with our fellow human counterparts in the face of shared fragility, it seems sometimes all it takes to learn about how to navigate uncertain times is a trip outside to the garden with a notebook in hand.

Breadcrumbs

BY SUMAYAH YASEEN

Breadcrubs

**Mother taught me
to never hold my hand out
for crumbs.**

Tightened palms possess more in the end.

Still I begged him for leftovers.

Devouring them like they were feasts,

Savouring them like sugar powder.

**I was the pigeon pecking
at bread pieces, starved of love.**

Pitifully cooing for a glance my way.

**Sweaty palms promised gluttony but
delivered stale crackers.**

bearing pangs and a half full stomach;

I salivate when gifted IOU wrappers.

I am always eager for the empty words.



Scheduled meeting at the morgue

BY SUMAYAH YASEEN

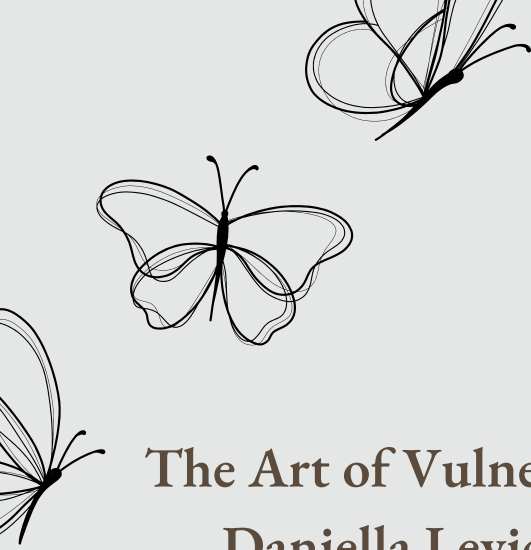
Scheduled Meeting at the Morgue

What is a heroic death, to an average Joe?
What is more super manly than a martyr for love?
I'd like to die in the trembling arms of a lover,
or slowly decay and ponder on existence.
Perhaps too little - too late,
but I'll bet it'll make people talk about me.
See her eyes, they're about to see death in the flesh

or

such a kind soul there never has been.
Always whispered by those who
didn't look twice when you were sick nor
when nights kept you up in emergency wards.
If I had a dying wish, Lord
It couldn't come soon enough.
An eternity not long enough to be kept away.
I like how crows bury their dead,
clothed in mourning colours
and readily lamenting. I
wonder if anyone would wail for me?
Yes, I'm a simp for tragedy, and
more so when it comes to me.
So dig my grave a little deeper with slightly more precision
and send me off with saline kisses.
I always did want to see my name in the paper.

Sumayah Yaseen (She/Her) is an English Literature undergraduate. Some of her publications include, her poem Heart of Steel – which featured in the University of Sheffield's 2024 anthology - and her poem Heartbreak Toad, recently published by Tin Can Poetry. She is currently working on her own collection of poetry. Her interests include reading, using words as an alternative to therapy, and lots of coffee. Her spare time is divided between family, friends, the husband, and the cat (who is a good boy). She can be found on her Instagram handle @ssum4yah



The Art of Vulnerability: Daniella Levick on Embracing Fragility

WRITTEN BY LUCY MATTHEWS



“

Writing helps me beyond all measure, and it can be frustrating when I cannot put pen to paper or describe how I am feeling a certain way.

To gain a full understanding of Daniella Levick’s interpretation of fragility, the three of her poems need to be deconstructed and understood. These are poems that confront grief, a never-ending feeling of panic, and acceptance of some of life’s most challenging elements, to name a few. Daniella is wise beyond her years, after reading her poems many would believe that Ella had lived multiple lifetimes and was giving back by imparting her wisdom onto us about what she had learnt from those experiences. An avid poetic force, Daniella is inspired by the confessional poets of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton, and has turned life’s challenges into beautiful prose, with one of her most poetic endeavours resulting in a description of a panic attack as a feeling that evokes ‘butterflies having knives’. This is a simple demonstration of Daniella’s ability to tap into raw human emotions and face them head on through words that evoke. Reading Daniella’s poems can feel like you are taking a peek into her personal poetic diary, but this in itself shows the weight of emotional expression covered throughout her writing. This is something that was taken into account in the aforementioned poem ‘Butterflies with Knives’.

D. The back and forth you have during a panic attack is so chaotic. You find yourself mentally going back and forth. I wanted the ending to show this, and show that amongst it all I am still here and the clouds have now parted. I also wanted to play with the idea that we have always had anxiety, and it is something that is passed down. To showcase the longevity of it I wanted to use the strength of nature, and where I see strength across nature. This takes me out of the experience, and it is easy to write about looking back. It was certainly about a conversation I had with myself about the panic of youth and losing that youth. I wanted the end to channel an 'I am still standing' ethos'. The butterflies in this poem have knives because it's violent. Anxiety isn't some sugar coated feeling that can be brushed away with butterflies, it has a lot more violent depth to it. When the clouds clear you can firmly say to yourself, I am still here. I think fragility is definitely within us but there are degrees to fragility. I don't think I will ever lose my fragility but the fragility of an anxiety attack is something you can overcome, especially as you grow older and get to know yourself better emotionally.

L. Daniella's comments on fragility drew my attention to the concept of a controlled fragility. When it comes to getting older, being out of control is a common feeling. It can feel like our age is in control of us, and the violent side of fragility expressed through a panic attack can be triggered by feeling like our age is in control of us, something which Daniella alludes to. It demonstrates a multi-layered relationship with fragility which expands as we get older. Each of Daniella's poems bring you one step closer to uncovering this relationship, and it seems someone who expresses feeling so out of control when it comes to their emotions is also in possession of a real foresight surrounding the human condition, most notably our relationship with grief. This was expressed through the eye-opening 'The grief you know'.

“

D. This poem shows the residual stigma around grief, and I wanted to show that it is so natural and all around us, and half of the time we don't even acknowledge this. It was all about grounding the grief through the lens of the world around us. It definitely ended up being a culmination of my own personal experiences with grief. Funnily enough I see a lot of dead deer on the highway, and this image just stuck with me when it came to poetic inspiration. The most prolific grief we know is loss, and it is a combination of my own lived experiences of grief and what my friends have experienced.

L. This poem was so visceral, it almost felt invasive. Do you think that this feeling of intrusion which may greet people when reading comes from a place of humans being conditioned to tip toe around grief, which when confronted, can bring us to the most fragile aspects of ourselves?

D. I wanted readers to feel uncomfortable as that is how grief is. When read through, you are inserting yourself within the discourse in a way you wouldn't in day to day life. If anyone is experiencing grief I also wanted to help them validate such, and if not, guide them towards understanding that grief is all around and is entirely personal to everyone.

L. This poem almost reads like a love letter to grief, and adds to this pot of fragile emotion which as humans we constantly try to dodge. Grief cannot really be defined entirely, but only really controlled, again alluding to this controlled fragility. Grief can feel like a narrator of our lives, and an influential one at that. The importance of poetry is bringing us closer to an understanding of such, and I think this poem really cuts deep into this and forces readers to look.

D. I wanted to expose the avenues of grief, and it can be a small bump or a landslide. I wanted to comment on how you cannot control grief, but only let go of it. The final stanza shocked me as the poem started out very pessimistic and then the hopeful turn at the end mirrors 'in a panic attack the butterflies'.

L. Your in-tune relationship with fragility should act like a comfort blanket when it comes down to guiding you through heavy emotions. Do you think this close relationship you have with your writing helps you navigate them so more, especially when it comes down to getting your feelings surrounding fragility, loss whatever it is, down on a page?

D. It certainly is comforting to make something whole out of something like fragility which can feel very segmented. It's rewarding and powerful to have a beginning middle end over something like fragility. Writing helps me beyond all measure, and it can be frustrating when I cannot put pen to paper or describe how I am feeling a certain way.

L. Writing certainly can foster a deeper relationship with these huge feelings. I can tell that in the last verse you were just in this flow state of grappling with fragility. The poem is also telling us to acknowledge our grief but the acknowledgment is within that. This is something which I thought really resonated with 'Dear World, I tried to love you'. Your final poem was the finale of the trilogy of life's events which you have taken us through across your poems so far, - a response to all the heavy baggage many carry across their lives. Was this the same perception you had when going into writing this final poem?

D. Absolutely. I think this poem is the most general and very broad of them all. It confronts fragility in the face whole. I do not think I wrote it as a frustrated letter to the world. As humans we are born fragile, and in the context of this poem, fragility was taken advantage of. In this poem I do not accurately represent the capacity for fragility to still be beautiful even though that is still there. I don't want to misrepresent fragility.

L. I would be intrigued to know what a dear world I love you poem would look like. You have attempted to do justice to fragility and compromise in a way. The last line encompasses the power of the world's challenges. It is ironic. Did you want to purposefully contrast this poem with your questioning of fragility?

D. I definitely wanted this poem to be very broad and use the world as a subject instead of an abstract being. I think what I want it to mean now is different to what I want now when I wrote it. I think the ending is highly charged, and because it is born out of frustration it is an amalgamation of fragility, frustration, a little bit of grief for a life where the world doesn't take advantage of this fragility. I think I was grieving the loss of acceptance of fragility. This is a letter to the world which is saying that I have accepted everything but why did I have to go through everything to accept such? , it's a curiosity birthed from acceptance, but that doesn't mean it isn't painful at the same time.

L. That is the beauty of writing- it can tell us we have grown through the re-reading of a poem like this. You demonstrate a willing at the end of this poem, whereas in the others you have attempted to intellectualise your pain. It seems you are just letting it all go in this one.

D. I live a lot in the past, and letting go is something which I really try and advocate for in my poems but actually doing it is a whole different thing. Anxiety, the panic of growing older and the idea of home are very consistent themes across my poetry. I have always had a very accessible and broad range of poetry reflective of these themes at my fingertips- growing up there were tonnes of poetry books in my house. I never grew up with this idea of only certain poetry being acceptable like Shakespeare for example, and I think that really has shaped my writing today and my relationship with poetry.

a comment from our Poet Journalist. Lucy

All of Daniella's poems read like a trilogy, a realisation which came to myself after reading each poem. They are a trilogy that focuses on the impact of life's events and our response to such. There are speckles of positivity, acceptance and longing across these poems cloaked amongst the intensity of sombre feeling which greets you at first read.

Daniella's interpretations of these events is multi-layered, and her ability to face these events head-on is admirable, doing the work for us when it comes to addressing the aspects of life which many will try and dodge throughout their entire life. Daniella tells me she is currently enrolled in a poetry class, meaning that she will continue to be a talented writing force in a world that finds it tricky to face the topics Daniella sharpens her pen with.

dear world, I tried to love you

even though you took me in your hands, though you
bent and broke me into bite-sized pieces.

even though you held me between your teeth, though you
spat me out, left me trembling on the worst kind of darkened street.

even though you sold me to every sunset, though you
laughed in my face when I tried to stand on shaking feet.

even though you made me just to break me, though you
buried my head in the sand and rubbed my skin raw because I didn't understand.

dear world,
I tried to love you

but did I ever stand a chance?

Daniella Levick

in a panic attack the butterflies have knives - Daniella Levick

a previous version of this poem received the Scholastic Arts & Writing Awards 2023 Silver Key Award

I am here only once and yet
 it has been a while since
 I opened my eyes
 saw an alphabet of anagrams
 instead of ash.

I am here only once and
 daily now, hourly, I make
 consternation the writer of my words.
 the milk of my motherland.
 the trunk of my ancestral tree: strong and evergreen.

I am here only once
 and I harbor sharpness in my diaphragm that
 you brush off as a
 butterflies-in-stomach kind of excitement, but
 the butterflies have knives clutched
 in their opal extremities.
 they love me for a lot but
 mostly for my misery.

I am here but
 I fear only a god-like kind of age will
 sober up my trembling,
 silence the heartbeat in my ears that rewrites living into a death march,
 smother the noir whispers I am born of:
worthless. worthless.
see how they stare, see how they see through you.
see how you are
worthless. worthless.

I am here but
 beneath a poisonous sky I have been
 slumbering.

I am here but
 I need millennia to know myself
 to know the self that exists outside of the world

on my palpitating chest.
but still, I am here.
regardless of the fear.
and tomorrow
when the morning breaks open
but not apart,
I will remember how close I came to being
swallowed by the night.

I am here.

I protest the breakability of people
because of the times I have stood just to say look, I am standing.
and yes,

I am always mending
always knitting together the parts of myself
that are convinced the world is ending
but look,
I'm still standing.
I'm still standing.
I'm still standing.

Daniella Liveck is our Poet of the Issue

Her poetry journey can be found on her Instagram: @apoeticdaydreamer

the grief you know

they want us to believe grief is a god.
that it is bigger than us,
the bodies it inhabits,
the bones it bubbles over in. but

grief is
flinching, fumbling, falling
head first over dread.
it is running from a moment that is faster and stronger and
always catches you in the end.
it is the way my mother was carved open, carved into,
for a daughter who cannot get out of bed.

grief is
wearing mary janes to a one-room DMV
in Pennsylvania hoping to find love.
it is the lone deer on the shoulder of a 6 lane highway and
it is the wind, kissing three glistening ribs that poke through its flayed chest,
mimicking breathing.

grief is
sisters. sharing a childhood, a bed,
the inevitability of a fathers impending heart attack.
it is bloodstains, birthrights, a screen fade to black.
it is breathing around haute couture
whale bones and wondering
if the ocean feels their lack.

they want us to believe grief is a god.
that it is bigger than us, but
you have walked beside grief your whole life.
you have worn it woven in your wiry hair,
cradled it in your trembling hands, kissed it on the lips
like you never have and never will a god. because
the grief you know is pocket-sized. it fits in your lap.
it sits like a chip on your shoulder, waiting
for the day you finally set it down and
acknowledge it by not looking back.

FROM THE ASHES

MAYA HUSSAIN
FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Her dreams within reach
but your black heavy boot
rests heavily on her chest,
preventing her to shoot

for the stars she's destined to reside with
for the love she's got to share,
snatched it all away
leaving her with nothing to spare.

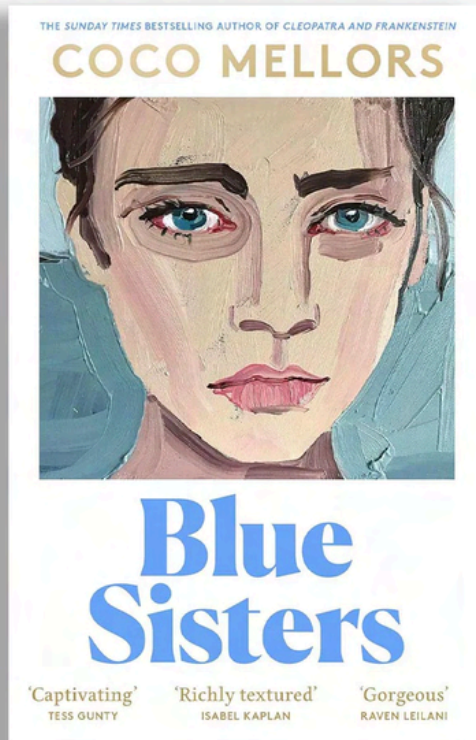
Making each breath hard to breathe
With a potential to move mountains,
you confined her to a cage
in agony she lived, stripped of her passions.

Cut her tongue and clipped her wings,
she's unable to soar.
Every time you speak, you
belittle, degrade, demean her existence
making her see life as nothing but a chore.

But can't you hear
her silence is deafening?
Fed your ego by asserting your tone,
all she ever knew you for was threatening.



October Book of the Month



Avery, a strait-laced lawyer living in London, is the typical eldest daughter, though she's hiding a secret that could undo her perfect life forever.

Bonnie was a boxer but, following a devastating defeat, she's been working as a bouncer in LA – until a reckless act one night threatens to drive her out of the city. And Lucky, the rebellious youngest, is a model in Paris whose hard-partying ways are finally catching up with her.

Then there was Nicky, the beloved fourth sister, whose unexpected death left Avery, Bonnie and Lucky reeling.

When, a year later, the three of them must reunite in New York to stop the sale of their childhood home, they find that it's only by returning to each other that they can navigate their grief, addiction and heartbreak and learn to fall in love with life again.

A Review of *Blue Sisters* by Coco Mellors: A Poignant Study of Loss, Love and Emotional Vulnerability



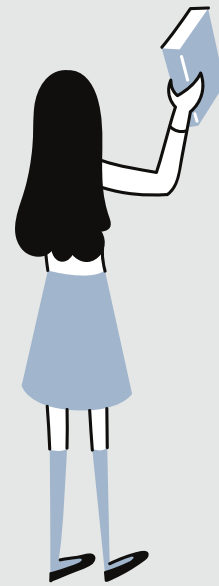
by Millie Harris

***“But what they don’t know is this:
As long as you are alive, it is never
too late to be found.”***

Coco Mellors’ *Blue Sisters* offers a profound and unflinchingly raw exploration of grief and personal vulnerability. At the heart of this novel are three sisters — Avery, Bonnie and Lucky — who find themselves returning to their childhood home a year after the death of their sister, Nicky. This story delves deeply into the delicate nature of sisterhood and the truth of loss.

Mellors writes with a piercing honesty that captures the blunt and often uncomfortable realities of her characters’ lives. She does not shy away from depicting the darker sides of addiction, grief and personal failure, instead confronting these themes head-on. This authenticity adds depth to the narrative, making the sisters’ struggles and transformations feel both genuine and profoundly moving.

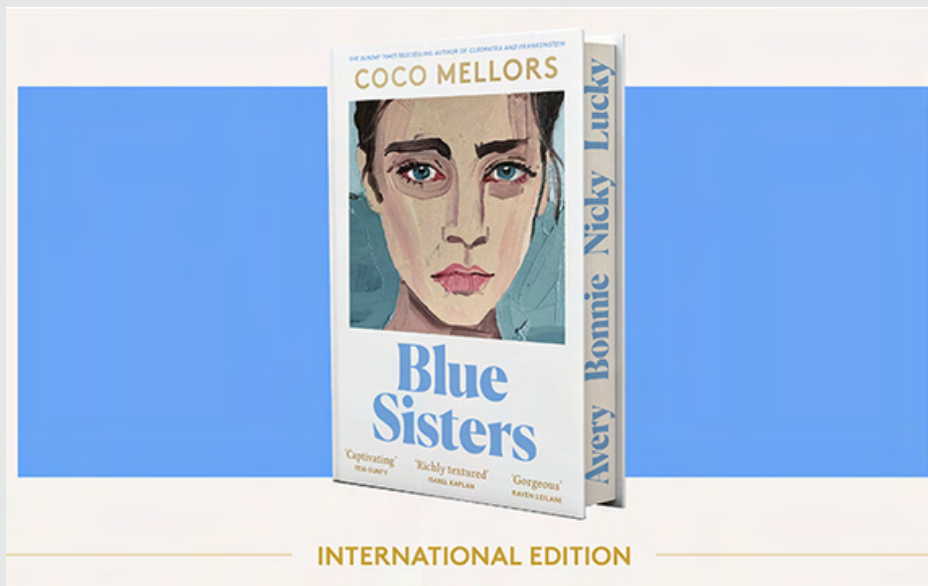
Throughout the novel, Mellors maintains a gentle irony, suggesting that true strength is not found in maintaining control but in allowing ourselves to break down. The novel’s emotional core is built around this fragility — each sister is teetering on the edge, their relationships strained by misunderstandings, resentment and unexpressed grief. The strength of *Blue Sisters* lies in its ability to capture this precarious balance between love and pain, the way familial bonds can both wound and heal.



Yet, there is also a profound tenderness in Mellors’ writing, a recognition that these bonds, however strained, are not easily broken. Mellors portrays the tension between the desire to pull away and the need to come together, creating a palpable push and pull that runs throughout the novel.

One of the most compelling aspects of *Blue Sisters* is its exploration of vulnerability as a form of strength. As the sisters go through their individual crises, the moments that resonate most are those where they allow themselves to be truly seen by one another. Avery’s confession of her struggles, Bonnie’s admission of her unrequited love and Lucky’s acknowledgment of her need for support all stand out as moments of raw honesty. It is in these unguarded exchanges that the sisters begin to find healing, demonstrating that strength often comes from revealing our fragility rather than concealing it. Despite its focus on vulnerability and healing, *Blue Sisters* does not shy away from depicting the messiness of life. Mellors acknowledges that to be human is to be flawed, to break and be broken. Yet, she also shows that there is a quiet power in picking up the pieces and showing them to those we hold dear.





However, there are moments within the book that ensured it wasn't a five-star read. At times, the narrative's focus on sexual themes feels like a distraction. The sisters' lives are peppered with sexual encounters and infidelities that are described with such detail it felt quite unnecessary. Alongside this, I also struggled midway through where the narrative pace slows considerably with Mellors delving into each sister's individual struggles. While this allows for a deeper exploration of their characters, it also causes the story to lose some momentum. The anticipation of their reunion starts to wane, and the narrative begins to feel stagnant. The depth of emotion is present, but without much forward movement it can feel like the story is stuck in place, making it harder to stay engaged with the characters.

Nevertheless, when the sisters finally come back together, the narrative regains its footing. The reunion breathes new life into the story, bringing a renewed sense of urgency and emotional intensity. Mellors captures the messiness and complexity of sibling relationships, showing that they are often filled with tension and unresolved conflicts but are also grounded in deep, unspoken understanding that they are family.

By the novel's end, the investment in each sister, flaws and all, became deep and undeniable. Mellors crafted a nuanced display of sisterhood, revealing each character's flaws, fears and hopes. In *Blue Sisters*, Mellors has given us a story that is not just about the pain of loss, but about the hope that can be found in picking up the pieces, in showing them to those we hold dear, and in finding that, perhaps, **we are not as alone as we feared.**



Millie began writing book reviews for Zimmer in August 2024. Watch out for her monthly articles on our social media and website.



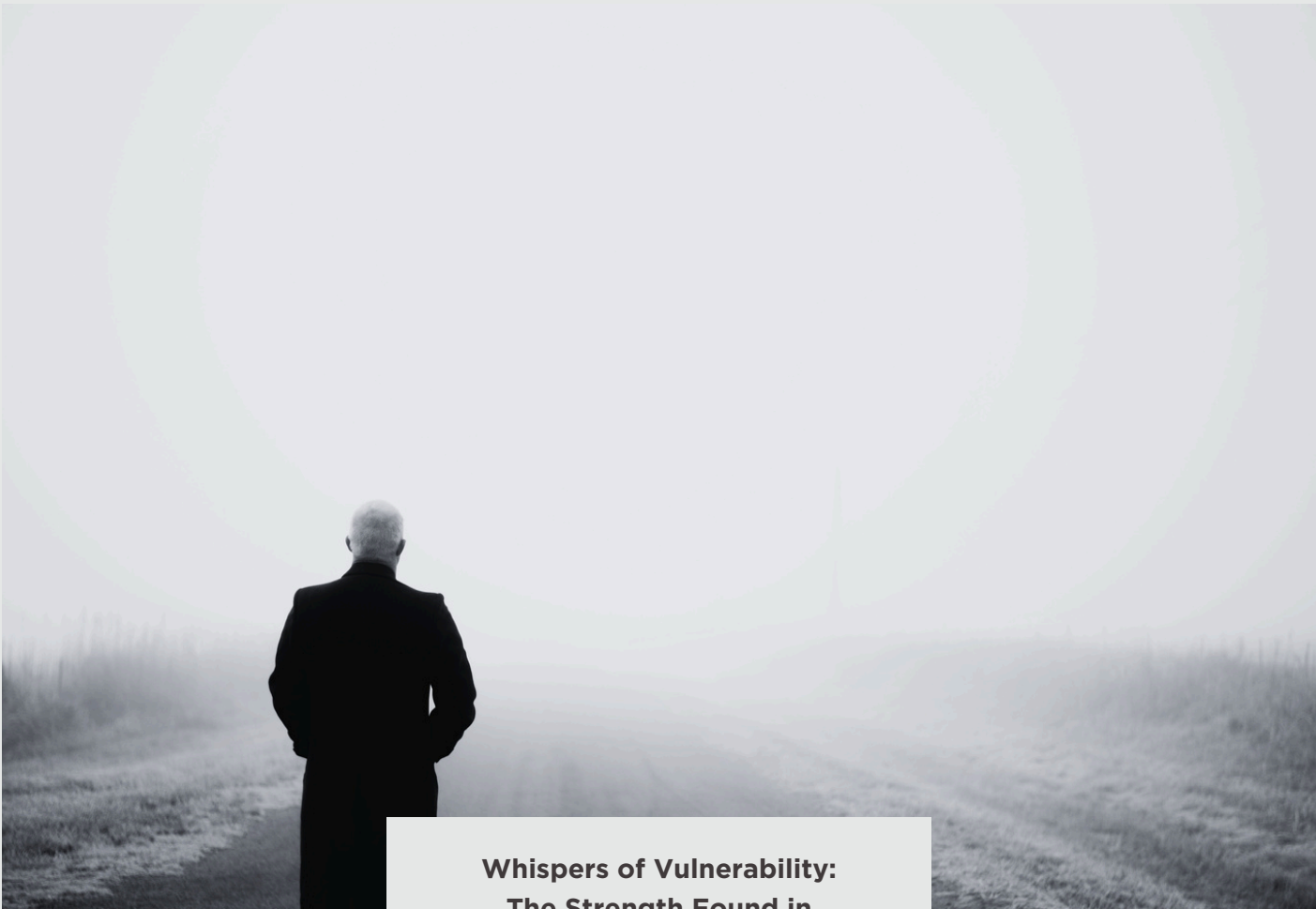
October Feature Poem

Seven years
Of silent tears.
Concealed bruises
And hush, hush fears-
Calculated manipulation,
Hidden within
The lie of
Stabilization.

I've turned the
Venemous spit
Upon my face
Into a delicate shield
Of lace-
Just for him to
Tatter every ripple,
All that grace.

Staring through bloodshot eyes
With such distate
"This wouldn't happen
If you just
Learned your place"

Azrael Aplin



**Whispers of Vulnerability:
The Strength Found in
Fragility**




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