



# RUCKUS

STUDENT LITERARY ARTS MAGAZINE

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# **RUCKUS** Winter 2020

**Student Literary Magazine**  
**The Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts**

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# THE LEHIGH VALLEY **CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL** FOR THE **ARTS**

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## *Mission Statement*

*The Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts provides a unique environment that fosters a creative, rigorous academic approach to learning and a development of talents in the arts. Built on passion, discipline and a commitment to excellence, this integrative educational experience inspires all students to believe in who they are and in what they can accomplish.*

*The works contained within Ruckus are the artistic expressions of the individual members of the Literary Arts Program. This collection is not intended to be viewed as a statement about the views of ChArts as a whole. Some readings and other content in this magazine may include topics that some readers may find triggering and/or traumatizing. We apologize for any content which may be viewed as offensive.*

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## **A Simple Melody**

Skyler Kimock

A melody seeps through the autumn oak,  
And the birch, rough bark shivering, tearing from the cold  
It follows the contours, gentle and twisting, of a senile river  
Remembering its mighty past, hobbling to the delta,  
Where it can finally be laid to rest

Comforted by a song, caressing the water, at peace  
Departing with the cool river breeze,

The music carries itself up haughty mountains, boastful and bragging  
Of glorious past, their ancient halls, decrepit  
Echoing the sound of tinny music, as they too are left behind

Their lofty pasts hanging placidly in the wind  
And a field of flowers, swinging and dancing to the music as it flies overhead  
Hues of purple and red, pollen and morning-dew guide the melody in a verdant waltz  
Through ballrooms framed by gnarled, twisted roots, illuminated by the rising sun

And at the end of the day, a quiet song winds its way back from the ballroom,  
Through the mountains elder halls,

Over a sleeping river,  
Passing the shivering oak,  
As a simple melody finds its way home

## **An Ongoing Testament to Transitioning Worlds**

Rebecca Haller

practically cynical notions

to force a “no”.

are we stuck in a principle?

political antidotes deemed to be practical,

but am I maniacal,

to die limitless and forgiven?

dying and dying to live in the physical,

but is this not physical?

limitless heartache and bloodshed and bodies—

no.

this is the principle.

our dying inside is just

test to the practical,

a joking practicality

stolen by: no one knows.

but us—

we are sensible.

we are timeless

proportioned star capsules of



no one knows;  
fantastical,  
and the frantical,  
a franchise to the forgivable.  
and if it's not actual—  
the clocks and the “rational”,  
could we flee from the terminal  
and on with the beautiful?  
turn this whole world around,  
our bodies, awaken the sensual?  
thank the stones, our weepers,  
the blues and the creepers.  
may we stir up the sensible,  
a practical deal with the natural.  
be on your way it seems,  
our dying old principle.

**weeping phoenix**

Laurel Kracht

Weep, Gaia,

Go ahead and weep,

Wash me away into the depths of a lake,

*Drown me.*

I want to hold you, to hug you;

Remind me why I never hugged you before?

All the times I hurt you

Did it ever mean anything?

Of course it did, you rise like a phoenix out of an oil spill;

You rise with anger and vengeance in your eyes.

Are you here to hurt me?

Go ahead and weep, Gaia

But don't forget me—

So often I came back to you

So often I promised change:

I will change for you, my love,

I will weep with you, my love,

But don't ask me to apologize.

You wrap your hands around my chest,

And you pull me into a hug,

And for a single second, I think,

*forgiveness.*

Then I slide a shard of plastic into your back,

(and we begin our dance all over again)

Are you shocked? Betrayed?

Come on, you knew it would end up this way,

Always fighting in the end,

For something better, another chance,

What chance? We don't deserve that—

I certainly don't.

Come on, my love, keep on weeping,

Let your tears prove something to me,

I know you have it in you.

The power to create and destroy yourself,

Isn't it beautiful?

Cover me in ashes, dump me under waves, rip me apart in a gust of wind, but remember;

For you,

Wrath incarnate, I destroy,

And for me?

My love, you rage.

## **Fireflies in a Graveyard**

David Fadem

Temporary light flickers.

Pinpricks igniting.

Life extinguishing.

Last nights of summer creep closer and closer,

Another in the— no, not books.

Scattered thoughts that we record and number.

Dancing beads frolic

Above dewy grass

Between crumbling slabs and sheets of stone,

With names and dates

Lost to erosion of body and mind.

The fireflies haven't a care,

For they will be dead in days.

So they dance.

We will be dead in hours.

So we dance.

## **Emerald**

Zoe Lachter

These emerald ferns that swing and sway  
And sing in their own emerald way  
Though often the lilies have more to say  
I listen to them most

They whisper your name once or twice  
Their syllables fast and precise  
Then stop, they know that will suffice  
To bring me back your ghost

We'll sit in sunlight leopard spots  
Who've dripped through branches' leaves and knots  
My ferns patterned with light ink blots  
'Till the sun's at her westernmost

The flowers chime in all the same  
But I know they just seek their petal fame  
So I'll leave you, silent just as I came,  
And thank my emerald host

## **From the uncomfot of my bed**

Jamison Butz

As the sun falls and the walls of my room become infinite, the air pours in, cooling down my bed heated from the sun. I fall asleep.

I awake, in a sweat, for where I lay is lit up in a blaring bright white light, disturbing me. The blankets covering my body chilled from the air of the night begin to feel warmed on my skin. Uncomfortable. And slowly feel more and more hot. Burning up. Feeling suffocated in my own comfort. I kick my blankets off my body in an almost pathetic manner, tossing myself around. I pull myself up.

Breathe.

Come alive. Just get on with your day. (I wish it were that easy.)

The day, one by one, picking and pulling away bits of energy from me. I'm drained.

Though time begins to run out along with me. I return to my room, alone in my space. I allow myself to fall onto my bed, knowing it will catch and hold onto me no matter what. I watch the shadows of trees dance and move around, my walls glowing yellow. My eyes trace the branches and leaves lining my room up to my ceiling as they blow around above me. My skin burns as I wipe them dry. I will be okay.

As the sun falls and the walls of my room become infinite, the air pours in, cooling down my bed heated from the sun. I fall asleep.



## **Cursive Lies**

Brody Defreest

I'll pace around in my empty mind, and make up lies to fill in the blanks.

And I'll tell you I love you even though I don't know what that feels like.

I promise to cover up my scars with some stupid tattoo that means absolutely nothing.

But when people ask what they mean I will tell a beautiful story about my childhood.

A childhood that I don't really remember, and the characters in the story will be far more complex than the ones that played in real life.

I promise to study the way people love so I can make you feel safe and happy for as long as you let me.

Even though I promise all these things

I am not sure I'll mean them tomorrow

Honestly I am not sure I have ever meant anything I've said

I learned to write lies so beautiful that people fell in love with the poem they wanted to hear

Beautiful cursive lies that read like their favorite book

See, I am a writer

I write a book for every new person that enters my life

Each word deliberately written for their pleasure

So when I say I love you,

Just know that it's a cursive lie

## **The devil Plays Dominoes**

Mia Marino

It will not take evil to destroy humanity

Rather, the state of our tarnished world

Is so far gone and so delicate

That it will only take one coward

Someone who lacks any kind of strength needed to

Stand up or stand apart

To thus begin the domino effect

Watch as their spineless, silent souls

Destroy everything in their path by merely touching it

While they fall onto one another

Like good-for-nothing tiles

Pieces of someone else's game

It's all fun until

One of them inevitably hits the ground

They will be so far down

That any power they try to summon from within themselves

Will—to their disbelief—not save them

They will remain stuck where they are

God I beg of you give these people a backbone

## **Skeletons in the Closet**

Abigail Morris

I am a ghost

Floating between states of

Feeling and living, hoping

For the day when the inner turmoil

Becomes as dead as I am to other people

So that I can finally be laid to rest

Mother says we're all the same

Young, stupid, lazy, ignorant

Living off of the dreams of others

Who paved the way for our safety

She says that about all of us

But I am nothing but a ghost to her

And I just sit there

My words forsaken

A silent warrior in a battle

Fighting the ones who came before us

Because I am a soul

Who believes in everything

And has nothing to lose

## **Broken Glass**

Salem Niceswanger

i want to adore you  
but hugging you hurts  
pins and needles slowly make way into my skin  
some in my eyes  
maybe that was why i was so blind  
i stutter out incomprehensible words  
about how badly it stings and aches  
about how i'd take a few more  
geez, i could never get comfortable with a ghost, could i?

i could never cry with you  
“but look at me!”, you'd say  
“are *you* the dead one here?”  
“no,” i'd respond  
but i *feel* dead  
with every breath i take  
i can feel blood swirl  
in the end, it would picture me gasping for air  
as you sat there and watched

i was there for you  
but when were you there for me?  
truth be told, you never were  
i wanted this to end with peace  
a few goodbye tears and let it rest  
but then again, you had so much energy  
so much rage filled in your body  
so much that your old scars would burst and ooze lava  
windows would shatter, furniture would snap like twigs  
the blame would be put on me  
and i'd be sent off to rot once more

sitting here now, my revenge delivered  
my arms caked in moss, earth taking me back  
i can't help but think about you  
the happiness you'd show me when you were alive  
the laughter we shared  
every memory carved into our skulls

i want to adore you  
but hugging you hurts  
and i think i can finally let go now

## **Revenge of the Ants**

Kiara Torres

Ants.

A tiny army invading my house

Invading my room

Invading my territory

“Go away, you’re not wanted here. There are too many of you,  
Too many, you creepy little things”

The ants whisper to me,

“It’s too dark out,

It’s cold outside,

Snow is starting to fall”

But I do not want the ants here

I do not want anyone here

I grab a can

I hold it in my hands

Shaking like leaves

I just want you to leave

The tiny ants look up at me one more time

“Go away, please don’t let us die”

I spray them all dead.

A silent massacre

One or two struggling to survive, but they give up,

Join their friends in Ant Heaven.

I go to sleep.

I wake up to the night still here

Cold drifting around me

I can’t feel my fingers in this cold.

I feel something touch me

Slimy and wet

Tiny, but all over me

I go to turn on the lamp

But in the moonlight I see

A tiny ant crawling up my arm

Towards my heart.



I do not move.

I can feel more crawling up my legs

On my hands

Each of their sticky little legs

Creeping up my body

They do not say a thing. I do not say a thing.

I turn on the light

I grab the spray

And they continue walking on me

Dancing maybe, in their own little ant ways

I grab the spray

I spray the ants that are covering my body

My chest

Even as they dig into my heart

Creating small holes in my flesh and

Ripping me apart they

Successfully

Make me bleed

Little

By

Little

I spray at them, at my chest,

My open wounds

They invade my body

Sticky, slimey ants digging themselves into the wounds of my chest

The scent of the spray is making my head dizzy

I claw at my skin

“Go away, please don’t let me die” I whisper

They laugh.

## **Moonlight Reflects the Purity in Bones**

Bayleigh Goff

When Sloane saw a little girl's body floating on the murky lake water, she was struck by how still the woods around her became.

The leaves stopped their constant whispers, the animals stopped their scattered scurrying, and even the universe seemed to hush. The child's face looked so serene, head bobbing towards the sky, mouth open as if swallowing up the stars. Her skin was flush, blue in the full moonlight. Sloane's mind couldn't stop racing, begging, trying to believe that this was a doll. A small girl doesn't just drown in Penny Lake. People don't come there to die, or swim, or even at all.

The lake is secluded and hidden behind a layer of thick shrubbery. At the edge, tangles of roots reach down into the shallows like arms, fragments of moonlight lie like shattered glass over the water's surface. It was her solace, a secret garden in the dense part of the woods that Sloane comes to when the world is too loud.

Sloane took a sharp intake of breath—consumed by the fact that this girl was very much alone. She stepped into the warm murk of the lake, gazing at the sky. Who let this happen? Who watched as the girl choked up water, screamed and begged, and was still so useless?

Sloane was aware of the spirits that frolicked in these woods, hidden between trees, blooming in flowers. She swore she spoke to a nymph once, her almond skin and lithe

body diving into the lake and not coming out. She could feel the tragedy in the rain, the rebirth in the grass.

Long legs began to trudge towards the floating girl, her feet sinking into the sludge. She remembered when she was first introduced to this lake, upperclassmen leading the way tipsy and loud. Sloane was terrified, cold, and felt alone. It was supposed to be an initiation the girls said as they tossed her in. In an act of defiance, Sloane stayed under the murk until the girls panicked. She sunk her fingers into the soft crumbling silt, and kicked down until she could lay among the clumps of moss and pond weed. When she resurfaced eventually, her lungs were convulsing as they adjusted to the brisk air. She was alone. They left her to drown in the middle of nowhere.

Sloane couldn't help but wonder if the little girl just wanted to feel the calm that lay at the murky bottom. To feel encased in a safe block of ice without a care in the world. But that didn't matter now she thought. The girl swam too deep, or didn't swim at all, or swam without a careful eye. When she reached the body, Sloane stared at her for a moment. She did look like a doll, a perfect specimen of a human girl, with her hair still tightly braided, and her fingernails painted a sweet shade of pink. She wore a dress with tulle cascading around her, but her little chest wasn't rising and falling. Sloane slid her arms underneath the girl, and cradled her to her chest. It was like carrying one of those gas station bags of crushed ice, cold and wet and heavy. She trudged back to the edge of the lake, then stepped up onto the bank. Sloane hobbled towards the woods, knowing exactly where this girl needed to be.

It wasn't long before the willows and the elms began to blush and awaken with the sunrise. Sloane had been working for hours, gathering and picking. The girl was laid in a pile of fresh leaves, surrounded by smooth rocks. Wildflowers were placed in her braids, her dress was more dry now, and regained its flounce. Sloane closed her eyes, and wiped her skin free of any debris. She stood there for a moment, staring at the tiny girl in front of her. Gripping the narcissus flower in her hand, she gazed up at the awakening sun. Sloane envisioned the girl, reaching for the bulrushes on the banks, consumed by their beauty. Did she see how the light reflected on the water? Did she see the life blooming around her? She doubted that the girl realized the irony of it all.

She placed a kiss on the blue girl's forehead.

Before the sun fully awoke from its slumber, Sloane dashed away from the girl and her floral shrine, past the trees, and past the river banks. Looking back once, Sloane dove into the murk of the pond.

With that the leaves resumed their constant whispers, the animals restarted their scattered scurrying and even the universe grew again. Sloane's face was covered in muck, head bobbing towards the sky, mouth open as if trying to speak. Her skin was dirty, red in the sunlight. No one's mind was racing, begging, trying to believe that this wasn't real. A young woman just drowned in Penny Lake. People come here to swim. People come here to die.

## **perpetual youth and the rest of them**

Madelyn Chase

The Wicker Women are cursed.

Cursed from the first boat across the Atlantic, some odd 13 generations ago, when Florence June Wicker decided she was going to the New World, to burn down the corn and rye and buffalo and build herself a house in the ashes.

Kate has known from a young age that something is strange about the women in her family. They are not *not* amicable people, they just keep to themselves. There are not *not* men in the Wicker family, they just stay out of the way.

And so Kate lives as well as she can. Finds friends in her cousins. Turns the other cheek. Shuns the rising tide inside of her that fills up her mouth and lungs, threatening to storm the shore. She talks less as she gets older. Doesn't want to ask a question she doesn't want the answer to.

But they tell her anyway.

Kate is the youngest Wicker Woman. Her 14th birthday happens in the fall, on a nondescript school day that passes like molasses. No one picks her up from the bus stop, but when she lets herself into the house, every living Wicker Woman is inside. Kate turns around and tries to run. Her grandmother snags her by the shoulder, pulls her back in. She sits her at the old kitchen table and flips a photo album open. Kate squeezes her eyes shut, until the phosphenes bleed into view and circumstance makes her look.

There are a silent few minutes as Kate turns the pages. When she has seen enough, she shuts the book and pushes it gently away from her.

“Why lie?” She folds her hands in her lap and looks down at them. She feels something building inside her but she is a lady and so she waits. No one answers. In an explosive movement she bangs her fist against the table. “Why lie?”

“How could I not?” Celia says quietly. “Look at how you’re reacting.”

Kate should have known, she thinks, as she watches Celia in front of her. She doesn’t fidget, doesn’t move. She breathes but Kate doubts she even needs to.

Behind Celia is Kate’s mother, tugging on her fingernails, ripping them off between her teeth and spitting them back into the sink. She’s always been like this, anxious and wound up, and now Kate sees it’s rightfully so.

Kate’s mother looks so human. Celia looks everything but. She is something bigger.

“How old are you?” Kate whispers. The words burn in her throat.

“I’m 18.”

“Liar.” She scoffs at Celia who hasn’t even the politeness to look ashamed.

*“Liar.”*

How could you do this to us? Kate wants to ask. How could you stay here and make everything so difficult? How could you drag us down with you?

Celia suddenly demonstrates all of the manners of 175 years when she averts her eyes, studies the ground, and let’s Kate scream it off in private.

“Liar!” she shrieks. “Liar, liar, liar!” There are hands on her, tugging, pulling her back to the surface. She resists. She strains against the truth as long as she can before the fight is bled from her with lancet sharp nails. She drops down, sinks into the carpet, and resigns herself to settle in the cold underbelly this terror has offered her.

Grandma lifts Kate up herself, resting her against her knees. She brushes the hair from her face and tucks it neatly behind her ears.

There is a climax to this story somewhere, a rise in the symphony that makes it all make sense, that swells loud enough and long enough and bright enough to put any slip ups to shame, but Kate can't tear herself away from the horror long enough to listen for it.

Because behind all of this falsehood, there is a plain truth she's always known.

The Wicker Women are cursed. The proof is right in front of her.

Celia, with her perpetual youth and the rest of them, sat in the living room around her, each carrying the damning secret that will only stretch and grow with every generation.

Celia will be passed down from one Wicker Woman to the next. They'll hide her in plain sight, as best they can, and move on when the townsfolk find fault in her appearance. She is Grandma's daughter Celia, Mom's daughter Celia, Kate's daughter Celia. And her daughter and her daughter and hers.

Celia will live forever. In her, the Wicker Women will too.



## **Collapse, Here**

Amani Jones

Mark this moment as a pool forms over your spoon.

Stop stepping

that way. To wake the ants in the walls,

Or the mouse we've failed to trap.

Revel in the air this Wednesday,

Not questioning the passing of hours, blending like

the mushroom, garlic, leek...

Poke my belly to say "I love you"

And we'll sit in creaky chairs that buckle when we laugh,

Some-morrow.

But if our silence shall be heavy,

We can eat.

Until the pot empties and we are warm,

Until things are better.

Let your tears fall into the soup we enjoy together.

## Untitled

Hannah Crouthamel

spacey;

the moon is bright,

I reach my hand up through the window,

it's white lights are touching my finger tips,

reconfiguring the lines,

becoming one.

my senses are out of focus,

like a camera lens.

the music has become the music of the sun, infinitely playing.

the days are blending together,

last night's drive was this morning's daydream.

tomorrow's sunset was last month's adventure.

## **writing you love poems**

Amelia Tuerk

I do try to write love poems.

To describe softness and eternity.

I try to find what it is that I love about you,

And hold onto it.

I remember, then, that love,

While it feels so sudden and yet finite,

Is a choice, and one that I have and will make time and time again.

I will choose you.

When you come and park outside my house,

And I run to the car, where the passenger door sticks,

And I kiss you through the driver side window,

I choose you.

When the rain falls hard against your roof and your windows,

And we lie together in bed, with blankets and movies,

And your head is underneath my chin and next to my heart,

I choose you.

I try to write love poems.

Try to capture emotion the way you capture me.

But all I can see is your eyes.

And all I can say is your name.

## **Hey Mom, It's Me**

Madeline Foster

“Hey mom, it's me.

I'm learning that I can't live on empty promises. Even if they're from myself. I need to trust my lungs to breathe on their own, my heart to pump my blood. But it's like I don't know how to feel safe in my own body anymore.

I always used to ask you if you loved me. If you were sure that you loved me. You always answered me the same way.

I wish I could love myself that much. I wish I could love my body for holding me upright, for surviving the end times, for still going, even now, with all the hate I have for it.

Loving myself feels like an empty promise. Like a dress that doesn't fit quite right, or a dream without an ending. It feels like fool's gold.

Mom, I don't know how to keep going. Sometimes I feel like I'm so deep under the water I can't tell which way is up. My soul is drowning in a pot of tea, I am like Alice, floating tiny in the massive, inescapable universe.

You tell me I lied to you, Mom. If it hurt you to inhale that one sweet lie, imagine the barbed wire around my lungs when I told them to myself. Imagine the pain when I realized what I'd done, after I'd lied so hard even I began to believe it.

I wish I could tell you everything, Mom. But I know we're not ready. I wish I had all the words in the world so I could give the kindest ones to you, and keep the bravest ones for myself. I wish I could swallow the fear and chew it up, spit it out like tobacco.

I gotta go now, Mom. But I -

*Call completed."*

## **The Deck of Cards**

Angelina Whitaker

I feel less lonely when I'm alone  
No one to show me what I don't own  
I'll choke back the tears when they're around  
I have been given lost, but I just want to be found

That's the hand that I've been dealt  
All of the crushing emotions I've ever felt  
Can be found in a deck of cards I shuffled  
Each one screaming, only to be muffled

Eight of spades, six of hearts  
Pick up all of the silent cards  
And listen closely to hear the whispers  
Crying out for help like howling wind in the winter

Eight of spades, six of hearts  
Pick up all of your broken parts  
And try hopelessly to put them back together  
As you drown in loneliness, or in the rainy weather

Three of clubs, nine of diamonds

Float on your tears to the cluster of islands

They're lonely like you, even when surrounded

By islands like them, and there's no way around it

Three of clubs, nine of diamonds

Go look up at all the highlands

Who look down upon you as you sink into the tears

And your cards are drifting, falling apart at the hands of your fears



## **Hair**

Shannon Cerutti

Early morning smells of burning hair  
Bare feet pressed impatiently on splintering floorboards  
Dad stands next to the sink, brush in hand  
trying to tame the wild knots with an iron  
to make them look presentable for picture day  
But I hate every second of it  
tears fall from a pouting face  
wondering why I can't go to school like I normally would  
being remembered in the yearbook as just me  
not a dress-up doll

*She doesn't have to do anything for crazy hair day*

*She can just come like she normally does*

I stick my tongue out at the group of laughing girls  
from my classroom island  
running my fingers through the mop of brown knots on my head

School nights I run from the brush  
hair untamed like the horses in my backyard  
Dad gives up, figuring if she wants to straighten the knots  
she'll do it herself

One morning, as I play with the toy dinosaurs in the corner

he comes up to me

*You're ugly*

I go home

And hand dad the brush

## **what isn't in a name**

Marlee Davis

davis

is a slave name.

engraved in the chains that

bound my ancestors

to a life of pain,

to days of brutal sorrow.

davis was the name

of the strange fruit

plucked from the

south carolina trees too soon

blackened by the sun

and something much more sinister.

we've been searching for our name in the dark for ages.

crawling hopefully through fields

passing crumpled bodies

and their ghosts

as we try to ignore

the painful connections we feel

to the earth below us.

davis is a slave name,  
but it is the only name i know.

**when the walls dance**

Isabelle Schlegel

when i dance

the walls dance with me

and the black corners of the room recede

further than dimensions allow

the world is a Tilt-a-Whorl

a magic carpet

a kaleidoscope

the ground swells under my feet

i dance like a gypsy on water

time stumbles through a mosaic

of shattered notes

on the record player, the needle trips

on the flow of sound

as my body pulses

in dizzying bursts of motion

to the rhythm of the music that fades

into the scattering of my thoughts

i lose my head

without grace, under a crying moon

and the floor falls away

when i dance...

## **Nature's Looking-Glass**

Bethany Dominguez

As a child, I remember looking into the still pond about a mile from my house. Every morning, I would dash through the damp grass, crystalized with dew, toward my national treasure. Light as a feather, the soft summer breeze would catch me in its drift (the skirt of my dress acting as a sail) and carry me to my desired destination. My deep brown eyes would glare at myself through the pond's reflection.

Some mornings I would be a fairy, other times a mermaid or a princess. On special occasions, the pond would mold me into a world-known scientist, ready to show the world a life-changing discovery or invention.

All I had to do was tap the clear water with my index finger and small ringlets would appear, initiating my transformation.

There was a magical essence around that dear pond, always giving me the confidence I desperately needed and shielding me from the jeering arrows fired left and right.

My hand-me-down clothes were my armor, my faith was a sharp sword, my tears were shimmering diamonds, my heart was a roaring fire.

As I have grown older, the mystical effects of the pond have gradually evaporated into the misty air. I can no longer rely on nature's looking-glass; it lays shattered one mile away.

## **Perhaps the World Begins Here**

Sienna Gallus

The moon circles our beds in constant, unconscious routine. No matter what, we must sleep to live.

The gifts of night wedged between closed eyelids. So it has been since creation, and it will go on.

We intertwine bodies here on cold nights. Our children check underneath for waiting hands. They tell stories tangled in messy sheets.

It is here where the endless pull of fear and peace labor us in the darkness. We make poets here, we make dreamers.

Our nightmares follow us awake and pull our beloved close. They laugh at us; at our poor, twisted hair in the mornings. Until they slink back into our heads by the open curtains.

This bed has been the sun in the dead of winter and yet too, the snow.

We have begun and ended in this bed. It's a place to hide in the warmth of memory. A place to dry your long-gathered tears.



We have laid in death on this bed, and have begun to breathe the life of tomorrow.

In this bed, we tire from love and sift through odds with careful fingers. We measure minutes till the dawn. We surrender ourselves.

Perhaps the world will end in this bed, while we are abstracted and centered, dying and wholly alive, hitting the snooze button and sinking five more minutes into sleep.

## **Dreams**

Ashley Lebron

It's always easier to dream, of  
all the things you want to come true,  
the ones that make you happy,  
And make life worth living.

It's better to deny than to believe the truth,  
The world keeps spiraling,  
It never seems to stop,  
Breathing.

When you think of the things that you  
wish would be, when it's dark outside  
and you're sightless,  
but somehow you still see  
life and the sky, you're believing.

We wonder why we imagine things that'll  
Probably never happen, but your imagination  
Is what makes your dreams a reality

Without wanting to know what could be

Or what things would be different,

Life would be almost nonexistent.

It's like how Langston said,

*“Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die,*

*life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly.”*

Your dreams keep your life afloat,

without them, you start falling.

## Untitled

Elijah Brown

i spent my friday night  
dancing with my mirror  
she's quite nice  
we go on long car drives  
sing our favorite songs  
she doesn't know the words,  
i don't either

however

when things get dark,  
she disappears

## **Her Song, They Sing**

Kalaya Chamberlain

A room filled with souls

A yard buried the rotting

White walls splattered red

And still she keeps winding

Listen to what she plays

Their cries are not stopping

The ribbon she finds you with

Is never untying

## **You are my Galaxy**

Mercedes Lobb

Take me  
on a trip  
to the galaxies  
edge,  
where your  
secrets are hidden  
within the stars  
s c a t t e r e d  
across the night sky.

Allow me  
to find them  
one  
by  
one,  
until I discover  
all of who you are.

I promise  
not to let any of  
your moon dust  
slip through my fingertips,  
for I shall plant them

along the purple skyline  
that is painted across  
my entwined heart.  
Have I ever told you  
that your eyes  
are brighter than  
the Aurora Borealis Lights?  
And that when I throw  
on your sweater  
it reminds me of your warmth?  
Maybe one day  
I'll be able to tell you  
how much you mean  
to me,  
and how your beauty  
made me feel alive.  
Perhaps over a cup  
of coffee at your favorite  
cafe.  
The color of leaves  
may change,  
but my love for you  
will not.

For you are my  
perfect fantasy,  
and one day,  
we shall meet again.





# SUKCUR

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