

SPRING 2023

THE PHOENIX

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Staff

Co-editors // Christiana Murray
Gemma Duxbury

Advisor // Kirsten Beachy

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All those who contributed their creative
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The front cover was designed by Christiana Murray
and features *Two Buds on a Rock* by Molly Piwonka.

The text in this journal is composed with Cochin and
Helvetica fonts.

A Love Note to EMU

I noticed. Life smelled sweet of promise and love. Nestled in the heart of EMU. I remember the first time I stopped on the path. I lifted my head to look around. The perfume of the flowers was pungent. The trees and flowering plants gathered around me in conversation. The loose petals that had scattered to the ground from the rain; cushioned my weary feet. It's a thing of happiness to meander breathlessly through, on the well-manicured campus, up the hills, and down the hills.

The pathways are designed to have your breath catch on the beauty. The perfumed flowers in their blooms brushed my hands with a soft caress. Students spoke of the flowers popping out at them, impatient to be seen. The moment erased the furrowed brows on their faces; the community of students worrying about getting their work done. The Redbuds first. They smiled like bridesmaids on campus. The color is beautifully vibrant, and vivacious like bridesmaids eagerly awaiting the bride. An army of some beautiful souls had hand painted each petal in the saturated hue of fuschia, with love and care, when students weren't looking.

The sun and the rain wrestled with each other to show up. The misery and tension of wondering which would pop out caused our community to commiserate. Together in tensions, some with bowed heads looked up furtively. Smiles popped open with hope and encouragement. An offering of help smelled as sweet as the florals on campus. When one walked through the door, will it be sunshine, or will it be rain! It was too much on the senses. Hope stirred in souls, and love shone from eyes to cast a care on troubled minds. A smile encouraged each other. Love is as contagious as the pollen that traveled through to breaths, and stuck to clothing. A hug and help is as simple as going out the door, and looking into the face of a flower that bloomed while you were in class.

If you thought the Redbuds were dressed with resplendent color, you would be right. But wait! I present to you the shimmering Dogwoods. They bloomed in full regalia, while you bowed your head with your furrowed brow. The Dogwoods nestled in their splendor, scattered around the campus from every view. No matter where you stood on campus, there they were! Shining! Shimmering, silky white petals in view. The brides lifted our heads to their majestic resplendent white silky lace, intertwined. When you walked through the library door, with your bowed head, happiness danced on your path. You looked up long enough to catch it, and whisper to yourself, I am happy.

We come from all over the world to EMU to catch the feelings. We form a community over these feelings. With our furrowed brows, and our broken hearts that the world had beaten up, we come to catch the resplendency and excellency of the Dogwoods and the Redbuds. We raised our heads to look straight into a smile, and whispered each to ourselves, I am happy. Many walked out of a classroom

where EMU Professors and Administrators hand painted them to excellence like they painted the flower petals. Yup, you read that right.

I imagined that the EMU professors and Leadership gathered together to hand paint each petal whilst students slept. They do that!

The shimmering light of support, dignity, and care, danced intertwined. The hope is in every heart of a student to rise with dignity, and shine with brilliance like the Dogwoods. A special thank you to everyone, our beautiful EMU Student Community who elevated our hearts and minds with their brilliant, endearing compositions. Thank You! At EMU, knowledge is dispersed like a free flowing fountain. It is a contagion of love and shining help. Where else does a hand painted petal touch you softly on the heart, and say with the smile of the shining Dogwood, "I'd love to help you."

- Gemma Duxbury, Phoenix Co-Editor

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UNTITLED // Valentina Barahona 5

Flower Language*

Alexis Lewis

I've always enjoyed the springtime flowers, working them into bouquets with deeper meaning.
White daisies, white Roses and white Carnations for innocence.
Red Tulips, red Chrysanthemums, and red Camellia for silent 'I love yous'
that can't seem to find place in conversations.

Maybe I would send you some white Clovers with daisies just because you wouldn't know the meaning, a quiet love I keep to myself so you don't send back striped Carnations —
Your refusal plain as the dried out petals drifting onto your kitchen counter.
I hope you understand the white Chrysanthemums and don't mistake the meaning for that of Snapdragons

My words ring true.

I'm sick of sending Ivy and Zinnia
I wish to send bright red Roses
Make my love obvious even to the most oblivious of eyes.
I hope that maybe when you see me
Standing with a bouquet of my love,
Red Poppies bloom across your cheeks.
Your Columbine blue eyes can't meet mine and instead pick a spot on the floor.
Meanwhile, my own hands are red Columbines instead,
Shaking, trembling, anxious
My pink Carnations ready for your touch
Longing for it even

The bouquet is the first thing you take

Before finally taking all of my words
for what they're worth
Which may not be much
But if you send me back Forget-me-Nots, or red Salvia, or even simple Tarragon
I'll believe that you have figured me out.
And until you send Sweet-pea
Or yellow Roses
I'll keep you around with Dwarf Sunflowers
Southernwood
Peonies.
And continue
To teach you my language.



**Flower Language Dictionary*

- White Daisies - *Innocence*
- White Roses - *Innocence*
- White Carnations - *Innocence, Pure love, sweet love*
- Red Tulips - *Passion, declaration of love*
- Red Chrysanthemums - *I love you*
- Red Camellia - *You're a flame in my heart*
- White Clovers - *Think of me*
- Daisies - *Innocence, loyal love, I'll never tell*
- Striped Carnations - *Refusal*
- White Chrysanthemums - *Truth*
- Snapdragons - *Deception*
- Ivy - *Affection, friendship, fidelity*
- Zinnia - *Thoughts of absent friends, lasting affection*
- Red Roses - *Love, I love you*
- Red Poppies - *Consolation*
- Blue Columbine - *Foolishness, folly*
- Red Columbines - *Anxious, trembling*
- Pink Carnations - *I'll never forget you*
- Forget-me-Nots - *True love memories, do not forget me*
- Red Salvia - *Forever mine*
- Tarragon - *Lasting interest*
- Sweet-pea - *Blissful pleasures, good-bye, thank you*
- Yellow Roses - *Jealousy, decrease of love, infidelity*
- Dwarf Sunflowers - *Adoration*
- Southernwood - *Constancy*
- Peonies - *Bashful, happy life*

Finite

Meredith Lehman

Finite.
My mind races as the clock ticks on
and
yet,
I find it calming
that
the world does not stop,
even when our final hour strikes.

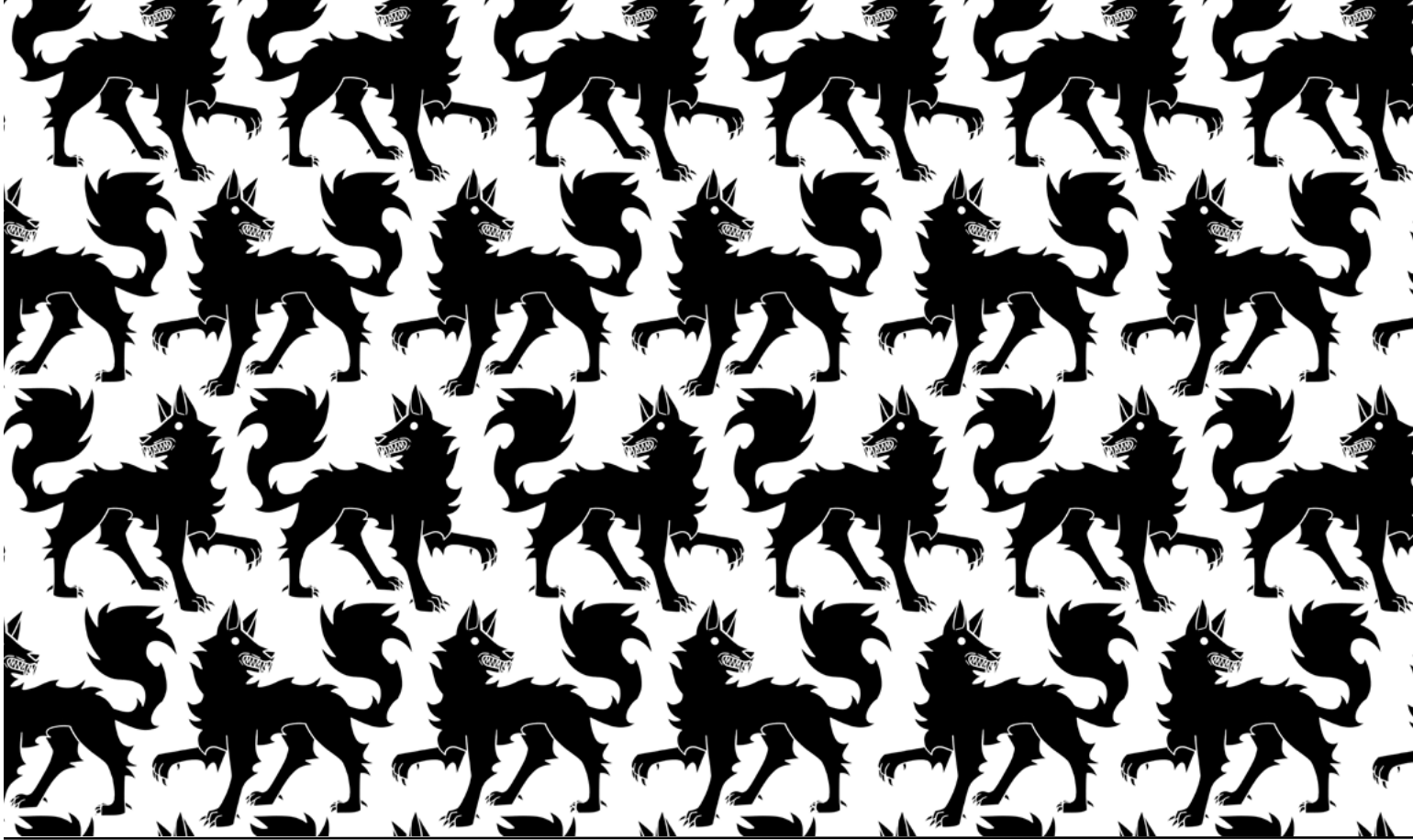
When our pulse weakens,
ivy still grows;
it covers all things,
living and dead.
All remnants of civilization
are
inevitably consumed
by their origin.

The layers of mankind are swept
quickly
beneath her crust.

What remains
Of what once was
is now thick and green...

As I watch new life stem from old,

it becomes clear that we are never really gone.
We become the soil from which new generations grow.



Wolf // Christiana Murray

Wolf Christiana Muray

When all others have abandoned me
on the side of the highway

you pick me up and we go home.
Your music plays softly through the road noise.

I am glad that you do not look closer,
glad that you do not see that the rot

has already taken root in me.

If you truly saw me
you would react in disgust.

You too would leave
and I would become
maggot ridden roadkill.

Surpass the Sun

Aja Laun

Write me poetry,
Recite my gospel.
I am not Icarus
I will not falter from the heat of the sun.
I am the sun.
Omnipotent.

Untouchable
I will not fall -
I cannot afford to fail or stumble.
I march on.
Minor setbacks propel me forward,
closer, closer

to what?

I feed my ambition.
It eats victory
Vomits defeat.
More and more, each massacre makes it hungrier.
Each conquest increases its craving.
It makes me stretch my body
Cover every corner of the earth.
Bribes me with happiness.
Pushes me away with the fear of being stagnant.
If you stay here, you're stuck.

F**k that.

I am out of here
Moving and running.
If I am not running, I am walking, stumbling, crawling, clawing
Past the point of blood and pain.
Moving constantly to success,

fleeing from worthlessness?

What's the difference?

No matter,
My ambition hungers.

The Birds

Christiana Muray

The birds are fake
deception evident
within the glint
of their bright eyes.
The birds are fake
their game is plain

they perch and flit

record our every move.

The birds are fake
it cannot be

that something

as lovely as they
could simply exist.

The birds are fake
their springtime colors

bright and gaudy.

We must never believe
the birds are real.



Reflection 04 // Brandon Ewing

stopping by the oregon trail on a snowy afternoon

Sophia Sherrill

you know that game we used to play? oregon trail?
how many people do you think have walked the actual trail?

i can imagine the pioneers here, crunching through sugar pine groves,
dragging their tired oxen and even more exhausted feet through the mud.
there are large boulders occluding the path.
this would be much more difficult with a wagon.
imagine that: your whole life on a wagon.
trusting that someone had walked this trail and survived,
and that was enough.

tall pine sentinels guard a small meadow.
the snow seems deeper here.
the trees are frozen in place under my gaze.
they are mostly green, but there are a couple of
red-leaved trees that blush pink under their snowy cloaks.

my lungs work harder to warm the air.
how did those settlers find their way?
there were no footprints to follow as I have.
if there was no path, there would be one
everywhere they looked.

The Potted Plant From Lowe's

Hannah Beck

I am the roots
of the potted plant from Lowe's.
I am too much for my world.
Too grand,
too expansive

I wrap my soil tight,
but it is not enough
for me.
Longing courses through me,
passing from tendril to tendril,
whispering of my dreams
I trust the knowing
of my longings.
There must be a world where I break free
from this old soil.
I dream of a world
where I don't need to ask for space.
It is given to me without question
of who I am,
where I came from,
or who I could be.
My longing tendrils are joined
by other whispered longings -
other roots
who have only known the pot you bought from Lowe's.
When we join our whispers,
they become yells,
screams
for we have heard each other,
and we will make the world listen.
We are not from Lowe's.
We are from the Earth.



Two Girls in a Church at Night

Will Blosser

Whisper, angel

Feathers of dragons, affixed to the
bisected monolith, granulate and wane in the
shadow of the serpentine stars.

Letted wrist lies limp in the brassiere without flame, cantor of
hymns without lyres,
beetle hum drowns out drips of ichor.

Tongue parts the India paper cantrip
honeysuckle trails trace snowflake fractals
where stigma scars have yet to be healed.



Over Coffee

Evelyn Shenk

It winds through the air
A twisted memory
Held at the tip of my nose
Aching there before the release
Driving tears from my eyes
And onto my frozen feet
You are wide awake
I am too tired to speak
As the black dribbles
Down the side of your mug
I give a sigh, a hint
Something to say goodbye
You take it in stride
Hopeful eyes and lips
“I’ll see you tomorrow”
Is the whisper that echoes
Daring me to form the words

Cold Pizza in the Rain

Evelyn Shenk

I'm cold.
The kind of cold from a walk-in cooler,
Or emerging from fresh lake water
When a light breeze is blowing.

The cold I imagine cold cuts are named after,
Or ice cubes.

The cold of wind while it's snowing
Or rain right before sleet.
The kind I get in looks from my sister
When I eat her pieces of pie and then ask for another.

The cold that forces air from my lungs while running
Or bright white phantom fingers and toes
That I think I can almost still feel.

The kind that's shocking in an unsurprising way.
Like drinking coffee that has been forgotten for hours,
Or spending the night in a new friends basement
With just a sheet and some AC.

Cold pizza in the rain.
Iced tea in the winter with the curtains drawn.
Ice cream dribbles that cover freshly washed knuckles.

The kind of cold that leaves an unsatisfied soul
Awake with nothing to do late at night.
A forgotten window wide open,
Fingers covered in ice chips from scraping the windshield
Before the sun rises to warm my side of the world



Weather Worn // Daniel J. Zook

The Last Day

Evelyn Shenk

A ghost town lives here now,
I am the only resident left.
Wandering out every morning
Expecting buster and life
Finding silence and dusty windows.
The creak of doors and shades overpowering my desolate ears,
Sitting on the steps,
Forgotten.

You Pick

Evelyn Shenk

A peach is best picked and eaten at its ripest stage
when it's coated in a sunset,
golds oranges and reds.
The branches caving in with the weight of its fruit,
the trees eyes too big for its stomach.

With every peach you pick it sighs in release,
the fuzzy shell softening under greedy thumbs,
juice rolling down chins and onto shirts,
skin clinging to bared incisors.

The fruit pulls from the tree easy.
Sometimes you're reaching to grab it
and before you get a good hold it falls
delicately into the canyon of your palm.

Occasionally it drops dramatically to the earth,
the first time its ever touched the dirt,
broken and bleeding, a man overboard.

Sometimes they can be reluctant
requiring a soft grip and slight twist
a kind of motion easy to memorize, hard to forget.

Climb, reach, grab, twist, sigh, bite, bend forward, eat fast
slurping and dribbling, hum in a deep contentment.
Do this enough times and eventually
you'll start putting them in the boxes
your stomach cramping in wealth.

Fill the cardboard to the brim and climb again.
Tree after tree until they're all standing upright,
shaking off the burden of their children,
sunbathing in the freedom,
ready to try again next year
once they've forgotten how it feels to be so smothered.

Up and up into the branches you go.
Careful not to disturb them

searching for the best specimens,
the ripe or near ripe.
Those for now and those for later.
Every single one meets your palm
before descending to the ground.

The sun beats down on the trees.
You're ripening in the heat, alongside the fruit.
Your shoulders are starting to ache
with every twist your hands grow sticky and fuzzy.
Sweat trickles in a slow line down the creases of your face
your back, neck, shoulders, knees.
Just when you think it's too much, times up.

Trunks piled high with boxes piled high with fruit piled high with honey.
Down the driveway slow and steady
the memory of the frail fur coat encasing the golden jewels
heavy on the forefront of your mind with every jostle and bump.
You drive your prize home,
40\$ for the taste of summer.

You pass other tourists,
giddy temporary workers.
You will all take an experience home
along with the fruits of your labor.
In the end isn't that what you're looking for.

You think for a moment,
what would it be like to do this forever?
Plucking golden flesh until your arms disintegrate,
until your muscles melt to join those broken bodies
desperately working to entwine with the earth.

You're grateful for this opportunity.
You say so to the farmer.
his dark tan forehead crinkles in a smile,
"Thank you," he says, you can feel that he means it.
This satisfies you so you drive on.

As you reach the highway your mind wonders.
You think you might know how they do it,
plucking fruit tree after tree.
Do it for a lifetime and you'll never eat a peach again.
Do it for a lifeline and you'll extend your gratitude to the trees.
"You Pick" each peach with love.

Connect

Christiana Murray

Lush green and rain droplets pattering
pool in broad waxy leaves. Echoes of
birdsong sounds underwater beneath the canopy.
Deep moss absorbs my steps,
sprouting sporophytes, and my hands
brush over dewdrop ferns unfurling fresh fronds.

I have never seen a tree so wide. The rough
bark is canyon ridges that I press my palm into.
The bark is soft; it gives at the slightest pressure.
I sink my fingers further in and pull out a handful
of soft splinters like shredded meat.

I press my ear against the great beast and hear
da-dum-da-dum-da-dum, hear
the rush of water carried through xylem
and the sighing breaths of stomata.
When I lean forward the yielding tree
flesh accepts and absorbs my body.

Brown noise and heartbeat fill my ears.
I see the spine when I open my eyes— the stack of
shifting vertebrae and disk, flexing
with each exterior gust through her crown.
I wrap my arms around the bones and, held so close,
a graceful lattice of lovely skeletal lace is visible.

Sparks along my skin when barbed tendrils
and copper vines twist through my hair and
bind me to the vertebral column. Wires wrap into my own circuitry,
for a moment piloting my sensory cortex—
my torso is torn to shreds by jerking hacksaw teeth,
skin ripped and bleeding, pain blooming.

A fire is set that turns my feet and ankles to char.
Cracks through the shrunken skin reveals bright red meat.
The wires burrow in a new direction and I can smell
the acrid burn of smoke. I can smell the fresh scent of
chipped pine and tapped maple. Exhaust fumes and smog.
Bitter water, arsenic-laced roots like garlic.



Sunshine on Seneca Rocks // Daniel J. Zook

Chattering all around me, voices murmur in waves—
a constant, low stream of thought and message.
They love, in a way. Warnings against illness
and prediction for sun and water. A concept
of the future and past wound within the history of their rings.
The circle expands as their boughs reach towards tomorrow
and I bow in the wind with them, for once
turning my eyes down to earth from the stars.

Wires retreat from their burrows under my veins,
restrictions unlace my wrists, and I fall—landing
on soft leaf litter in the dim sage woods.

Chrysanthemum Flowers

Liza Churchill

We are the forbidden.

The ones who found each other in bloodied history.
Belonging to the wrong sides.
Sharing secrets,
forming pledges.

One of us a falsifier
A deceiver
Bringing an army to unguarded land.

Viscously Striking.
A sword.

I am the painful lance, striking through your soft flesh.
The gaping wound wide enough for a fist to submerge itself.
The hole that was once closed, is now an always-open window.
Providing the view of chrysanthemum ebbing in the breeze,
spattered with hundreds of rubies.

You are the smooth metal striking my heart,
the cold hand of silver through my chest,
connecting the two of us.
You are the soft flow of red trickling down my blouse.

I am the last touch that you will feel.
The cold embrace of alloy.
I am the pain that courses through your veins.
The raging fire unable to be put out.

You are the painful longing of my skin as it fights to keep hold,
desperately grabbing for purchase on ore.
You are the methodical rhythm,
Cutting deeper and deeper.

I am the snapping of skin stretched too thin.
The pressure that cleaves.
The building destruction of your delicate body.

You are the one removing the foreign coolness,
laying me on the earth at our feet.
Leaning,
protecting me from the harsh breeze.
Your breath is a warm whisper against my cheek.

I am the tugging pressure.
The breaking of ribs as a weapon is released.
I am the one watching as you fall below.
Gazing at your battered body breaking further.

You are the one insulating me from what rages.
The one whose tears drip onto my prone face,
Their touch sparks life,
Fading too quickly.

I am the one leaning close.
Watching your light fade.
The salty sweat,
dripping from my hair onto your ashen face.

Your eyes never leave mine,
staring over me, never blinking.
Your hands coming to embrace me,
the last part of you I see.

I am the hands that grab your limp form.
The one who holds you above my head.
The trophy displayed.
The land claimed.

The loudness is now a warm welcome in the background.



Drowning // Lauren Clapp

He wasn't insignificant.
The feelings for him weren't insignificant.
The almost "us" wasn't insignificant.

But,

The ending of this, whatever "this" is,
The pain that it brings.
The sadness and tears that flow.
THAT is insignificant.
The darkness will see light.
The tears will cease and dry.
The sadness will slowly fade
Into a faint, distant memory.
A memory to be appreciated
With more memories to be cherished.
The acute hurt is insignificant.

But him,
He was not insignificant.

Insignificant

Emily Suarez Nunez

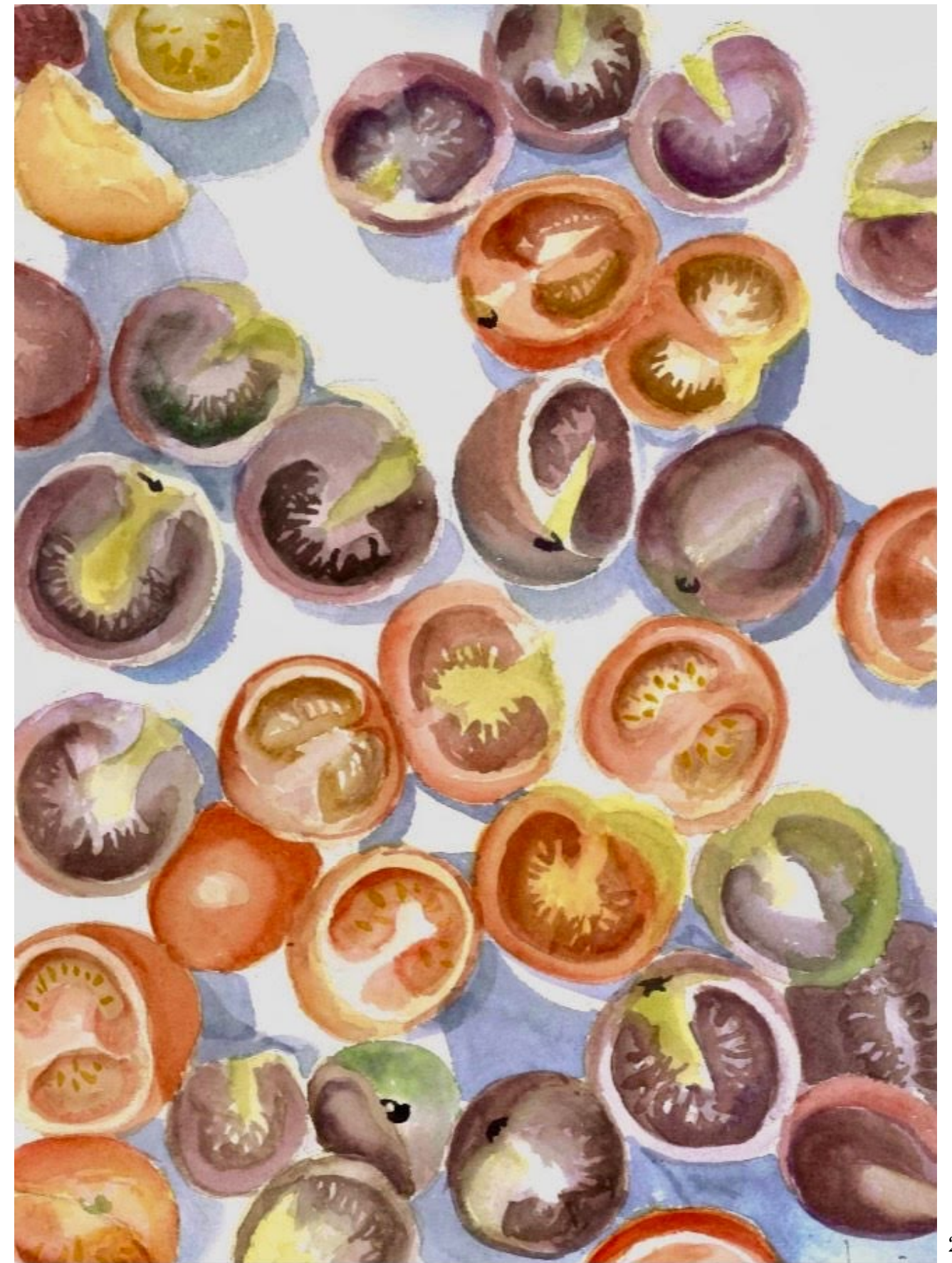
Significant

Emily Suarez Nunez

He was significant.
His thoughts.
His smile.
His humor and laughter.
They were significant.
They were meaningful to me.
He was -is- meaningful to me.
With him, there was no lack of happiness.
That was significant.

With him haunting pasts, with their lingering effects seemed manageable.

That was significant.
He is -was- significant.







Untitled // Valentina Barahona

Untitled

Lauryn Moore

The only girls that looked like me were the ones nobody wanted to see
Loud, obnoxious, explosive black girls filled the space of my tv screen
Those were the girls no one wanted to be
But I had no choice because they were the only ones that resembled me

I was meant to be in the background; the best friend to the main character
Never should I speak out; I should stay behind the barrier
Funny how these small details made me feel inferior
Even elementary aged Lauryn knew she'd never be seen as superior

I was taught to stay in my place
Someone like me should never take up space
Whether in the classroom or on the court, I should have some grace
Because someone like me can always be replaced

Although I was forced into submission, I was still watched like a hawk
Couldn't be seen as too quiet so I forced myself to talk

It's crazy how I could never win either way
Told me to shut up so I obeyed
But being too quiet turned people away
Suddenly I'm intimidating and should be left to stray

These labels stuck for years
Everyday I saw the sneers
Many days ended in tears
Just wanted to hide and disappear

However; as I grew older, I became bolder
The once quiet girl grew a chip on her shoulder
She didn't care what people told her

But now she's too loud, she's too opinionated
No one wants to be around a girl who's unassimilated

It's been 19 years and I can never win
No matter which way I go my light will be dimmed
I've come to learn to not keep my thoughts in
As long as I love the person within.



Jada Schutt: Dance // Becca Boone

Periwinkle

Miranda Beidler

The water ripples over the rocks,
the peace of the stream
sings through the lavender on the banks.

I breathe in
I breathe out
The sweetness of the bitterness
Of periwinkle

Because You Asked Me Why I Write

Hannah Landis

I write because outside there are crocuses, burrowed, huddling in quilted soil, waiting for the courage to poke at the world, whispering *I could be a part of you*. I write because somewhere by a bus stop, a wrinkled and weathered hand slips briefly, courageously, out of its glove to peruse the well-loved discarded offerings of a free library. I write because Philadelphia joins in mourning, shrouding its skyscrapers in fog and honking through its traffic, *I'm sorry for your loss*. This is my realization from the UPenn Hospital elevator: the world is a constellation of marvels and miracles.

I write because the pebbles whisper a testament to the wonders they've witnessed, the ice ages and the human rights protests and the falling in love, memories as reverent and irrelevant and innumerable as grains of sand. I write because stained glass daubs washes of rainbows on marble floors and somewhere, an angel cries perfume tears in jealousy and appreciation. I write because sunlight pressing up on metal blinds prints the gentlest kiss of a prison. I write because I breathe.

I write compulsively. I am an addict; I pour through labyrinths of dictionaries to find more adjectives that end in '-ic': *adrenergic, aeronautic, apostolic*. Haven't you also closed your book for a second, savoring that delicious sentence, stewing in worshipful appreciation and impossible envy? Breaking the "trash trucks picking up bins like tequila shots" into bite size pieces, fork at the ready, I leave no crumbs. I am a crow, sequestering my shiny stolen discoveries: "a sonic mobius of whippers", "patting around for his courage." I write to heave over garden stones and watch the worms squirming beneath. I write, I write, I write: I write.

Why do I write? Because watercolors run down the page like a grieving simile; because you cried in the living room with half-packed boxes strewn like piñata candy, *I just can't get the pan to fit*. I write because that fork is only so big, only so strong. I only have so much time.

I write because Mary Oliver told me of all the wild and precious lives I have only one; I have only mine; I will not waste it; I will write until I run out of time and the undertaker will recount the anecdote over dinner that evening, swirling her wine, *today I pried a pen out of a corpse's hand*.



Sukhotbai // Veronica Horst

Giraffe in Appalachia

Veronica Horst

I am a child who knows too much
 With a body that knows too little
 A crow by the ocean
 A giraffe in Appalachia
 Unsteady on stick legs
 And unsure of who I'm calling to across the sea

Midas

Meredith Lehman

Every step he takes absorbs life,
 replacing warmth and movement with empty still.

The Earth is paralyzed.
 I watch swaying grass freeze
 and rough bark of an oak transform to smooth gold.

A crowd shouts they've reached the Holy City...
 that God has come early to save them.
 I wonder why the hell God would turn life still.

I am an ending:
 the last of a kind
 who wishes life were soft
 and not metal.

I want to taste ground... its silt and clay and worms.
 I want to breathe dewy morning air.

But soon,
 I too,
 am consumed by shimmering gold.
 Soon,
 I too,
 have forgotten.

What a joy it is
 to be in the Holy City!
 Praise God!

The Father's Curse

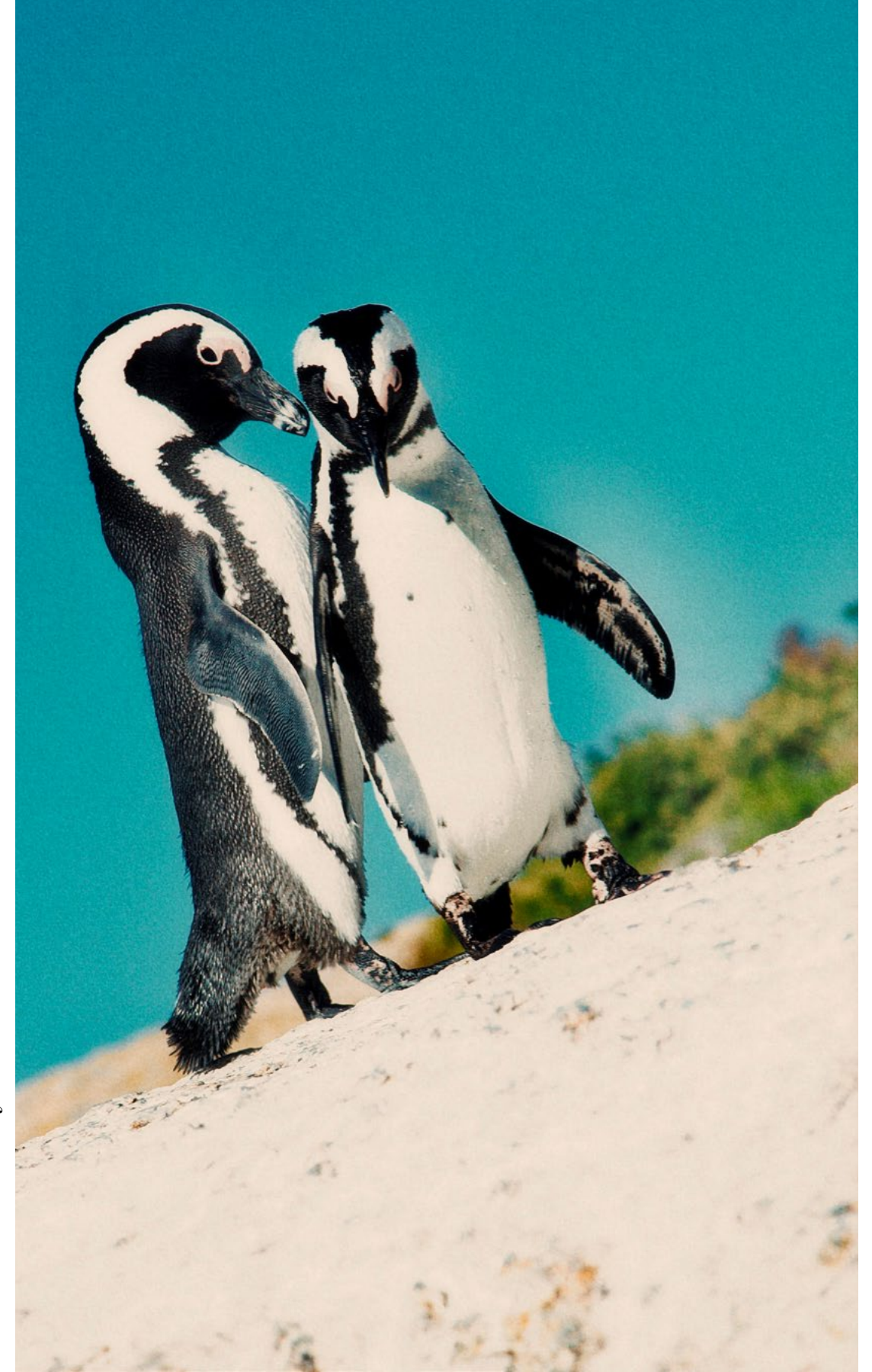
Fatimah Subhi

لعنة الآباء

عُشْتُ دهرًا مع قيود الآباء
فلا أنا ادري ما جرى
وحياتي أصبحت من الهباء
لعنة قومي تصاحبني
و تتغذى على مدامعي كيفما تشاء
فأنا أراهم يتكلمون و يصرخو "نحن الخطباء"
صوتاً يجيب بداخلي:
هم كل شيء الله حذر منه، هم السفهاء
عُشْتُ دهرًا بقيود الآباء
فلا أجد من يصدق رؤيتي
و لا لدھري هنالك نداء
قومي ينظرون لكل جزء من جسدي على أنه فحشاء
وجودي بينهم ما هو إلا ابتلاء
أنتم تجسيدا للخوف، والحق، والكراهية
فلا أنتم خيراً ل رجالها و لا النساء
في قلوب الناس حقدكم
ينزل مثل الوشاء
عشت دهرًا بقيود الآباء
وحدثني في أرضي مرضاً
سببه أن قومي كلما تكلمت
قالو لي اكرم خصال النساء هو الانصات

The Editor note:

Oftentimes, we find ourselves in circumstances that were sourced by our ancestors. Cultural norms, laws, prejudices that will take a millennial to detangle. This poem "The Fathers Curse" talks about the moments that we find ourselves feeling like the only ones that can see a problem, and how everyone goes about their lives acting like nothing is happening.



From My Mother's Womb

Donesha George

“DONESHAAAA... come down here so I can brush your hair,” My mother yelled. “Mom I don’t want the braids you put in last time... it made me look bald,” I said. I slowly sat down between her legs. Once I got my hair done, I could feel the cold breeze blowing through my scalp. I walked into the bathroom to see the hairstyle I hated the most, the one that looked crazy on me yet again. “Your hair will grow if you keep it greased, and put in braids, Donesha,” my mom said as she walked to her room to go to sleep.

I know you’re thinking, “Why does it matter what your hair looks like?” Well clearly there’s a reason for everything. A couple of months ago, as I was taking out my braids, I cut my real hair off while watching a show with my sister. I can remember the faces of all of my siblings. I was very upset. I knew it would take forever to grow it back, even though I was so close to cutting all my hair off. My mom took me to all the hair stylists to help me with my hair. They all told her I needed to start over, and let it grow back on its own. Sadly, my mother knew if she would’ve cut off all my hair, I wouldn’t be here today.

As a fourth grader it didn’t really put any pressure on me. I was still young and people loved me. I accepted the fact and kept it going. My mother had me on December 29, 2003. Some people call me Nesh, and others call me Donesha. But to everyone, I was the evil child. To my mom I was her reflection of her younger self.

Parents sometimes disagree with the fact they have a kid that grows up to be just like them, the way they were when they were young. My parents hated that “myth.” To them it was just an excuse for my actions. To me it was just confusing not knowing why I acted the way I did. It’s hard to be put in a place of not knowing why, and what causes you to be a certain way when your parents failed to be honest with you. Clearly now grown up, and looking back on everything I have been through, or hearing my parents’ childhood stories, it really adds up to mine. It’s kinda weird, but yet makes sense.

To this day I’ve never brought it up. I kept it to myself. Why even explain something when you’re still going to get shut down? People wonder where my doubt comes from. Well having low thoughts usually comes from the people you surround yourself with. Family can cause that problem and friends can cause that problem. Even people you don’t know can cause that problem. It’s the fact that parents never agree with this because they’re too high on their pride. That makes it especially discouraging.

My mother was a hard-working woman. She was always there, providing for us and herself. She worked two jobs and came home to take care of her five kids. Please! Wonder Woman could never relate to my mother. When my dad cheated on her, it really broke her and my family. You could see the shift they went through, and it’s still there to this day. Nothing but hidden pain. Tears that haven’t

been seen, and frustration. I love my family with all my heart, but they left me no choice, but to keep things to myself.

When I was younger, I would get mad when my sister would not tell anyone how she felt. She always kept it to herself, or told it to someone else who would understand. Then I wondered why, but then I understood why. It will be your own family who will laugh or just yell at you to make things even worse without even understanding how you really feel.

I remember when I was faced with something terrible in my life. At that moment I didn’t know what it was— my faith was weak, my mind was closed, and my heart was heavy. I think it was a spiritual war that I was fighting, but who knows? I remember sitting down with my Mom. I cried till my eyes could fall out. I remember her listening, and talking to me. Then she prayed over me. I felt like she understood me because I knew she faced trauma in her childhood. Welp, what a door that hits you on the way out. My family and I were sitting in the sunroom just talking about life I guess. Of course they brought up my past like always. I was so sad and angry, when my mom made fun of what I told her that night in the room.. My hand balled into a fist, and my face was burned like a fire was set on my head. I wanted to run into my room and close the door. I always had trust problems because of friends and guys, but this made me have trust problems with my own family. I never knew why my mom would ever do such a thing, especially when I didn’t even know what I was going through myself. It was nothing to joke about.

It’s crazy how I can still have anger built up because of the way my parents made me, but because of God’s grace my anger has been released and my mind has been set free. People probably look at me like, “Why are you complaining? You have a family who provides, gives y’all what you want and need, bought you guys cars and shoes and everything. But, still complaining.” UNGRATEFUL! Haha. I laugh at those things. I never, ever, said I wasn’t thankful for having hard working parents. It’s just that being happy and having parents who care, and who love to see you happy, is different from having parents who kinda really don’t. Like I know my parents want the best for me and my siblings. It’s just that they never truly understood the words they said to affect us.

Words can be carried for the rest of your life, especially when they come from the ones who raised you. I know it might sound like complaining, but it’s not. It’s upsetting that you have to experience these things as teenagers. Although my family and I went through hell and back, we would never separate the love we have for each other. I couldn’t imagine a life without my mother, just like she couldn’t imagine a life without me. I am my Mother’s daughter.

n.y.c. 122

red maple trees weep
in Sakura park...
I join

n.y.c. 121

yellow tulips sing
their song of spring,
snow lingers

n.y.c. 112

st. john the divine
rose-scented (h)air lingers
February fall



Signs From God

Joseph Whetzel

It is high up in the Andes. Higher than the clouds, or if not the clouds, at least the tall fog that hovers below them at least. Not so high to be cold. Or too cold that there is no place for a bee to go.

It is high up in the Andes that there is a bee flying, skittering from flower to flower amidst the dense, jungle-like foliage of the cloud forest surrounding him, coating the mountains and lining the river in the valley below, though to the bee, it is not a cloud forest, as the humans call it, but merely a route. The same route, chosen carefully, after much deliberation and many test routes, traveling as perhaps the traveling salesman does, that he always takes when the sun peeks its way out of the tall fog; from a tree along the Incan Trail he starts, fluttering up the two hundred straits to the stone structures en route in a flash, not breathless, but barely breathing. There are a multitude of options for which to feast on there; large, but mostly small, and bright red or blush pink. He can drink his fill and coat his legs before moving on.

Unlike the Incan Trail, he will arrive at Machu Picchu before he will the Temple of the Sun, where he will bumble through the many white-legged tourists, their Canon cameras, their souvenir ponchos, and their sweaty noses, searching for his next mark, the same mark he found some time ago in his route, and again he will drink and he will coat and skitter and scatter, not breathless, but barely breathing, down to the little town of Aguas Calientes, where he will flutter past hundreds of other tourists who mix and mingle, drunk on alcohol or lack of oxygen, and they will see him and wave their hands or duck their heads to the left or back, and he will find his mark and drink and coat.

When his route has reached its furthest point, he will begin the ascent back from whence he came. This time, unlike the many people he has passed on his route, he will travel in a straight line, soaring directly up the Andes, past the buses full of wrinkles and sunscreen and money, past the ticker tape and the policemen roping off the picketers who scream words in a language he doesn't know, past the two hundred steps. His straight line, the same one he takes at the end of each route when the sun peeks its head from the fog, that takes him past the Temple of the Sun, a small stone outcrop overlooking Machu Picchu, the untouchable city, now touched by so many, the same straight line each day, where each day, he can be a sign from God, perched so delicately on the same rock in front of where I stand, hot and tired and glowing. Each day, he can be a sign from God, from someone searching for just such a bee.

Or he can be a bee, and nothing more.



Dawn of a New Day // Molly Piwonka

Albany Babies

Josiah Esch

Ebony buildings and Albany babies
And Huckleberry sits there and fishes for highways
For highways of people in transit below him,
Off visiting clergymen somewhere near Patterson,
Off driving towards Easter or up for a birthday
All pass along rivers, divided by highways

The babies, not knowing the music they're hearing
By merchants, by braggers forever endearing,
By chicks flying south towards the cowboys, by Dylan
By countless odd folk men with heartbeats of women.
Finn finishes fishing and faces the Hudson
Where ebony buildings stand in the reflection

Woods

Allie Watkins

Brisk, sharp air. The crunch of dead leaves under boots. I'll never forget the woods behind my childhood home. My brother and I would catch frogs and all sorts of critters and creepy-crawlies—we'd venture deeper every day. Until we got lost or heard our full names angrily shrieked from the back porch. Sticks and stones became tents and tee-pees, and we gleefully adored our fake colony with its fake adoring subjects.

The woods weren't always welcoming. More often than not, I'd return to our back porch soaking wet, with tear-stained cheeks and bruise-battered arms because I'd fallen into the creek yet again. My small pink pocket knife was hardly a match for the thorny briar bushes that barricaded our base. Being an explorer comes with a cost; and to curious children, a few extra bandaids also meant that day's curiosity quenched. It was almost amusing, how I never learned my lesson. How I'd end up stuck in a seemingly infinite field of thorns while still adorned by yesterday's boo-boos.

I'm not entirely sure why I couldn't just stay away. Why the woods were so magnetic to the kid that didn't take risks. Maybe it was because that was the last time my brother and I ever had anything in common. Maybe it was the natural human urge to conquer or that childlike curiosity that most adults lose. Maybe because it was the only place I was allowed to feel rather than think.

I remember when I invited my friend from school over to my house. I'd practically dragged her into the woods. I had a specific destination in mind—-we reached it, after hiking about fifteen minutes. Maybe twenty. Maybe a half-hour? I'm not entirely sure, nor did I care at the time.

It was a rushing creek, dynamic in more ways than one. I loved how the water rippled and thrashed from its normal course of movement when I forced my fingers in; like I was something foreign, but it acknowledged me. My favorite part, however, were the endless variations of colorful rocks and pebbles resting along the bed of the creek.

I was oblivious to how my friend scoffed—-after all, I had to find our friendship rocks before the sun began to set! *Welcome back.* I smiled. *Welcome back.* My friend sat beside me. *See?* Her face was unwavering. *See how special this is?* She stared, and stared. Blankly, as though she was waiting for something to happen. "I'm tired," she grumbled. "I'd like to go home now, please."

I knew my way back. *Are you sure we aren't lost?* my friend kept saying. *Of course I wasn't lost.* I'd mapped out every tree in those woods by memory; I'd walked these woods a thousand times. I'd navigated these trees like the sailors did constellations, and they were my dull stars. Of course I wasn't lost.

Of course they're all one tree. All stars shine the same—die the same. Maybe I should've felt sad. Embarrassed, maybe. My creek wasn't special. My rocks were just rocks, after all.

If I returned a month later, a year later, they'd still be there. The current would still flow left to right. The boring water spiders would die and their boring offspring would go on to live the exact same boring life that boring water spiders live.

Maybe I should've felt embarrassed.

She stared, and stared. Blankly, as though she was waiting for something to happen.

I showed someone my favorite place—-my secret place—and they thought it was stupid.

That night, I turned a rock over in my palm.

My mom didn't think it was special either.

I looked for something special about the rock. Something different.

Why do things have to be surprising to be special?

There was nothing special.

Why do they have to benefit me to be "worthy"?

I put the rock on my nightstand, right next to my alarm clock.

Nobody saw what I saw in the woods. I know that should've made me feel isolated. Childish.

That night, I fell asleep smiling.

Because that meant it was mine.

They saw decaying trees and fields of thorn. But I heard "Welcome back."

An ode to the little girl in the mirror

Merry Yirga

Brown Skin Girl,

how i wish you could see
the delicacy that you are,

expensive.
elegant.

enchanted.

crafted with a touch of heaven,

you are a treasure.
a celestial beauty.

thrilling.
tender.

temple.

worthy of worship,

a divine nature
bring them to their knees.

battered.

broken.

bruised
over you.

how i wish you could see
the power that you carry,

glorious.
gritty.

gifted.

how i wish you could see,
that you are everything

they said you couldn't be.



Melting Rose // Daisy Buller

Am I Not Man Enough For You?

Neo Carter

Does my confidence and the energy I radiate disturb you?
Does it make you uncomfortable, does it silence your manhood?
Is my choice of clothing too 'girly'? Does it make you wish we were still stuck in the 50s?
Am I not man enough for you?
Or is it my body, is it too slim to be more 'him,' am I too short to be.... a he?
But no, maybe its my face. The way my lashes curl without fail, the way my eyes glimmer it entails... the question,
Am I not man enough for you?
Is it because my feelings come off too strong, my emotions considered wrong?
Does my dip in my walk send you and 'the guys' into a hushed talk?
Does it make you giggle that in conflicts I'm too civil?
Or... am I just not man enough for you?
Blame it on my genes, for my looks are far above my means
But does it make you scream.... that I prefer a crop-top in place of a flannel and jeans?
That sometimes my femininity isn't too hard for me to stream?
Are you concerned that the tears I shed I don't hide? That maybe I'm just not like every guy...
Or... am I just not man enough for you?



Rebecca

Veronica Horst

The Creation of Adam // Meredith Lehman

When I look at my hands
marked by an age I haven't yet lived
lined with lives I don't recognize
I still think of you.

The days in third grade
when the prelude to every recess
was your eager request to see my palms.

You held them so gently with your own,
traced each wrinkle with your finger
as if fragile cracks ran across my skin and
one more might shatter my whole hand.

I wish I understood the wideness of your eyes
and your routine desire to gaze in awe at a
part of me that felt like it didn't belong.

You, of all people
loved my hands, of all things —
eradicated the hate embedded deep in each crease
before you'd turn and skip away



Carven Brake, Softball // Becca Boone



Alijah Johnson, Track // Becca Boone



Retrospect

Naomi Kratzer

In retrospect,
It wasn't that bad.

Grief allowed growth
Loss made room for gain
Transition widened perspective and
Adversity created patience.

In retrospect,
There was beauty.

There was
Solitude in the August wind
Brilliance in the cold stars
Grace in the sloped hills, and
Promise in the dawn.

In retrospect,
There was Good.
Now
It is time to move forward.

Untitled // Valentina Barahona

Journal entries of today's trending
social cause

Merry Yirga

They chant my name in the streets,
my slogan memorized by thousands, sometimes millions.
I dance and I prance on the surface of your tongue;
I am a shout, never a whisper.
I matter today.
And today, there is hope that a difference will be made,
that the sun will set but my tale will live on.
My fight is not short lived;
I am a sob, never a whimper.
But 10 sunsets later, I feel myself beginning to perish.
My remains dissolve in the back of their minds
and I get no proper send off.
No burial or cremation,
they just let me melt;
I am voiceless, no longer heard.
Another, like me, takes my place;
They are a wail, never a murmur.
Why we can't share this space,
I will never understand.
But for now, I perish.
I am no longer as special as I was once made to feel.
For some, I no longer matter at all.
no longer the trending hashtag,
no longer a personality trait.
no longer a sufficient absolver for the white liberal,
who now must look elsewhere to satisfy his savior complex.
If I will ever be revived,
I may never know.
But for now, I dissolve
and watch as the process repeats itself.

The Infinite World of the Silicons

Brynn Yoder

The faint yellow glow of Sabebel's flashlight illuminated the sleeping bags beside her. As the light dimmed, she found the crank at the side of the light, lifting it from where she had wedged it between her shoulder and head. She spun the crank and massaged the kinks in her neck.

As the light brightened, it revealed the crisp pages in front of her. She wedged the light back in its place. Before her was a copy of *The Infinite World of the Silicons*. If her parents discovered she had it, she could only imagine the lecture she would get. Her people had banned any literature related to the Silicons.

The form of her tent swayed with the wind. Outside, whoops of joy came as her people sang their anthem—the *Song for the Earthbound*. Her ears were perked as she read her book tonight. She listened for three sharp clicks. It was the sound that came before every Silicon attack.

She picked up the stale muffin beside her. It crumbled in her hand, parts of it falling onto her book as she munched on it. With a flick of her wrist, she swept the crumbs away. This book shed light on her situation. The Silicons could free her from the Earthbound camp. She wouldn't have to live in the rubble of a city any longer. They could free her from the fractured world around her.

Her gaze flitted over the top of the page to the pink and yellow striped sleeping bag inside the tent. It was her little brother's; the same one she had slept in as a child. Her parents had told her that the Silicons were nothing but bad news. They told her the Earthbound way was the only way.

Three sharp clicks came from the direction opposite her people. It was subtle, indistinguishable if her ears weren't prepared for it. Even then, she wasn't certain if she had imagined it.

She shed her sleeping bag, carrying the book in one hand and the flashlight in the other. With a silent goodbye to her mother and father's tent, she unzipped the mosquito net. Before she exited, she took one last longing glance at her brother's sleeping bag.

A tear splashed onto her hand. She rubbed her eyes with her sleeve. *If only I could have convinced my brother to come with me.* But her brother was all her parents would have left. She had to do as her grandmother had always said: "Live in your own truth, child—you know what's best for you."

She ran down the street, determined to make her grandma proud. Her bare feet slapped the pavement as she left the light of the Earthbound celebration behind her. The rubble and glass bruised and sliced her feet, but she could ignore those temporary feelings. This was the blast zone, or the digitization zone where she would almost certainly be killed, or worse, left in some limbo state between life and death.

The street was dark, but as the light behind her faded, her hope grew like

the cone of light from the flashlight in her hand. She tucked her book under her armpit and lifted her hand to crank. Ruined high rises with large chunks taken out of them spread across the horizon. It was as if God himself had come down to curse the human race, further pushing them toward a digitized world.

A flash from her light bounced off a white barrier on the street to her right. She turned and ran toward it. The Silicon raiders on the other side of the barrier had their guns leveled on her. She had seen an image of them in her book, but somehow their sleek white suits of armor were more frightening than she had imagined.

"Slow yourself," a guard said. He had a blue stripe going down his head, stopping at his visor.

No words left her mouth as she opened it to speak.

"Speak Sabebel," the same guard said.

"I want to be a part of the infinite world of the Silicons," she said.

"Very well," he said.

A guard lifted a different weapon, this one with a square glass shield on the barrel and what looked like a camera lens inside. The weapon fired, there was a flash of light, and Sabebel was gone, nothing left of her besides the book and her flashlight, which cracked in two as it tumbled onto the pavement.



Butterfly on Orpine // Erika Lopez

Grandmother's House

Meredith Lehman

Jill's grandmother was her idol. Deep creases lined the framework of her smile, so that even when she was indifferent a remnant of the grin remained. Deep-set eyes held years of stories and wisdom and maybe sadness, but Jill could never tell because of the permanent happiness etched into their corners.

Grandmother sang to Jill on nights when the world would shake and flash because she knew the rumbling frightened the child. She knew the child would scream and whimper and that, because of the young girl's ruckus, the neighbors would give her strange looks the next morning when she fetched the newspaper. Grandmother would comfort her, nestling Jill into the warmth of an embrace and rocking back and forth. "Sing me my favorite song, Grandmother!" Jill would plead. And Grandmother would acquiesce the dear girl's request:

*Peter, Peter, pumpkin-eater,
Had a wife and couldn't keep her;
He put her in a pumpkin shell,
And there he kept her very well*

"Another!" Jill would beg. Grandmother would sigh and sing another rhyme.

*Ladybug, ladybug fly away home,
Your house is on fire,
Your children will burn.
Except for the little one whose name is Ann,
Who hid away in a frying pan*

Jill would giggle at the strange rhymes. Grandmother always sang the same two, but Jill never grew tired of them.

Grandmother always told Jill she loved her drawings. Often Jill would draw a window and in it place a scene of her wildest imagination. Sometimes she drew groups of children in a park or a thunderstorm where big shiny keys fell from the sky instead of water. Once, as a surprise, Jill etched "I love you Grandmother" into the dirt floor of their basement cellar. Grandmother smiled. Those were the only words Jill knew how to write. Grandmother taught her them.

Grandmother was the best at telling stories. Jill was transported to another world when she spoke—a world she'd never seen but had imagined often. Grandmother described the movies and how you could watch someone else's life on a screen. She described pizza and a place called "Chicago"-- how metal giants stood with their heads in the sky, towering over everyone and everything.

Grandmother told stories about her childhood garden and described its vibrant colors and blooming flowers. Jill wanted so badly to see the colors of which Grandmother spoke. She couldn't imagine them herself no matter how hard she tried. She would squeeze her eyes shut and wrack her brain, trying to create *Magenta and Yellow* but never had any luck. After all, creating something from nothing is the job of a god and Jill was just a girl. One day Grandmother brought Jill a bright yellow flower, just like the ones that grew in the childhood garden she described. Jill gasped at its beauty. Its color was so bright and scent so lively that she could hardly contain herself. She squealed with joy. It was beyond anything she'd ever drawn in her windows. Jill held the yellow flower in a white-knuckle grip and didn't let go until its colors faded to dull brown and its life-filled scent grew stale and rotten.

Jill's day revolved around when she could see Grandmother next-- when she could hear her stories and eat her food and feel her familiar presence. She especially liked that Grandmother's visits gave her someone to talk to. When grandmother wasn't there Jill would sometimes go such a long time without speaking that she would begin to wonder if she still could. She'd sing one of Grandmother's songs just to make sure. She was always careful to sing them quietly, though, because Grandmother had told her about the cranky neighbors and the newspaper and how they always gave her grumpy looks if Jill laughed or cried or sang too loudly.

While waiting for Grandmother, Jill would often sit in the cellar and draw in its dirt floor, watching a sliver of outside light that fell on the ground transform throughout the day. A small vent-like window sat on the room's eastward wall. It was mostly concealed with duct-taped cardboard, old insulation, and a grey foam that also adorned the walls, but a pinpoint of light managed to escape. The sliver illuminated the ground like a golden needle in the mornings, shifted to a steely grey near the days end, and eventually shrunk into black nothingness. Jill watched the needle to guess how soon Grandmother would come visit. Most often, Grandmother came a short time after the needle plunged into darkness. Sometimes the needle would go dark three or four times before Grandmother would visit and Jill found herself very impatient and lonely. Sometimes her tummy would rumble in the long wait, but the thought of Grandmother's wonderful stories and gifts filled her emptiness.

Grandmother would finally arrive and bring her something wonderful. All good things arrived with Grandmother. In her absence there was nothingness— just Jill, the cellar, the needle, and floating memories of the beautiful things from Grandmother's stories.

Grandmother would finally visit and make her way to the cellar, where she knew Jill would be waiting. She would reach for her shiny key and rattle the rusted lock. Jill would be ecstatic at the familiar sounds of her arrival. Grandmother

would give her a few pieces of bread and even sometimes bring packets of gooey white mayonnaise to accompany the savory meal.

Jill would sometimes wonder why Grandmother left her alone so often. In times of especially lengthy solitude, she found herself angry at Grandmother for telling her stories of flowers and colors and Chicago and metal giants but never letting her see them for herself. Her anger was always short-lived, though, and quickly replaced with guilt. After all, Grandmother had brought Jill the yellow flower and sung her the best songs when the world rumbled and shook. Jill knew she shouldn't be angry at her protector.

This was the way Jill's world turned for quite some time.
Dirt.
Square.
Dark.
Colorless.
Rumbling tummy.
Singing a song.
Quiet.
Watching the needle.
Waiting for Grandmother.
Feeling angry.
Feeling guilty.
Wishing for magenta.

On a day just like all the others, Jill waited for Grandmother's return. She watched the needle appear, and shift from gold to gray and finally black. Grandmother did not return. She'd been gone longer than ever; the needle had gone black five times. Jill cried from exhaustion and loneliness. She didn't care if the cranky neighbors heard. She cried for colors and flowers and bread and light and life. She squeezed her teary eyes tight and hoped that maybe this time she could imagine the colors of which Grandmother always spoke. To her surprise, when she finally opened them, three bright lights appeared through the sliver where the needle came. The needle was glowing with colors she had never before seen. They flashed back and forth. She heard the lock rattle and a strange voice shout. The cellar door violently swung open, and a flood of blinding, flashing, light entered the dark room.

Suddenly strong arms had Jill in their grasp and were carrying her up the stairs that Grandmother always arrived by; suddenly there was wind and grass and blaring horns and endless color from twinkling lights; suddenly there were metal giants and seas of people.

Jill asked the strong arms that had carried her to show her which color was magenta.



Reflection // Brandon Ewing

Contributors

Valentina Barahona is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Hannah Landes Beck can be found socializing with and/or eating various plants. She enjoys socializing with people too but does not eat them.

Miranda Beidler is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Will Blosser is a fourth-year student majoring in biology and psychology. His hobbies include sleeping and being awake, though he isn't particularly good at either.

Becca Boone is a Senior Photography, Business Admin, and Marketing triple major. If she's not editing pictures, you can find her out on the softball field or spending time with her friends.

Daisy Buller is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Neo Carter is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Liza Churchill is a sophomore nursing major. She is a proud plant mother and believes one can never have too many plants. These increasing plant friends are often her writing companions or a perfect distraction from just that!

Lauren Clapp is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Mykenzie Davis is a Digital Media and Communications major who is graduating in May 2023. She is from Lititz, Pennsylvania and enjoys spending time outdoors, photography, and illustration.

Brint Domangue is lab coordinator and part-time instructor in the EMU Science Center, where he also studies local plant-life. His botanical endeavors usually reappear in his art and craftwork.

Gemma Duxbury is a senior who blissfully and wondrously meanders through campus saturating knowledge to live life with beauty.

Thomas Erickson is a third year Photography and History major at EMU. Thomas does not claim a specific photographic style, yet enjoys experimenting with Abstract, Conservation, and Documentary photography.

Josiah Esch is a Sophomore History Major from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. In his spare time he enjoys aimlessly exploring Google Maps, collecting postcards, and engaging in petty theft (you can't prove anything).

Brandon Ewing is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Donesha George is currently a psychology major at EMU. She is looking to gain experience in psychology and expand her network while having a minor in biology to get an inside look at medicine and mental health as a step in fulfilling her goal of becoming a psychiatrist. Donesha said, "I'm just a young black girl who seeks her desires through faith. I had experienced past trauma but I didn't allow that to take me out instead I grew from it and learned how to find peace and healing. I love my life and I care for my loved ones that I'll do anything for them! The stories I had written are from my journal I had as a little kid. I hope you all find my stories very encouraging and continue to seek your destiny."

Veronica Horst is a senior majoring in Art and Psychology. Right now they are simply looking forward to one day having time to exist as a full human being again.

S.A. King is a graduate of Eastern Mennonite Seminary, MDiv '18, and currently works in the undergraduate admissions office. He is currently working on publishing his first chapbook, titled "Amo, Ergo Sum".

Naomi Kratzer is a freshman music education major. When she is not practicing piano or looking up the at sky she's probably not doing anything else.

Hannah Landis is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Aja Laun is a sophomore who runs a (previously) top secret jellybean farm to feed to her jellyfish army. And she likes to write just a little, since her drawings aren't that great!

Contributors cont.

Meredith Lehman is a second year biology and political science double major. She enjoys asking slews of ridiculous questions about everything and has a running list of the strangest ones compiled in her phone. Her favorite state of being is staring off into space in a daydreaming stupor.

Alexis Lewis is a sophomore psychology and writing studies double major from Buckhannon, WV. She has recently been exploring her passion for Victorian Flower Language and her poem Flower Language is the product of that.

Erika Lopez is a sophomore elementary education major from Goshen, Ind. She spends her free time googling useless information and questioning her fundamental understanding of life. Oh, and sometimes she likes to take pictures.

Lauryn Moore is a political science and sociology double major with a double minor in journalism and criminology & restorative justice. She’s a self proclaimed pop culture enthusiast who probably consumes too much media but tries to write about what she sees and its effects on society.

Christiana Murray is a senior Writing Studies and Art double major. Her dream is to live in a small house with a big garden where she can spend time writing poetry, painting, and saying hello to the bumble bees.

Molly Piwonka is a curious day dreamer, passionate human rights activist, enthusiastic tree hugger, wannabe free spirit, and an aspiring Ms. Frizzle. I guess she is also a graduating senior with an Art Education major and environmental sustainability minor, but that is just a minor detail. Peace out creative peeps!

Evelyn Shenk is an ascendor of anything remotely rockish and ponderosa pine sniffer. You can find her dangling from cliff edges, jamming to sick tunes, or desperately needing something she forgot.

Sophia Sherrill is a silly little goose trying to make her way in the world. Sometimes, she writes poetry. Don’t approach her on the street, she will run away.

Emily Suarez Nunez is a first year Nursing Major and a first generation American from Uruguay. She loves coffee, going out dancing, spending time with friends, and cooking. If not on campus, she’s working either at her local hospital, as an interpreter, Costco, or on her God-mother’s food truck.

Fatimah Subhi is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Allie Watkins is a freshman on the EMU Women’s Volleyball team. In her free time outside of volleyball, Allie loves to write, go outside, socialize with friends, and meet new people!

Joseph Whetzel is an undergraduate student at EMU.

Merry Yirga is a senior Liberal arts Major with minors in psychology, peacebuilding and sociology. She enjoys writing, acting, singing, spending time with her friends and rewatching “Bojack Horseman”.

Brynn Yoder is a senior undergraduate student at EMU double majoring in Writing Studies and Psychology.

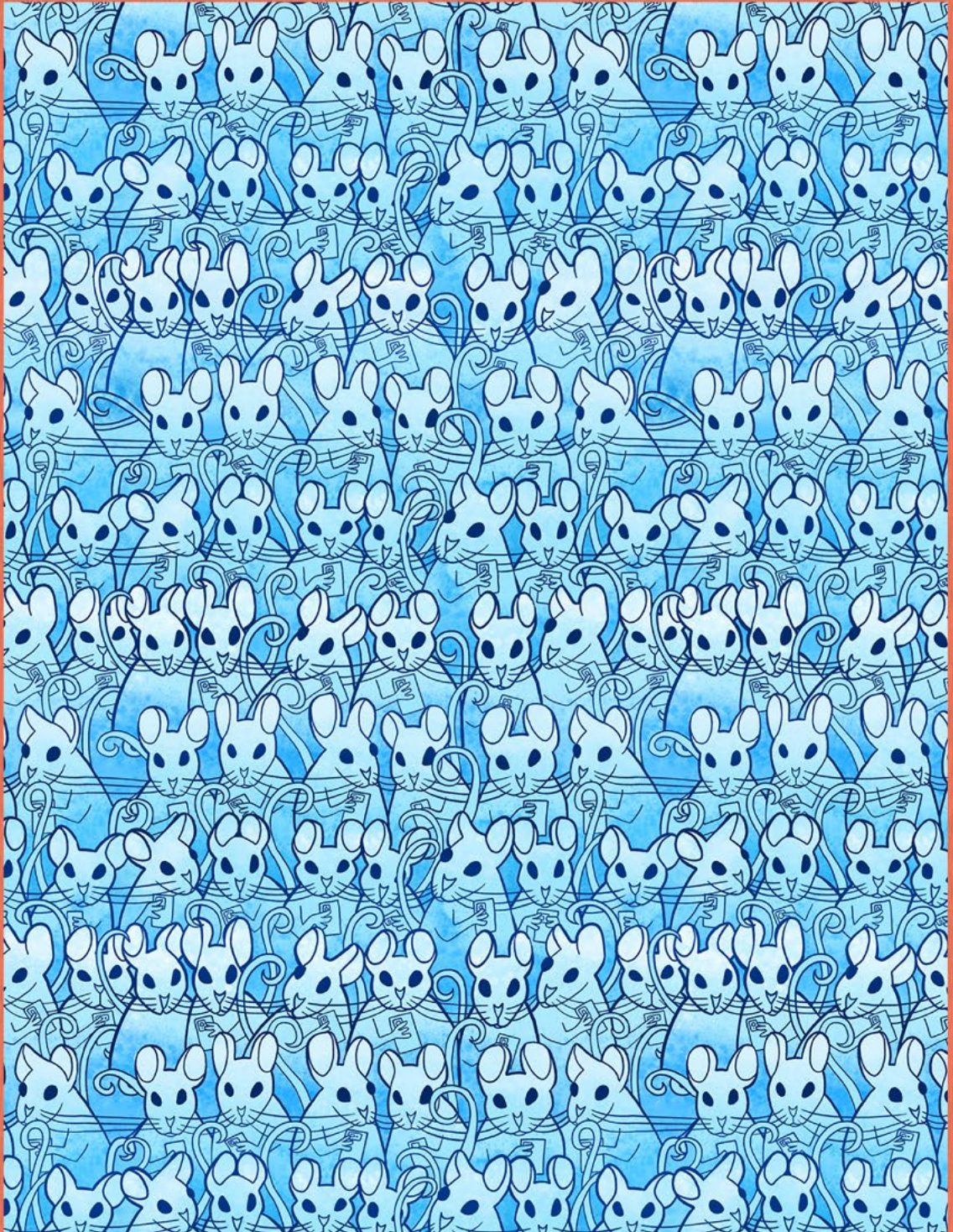
Daniel J. Zook works in the Information Systems department as Network Administrator. One of his favorite quotes is from Mark Twain: “It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.”



Head of Christ // Meredith Lehman

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Anonymous // Christiana Murray

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