

LHS FOLIO

SPRING 2021



Cover art credit to Sophia Martin

Dedicated to

Class of 2021

Cherries

Ice cream trucks

Future dreams

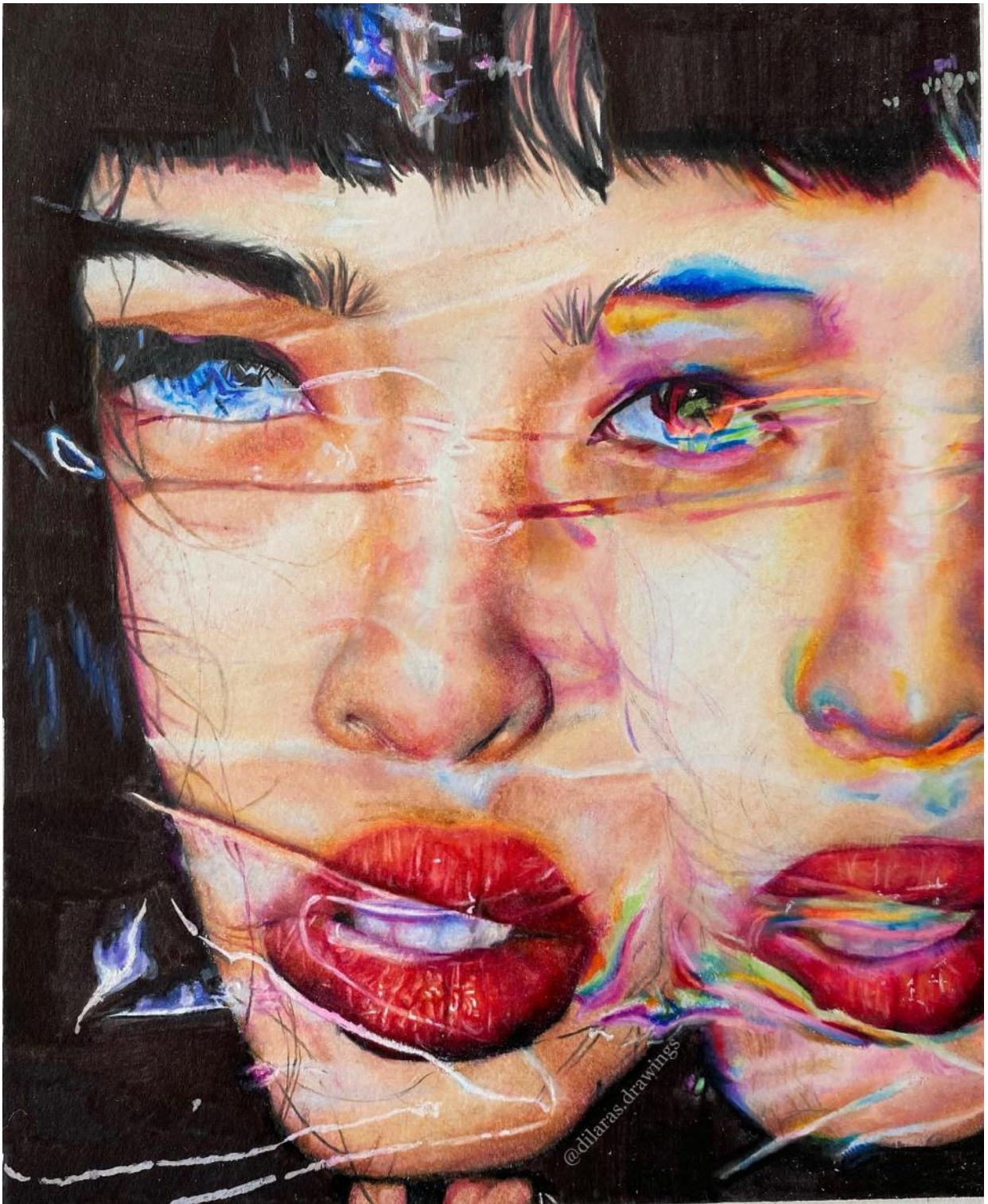
And

Loving yourself

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phonto
By Dilara Bahadir



untitled
By Lotem Loeb



Secret Garden

By Allison Liu

sweet Caroline

By Haley Creighton

light cream and lavender
hightops, push-up pops
tracing scarlet
lips, soft
hip's dips,
hands running over silken
skin

sweet orange Cool
Whip, creamed caramel
coffee, Gram's cream of wheat
in ceramic white
mugs,
glass straws sliding like
cool fingers, massaging
our throats inside-out
with the strawberry taste of your
mouth.

Lying with you here, in the almond-
shaped afternoon light filtering
through these orange trees—it's like
music

jazz, hip hop, indie, rock,

sparkling in the temples of a dreamy,
spinning head, stomach
lost to the clouds.

We both knew, you and I, that you had to
fly, and I, too, one of us,

away from those almond-
toned leaves, heavy-scented wet soil
tickling our lungs, morning
dew warmed
with sunlight that slips through my
fingertips, but not before
leaving your skin soft and cool
to the touch.

The music's deep
in my head,
thought or sound I couldn't
tell; hair waterfaling slowly,
bittersweet velvet softly falling
over bare shoulders—

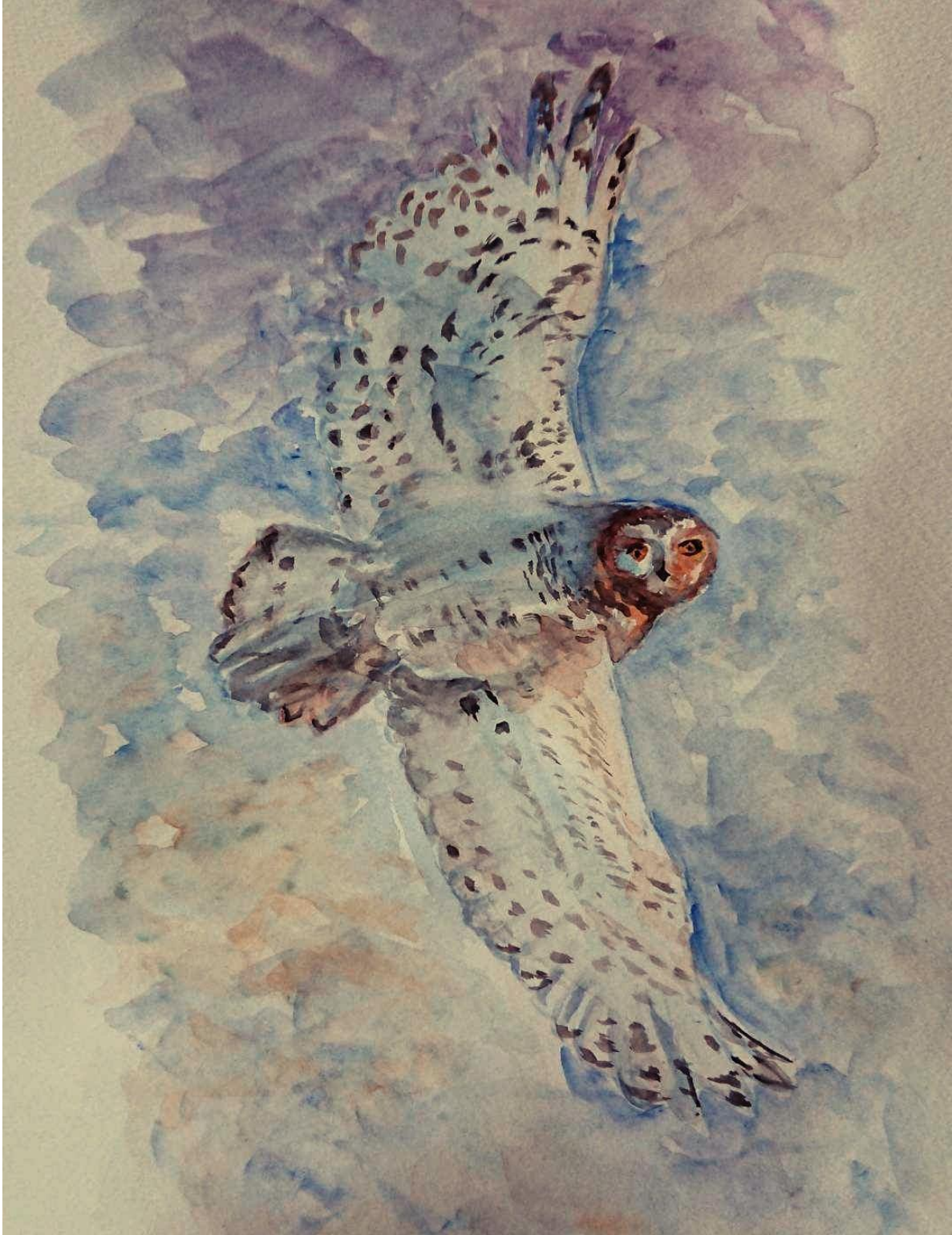
whispering, *whispers*—

*I will see you
forever in the
afternoon.*



untitled

By Stella Omenetto



Soaring
By Victoria Yuan

Vegetable Tuesday

By Mira Menon

on Tuesday, you visit me while i drink sun and wind flavored tea
and complain about David Bowie being dead.

you squint at a spaceman,
grin like we're still humming 'Madame George' on the balcony,
a gritty taste of menthol cigarettes and rain.

uno, due, tre,

you count out the number of pills in the Tuesday compartment.

uno, due, tre,

i count out the number of lines on your pensive forehead.

the number of people leaving is increasing, *presto sarete tutti andati,*

i say to you as you scrub away red sand and bones,
remind me to eat spinach and read Naked Lunch.

you say to me,

everyone is still here.

everyone is still here.

tutti sono ancora qui.

then maybe i am the one leaving.

no, *non vai da nessuna parte,* but your eyes say otherwise;

maybe you are convincing yourself more than me.

last year i fed you slices of grapefruit underneath that bright green beach
umbrella,

your skin gone fleshy pink as i licked a bitter juice out of your mouth.
ciao amore mio, il tuo sudore estivo sa di frutta fresca.
amarti è il mio posto sulla terra.

this year i feed you tiny cubes of cheese with my shaky hands,
and you smile something drowned in emotion,
when the cubes slip from my winter hands into your lap.
you kiss words you'll never say into my forehead,
i ignore your watery exhale, tension roped between your shoulders.
addio amore mio, sei troppo bella quando piangi.
amarti è il mio posto sulla terra.

ITALIAN TO ENGLISH

ITALIAN	ENGLISH
<i>uno, due, tre</i>	one, two, three
<i>presto sarete tutti andati</i>	soon you will all be gone
<i>tutti sono ancora qui</i>	everyone is still here
<i>non vai da nessuna parte</i>	you're not going anywhere
<i>ciao amore mio, il tuo sudore estivo sa di frutta fresca. amarti è il mio posto sulla terra.</i>	hello my love, your summer sweat tastes like fresh fruit. loving you is my place on earth.
<i>addio amore mio, sei troppo bella quando piangi. amarti è il mio posto sulla terra.</i>	goodbye my love, you are too beautiful when you cry. loving you is my place on earth.



she is everywhere
By Leah Hubbard



one for you
By Leah Hubbard

passionfruit

By Stella Omenetto

because of all the unforgettable things about Her,
her admiration for buttercups
the angle of her dimples
the way that conversations of color made her eyes a little greener
and her lashes darker
the day one asked me to tell them about “*Her*”
the words
“She tasted of passionfruit when I kissed Her”
leapt off my tongue before the question even knocked on my ear
for She felt like adrenaline and serotonin against my lips

and while the shadowed seeds she hid in her sweetness
threatened and tantalized me
with shards of my own teeth,

her voice smelled like nectar and honeysuckle
so even as the imminence of peril grew stronger,
of a shattered molar slicing my cheeks,

i have yet to stop finding myself trying to lie to my tongue
and beg that all that touches it burns and consoles
just as passionfruit
just as Josephine



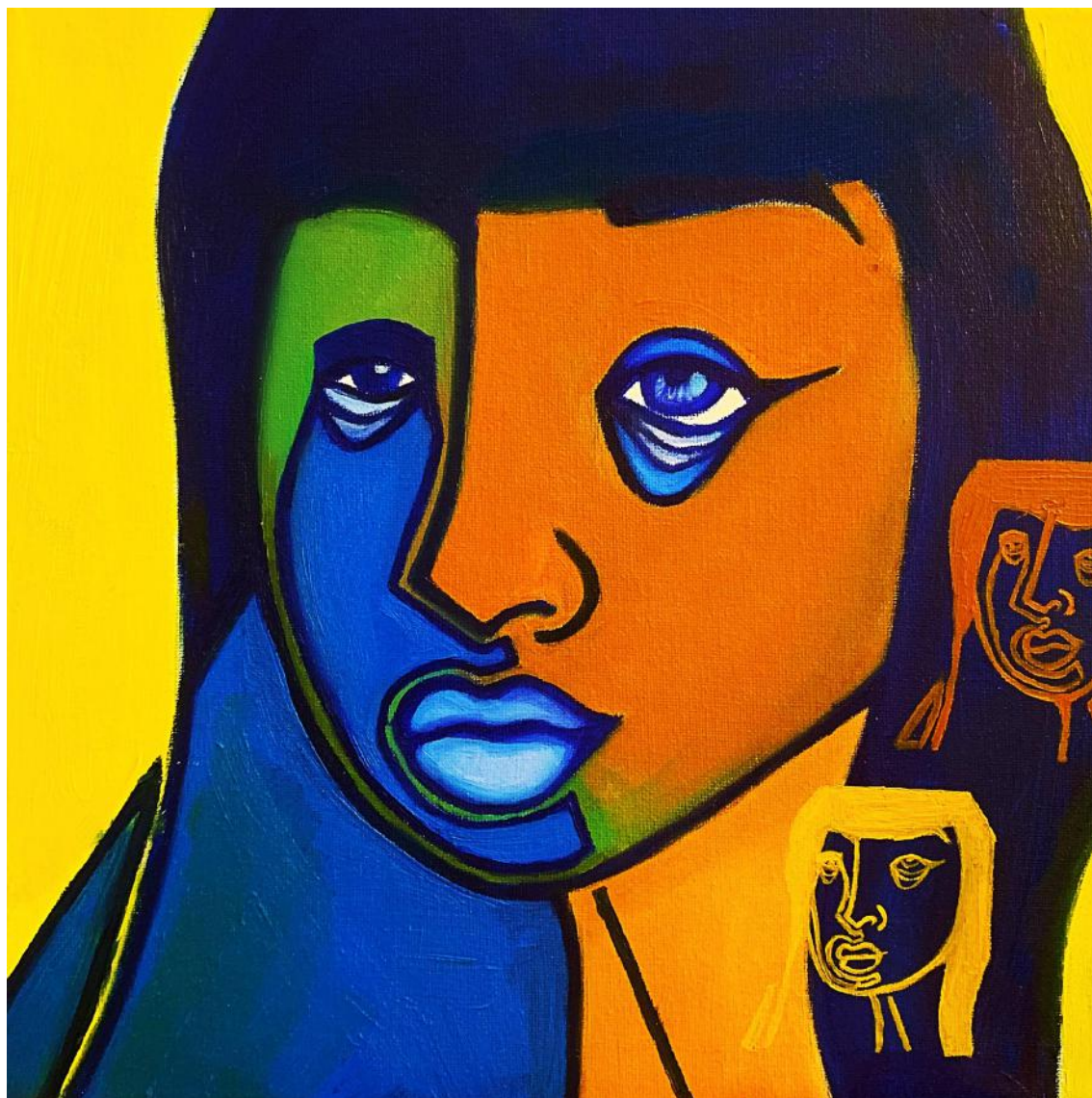
untitled

By Ariela Etingof



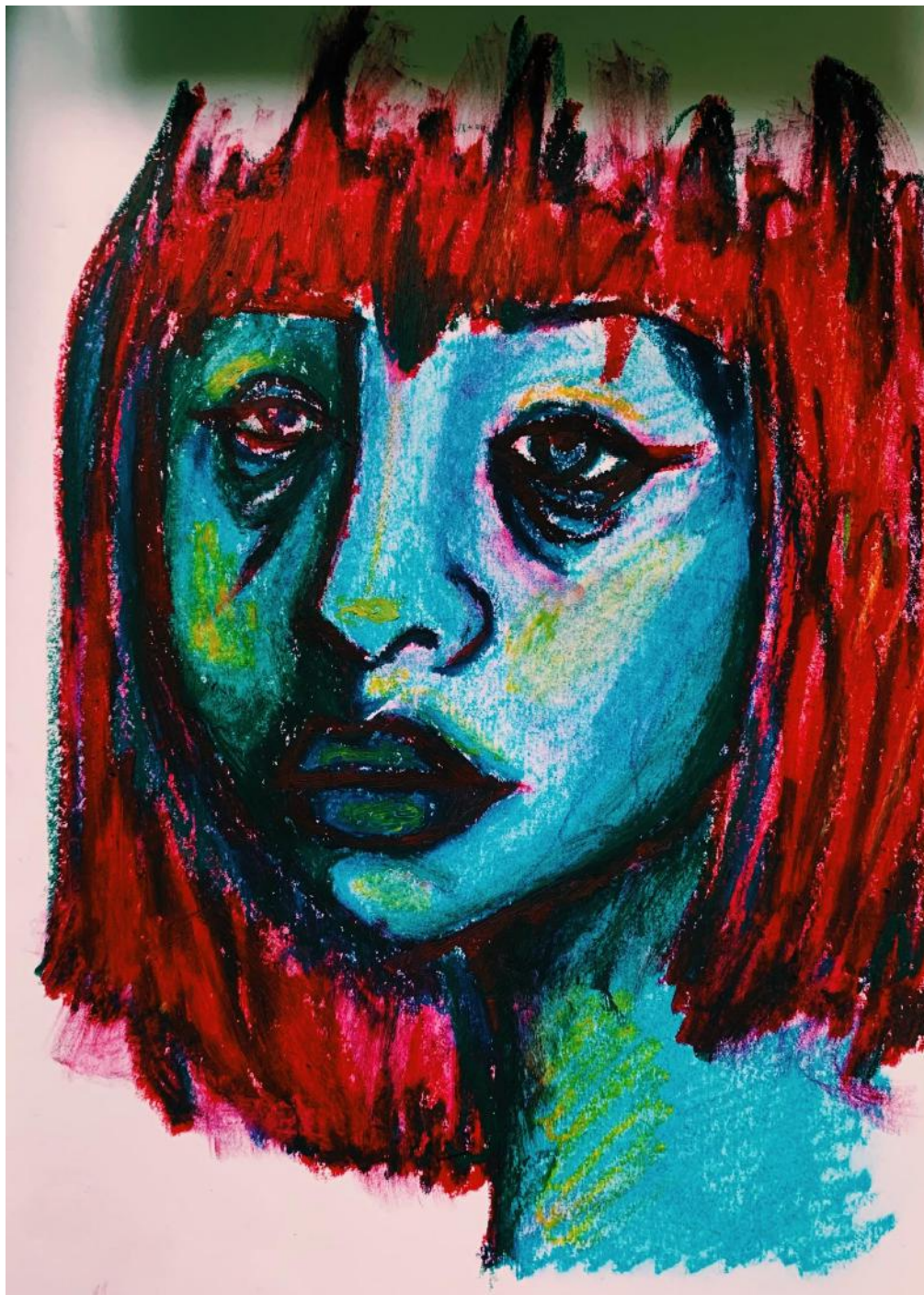
untitled

By Dilara Bahadir



untitled

By Stella Omenetto



untitled

By Stella Omenetto

Sharing a sunset with you

By Pip Fletcher

Sharing a sunset with you

transports me to a season that is a lifetime in length.

Or what I imagine a lifetime would feel like,

since I am barely one fifth of the way into mine.

A lifetime I have barely brushed my lips against,

yet, I know I want to spend more of it (all of it) with you.

You were thoughtful enough to bring a blanket,

to protect us from the evening dew.

If you'd forgotten the blanket

(in a rush to move out of the house, ready to see me)

I wouldn't have minded.

I would have let the dew dampen my dress.

I would have let you drape across me in an effort to stay dry.

The sun is sinking faster now, daring us to look away.

I look away, in order to see you absorbing the colors

(green trees, yellow sun, red clouds, purple night).

My heart beats faster now, filling my body with color;

I absorb the sunset more.

I thank a god that I don't think I believe in that each sunset is unique

and that You have not seen this specific array of colors and shapes

take hold of the sky before.

I wish I could reach up and hold the sun in the sky,
only that would mean taking my hand away from yours.

The sun has said it's stretched out goodbye:
so we must too.

The sky has spread into a navy hue.

My heart pumps dark blue
when I'm not with you.

Inspired by Frank O'Hara's "Having a Coke With You"



untitled

Ariela Etingof



Reflection
By Allison Liu

boatmen

By Mira Menon

**warning: profanity*

Beau stands on the gritty sand, squinting through bloodshot eyes at the waves as they rush up the beach, a foamy gurgle in the piercing white daylight of early January. An icy wind whips around him, sinking its fangs into the back of his neck, a sharp sting licking at his bitten-through cuticles as he wrings his hands together. The boatmen grunt as they pull in, barely giving him a passing glance as they wrench their trawler steady, a fading white and blue thing. *La Bella Vita*. He tries to remember what that means, but it's lost, somewhere in the empty space behind his eyebrows.

"Excuse me," Beau starts, soft and quiet. It's swallowed up as soon as the words leave his mouth, by the crashing shoreline, the salt that grinds behind his blinking eyes. The boatmen shoulder past him, wet boots spitting sand as they trudge up the shore with sloshing buckets, a curling smell of gutted haddock wafting up behind them with each step.

He clears his throat. "Excuse me," he says again, louder, the tops of his cheeks flushing dark in stark contrast with his winter-bruised lips. One of the men stops and stares, takes in Beau's long black coat, his smooth white skin, the way he looks like he doesn't belong but for the sharp jut of his cheekbones, the hollow blue space in his eyes that they somehow share.

"Whatta ya want b'y?"

"I, um, I was wondering if you had any space on your trawler."

"What?" he shouts, cupping a hand to his ear as if to expand his hearing range. Some of the men behind him snicker, and Beau hunches his shoulders in, curls his toes in his boots to distract himself from the building pressure of tears behind his eyes.

"Do you have any space on your boat?" he asks, louder.

The man lowers his cupped palm, and the snickers morph into short laughs of bewilderment. Beau grips at his hands, fumbling for something intangible like control, or understanding, and watches as a look of amused contemplation passes over the man's face.

“Can ya gut a fish?”

Beau shakes his head *no*, curls his toes in further, an unpleasant weight settling itself in the center of his stomach.

“Can ya throw nets?”

Beau shakes his head again. The man chuckles.

“What can ya do then? I don't have any use for extra weight up 'ere.”

“I... I can learn,” Beau contests, and he hears the words fall out of his mouth and smack the sand in a sad wet pile of grey, hears the man snort and shake his head, hears his heartbeat in the cracked space between his jaw and his ear.

“I've no use for you, b'y,” the man mumbles, his steely eyes raking up and down Beau's body in scrutiny. Beau instinctively curls in further, looks down at his faded brown boots, runs a shaky hand through his unkempt hair. The man squints at Beau, then flashes his teeth suddenly, a startling silver sneer. He turns and reaches behind him to grip at the back of another boatman's collar, a boy in a duck yellow rain-jacket, and yanks him forwards.

“What'd you say your name was?” the man asks.

“Beau.”

The boy's eyes flick up at Beau, then back down, as he wriggles his shoulders with a grumble, smacking at the man's grip to release his hold on him. The man lets go, only to clamp down firmly at the back of the boy's neck with a calloused hand.

“Fuck off, Elm,” the boy mutters.

“This ‘ere is James,” the man, *Elm*, says, ignoring the boy. “You look ‘round the same age as ‘im. He’ll take you up the coast and you can find a nice job... cleanin’ in an apron or summat,” he snickers.

Beau stills, feels the air latch onto his body and seep through his pores like a thick wet blanket, a cold knife slicing through him, yanking at every nerve-ending in his spine. His hands curl into fists as he shoves them deep into his pockets and blinks nervously at the man, and the boy in the yellow rain-jacket beside him.

“What do you mean?” Beau asks.

“I mean for a fruit like you, I ‘spose an apron’ll do you good.”

Beau feels it in his forehead as his breath crumbles, startled stutters and gasps of fear, an unhelpful anger bubbling up through his throat, crawling in the space underneath his skin.

The boy mutters something unintelligible under his breath at that, twisting out of Elm’s grip and stomping his way onto the deck of *La Bella Vita* to gather up another bucket.

Beau wants to say something, he wants say anything, *fuck you, fuck all of you, you fucking cunts*. He wants to scream something wicked, something ripped from the bottom of his chest, something empty and full at the same time, something that tears the skin of the surface away, peels back the layers until he can feel, until he can feel something fleshy and pink and scraped clean, something other than the dull monotone burn of the twisted black snake that loops itself around his lungs.

He says nothing.

He exhales sharply through his nose as the men laugh, a deep thunder of a sound, thick like the nameless brown alcohol they’d served him up at the bar. Their laughter follows them as they make their way up off the beach, *La Bella Vita* knocking into the flimsy excuse of a pier it’s bound to with restless groans as the ocean moves in eager waves around it. Beau watches the men, watches their plastic buckets spill over pink-tinged water as they sway, jeering and shoving

at each other. He supposes they have families, they have homes, he knows they are probably loved. And he hates it, he hates them for it, he hates that he feels so angry and exhausted all the time, like a wind-up toy creaking its way to an unsteady, shuddering stop.

He blinks slowly, eyes sunken in, and moves to avert his gaze, when the boy in the yellow rain-jacket, *this 'ere is James*, peers back over his shoulder. His gaze is unwavering, something tepid flickering across his sharp green irises. Beau stares, digs his fingernails into the palm of his hand, and swallows cautiously, before the boy, *James James James*, snaps his head forwards like he never had looked back at all.

Beau sighs audibly, unclenches his fingers and stretches them out, before pressing them harshly into the sides of his temple in small pressured circular movements. He squeezes his eyes shut, allows the salt-choked air to fill the inside of his body, feels himself start to sway in tandem with the cadence of the water as it spills up the shore in frothy heaps of blue. He lets himself drift slowly towards the sound, hears his boots shuffle forwards as they soak up more and more water, the tips of his toes burning cold with the sensation.

The space between his eyes and his eyelids is a pale grey color. Like the soft toy bunny she used to carry everywhere, her small stubby fingers peeking out past the sleeves of her sweater as they turned pages of a fading novel. *The Secret Garden, Peter Pan, Watership Down*, the spine cracked with dry summer air, her mouth forming shapes around the words silently, lips quirking up into an unconscious smile from time to time as she hugged the bunny closer where she sat curled and content. Beau lets his mind wander there, to a place he hardly allows anymore, back to her, back to when he was truly a boy, eighteen, sixteen, twelve, back to big open fields and green-lit daytime, back to yellow; yellow grass, yellow hair, yellow sun, the dust-yellowed pages of her paperbacks.

She would have loved it here. He thinks she would have loved it here, he thinks that if he had come in the summertime she would have loved it here. He imagines the sharp biting wind replaced by a cool sweep of air, something gentle that would tickle the back of their necks.

She loved the ocean, she loved the breeze, she loved the sounds of other children laughing, lithe bodies scampering up the stretch of sand in a tumble of limbs when their mother called, *come babies, dinner*. She'd watch them, something akin to wonder in her big owlish eyes, *Beau, did*

mumma call you like that, and Beau would nod his head, *yes*, muster up a reassuring smile despite the twinge in his gut, a twinge that whispered *no, no she didn't, no no no no, you're a liar, you*.

The backs of his knees are wet, his steps growing sluggish as he moves deeper and deeper. He drops his hands from his temple and lets them brush the surface of the water, eyes still squeezed shut.

Beau remembers open windows, fresh strawberries, shrieking giggles, bare feet padding down white wooden stairs. The musky smell of the stables, the lavender buds that sprouted up in the springtime, her baby squeals when the chickens let loose. Fireflies in an open jar, the night like a full-screen television from the back of his head to the front, her mouth open in a soft *o*, the evening air raising the hair on his arms in hello. He remembers their twinkling ends, the way they rose out of the meadows like embers falling from the end of a cigarette butt. The heady, unexplainable desire to pinch them between his fingertips, his youthful awe not yet fully gone.

They'd said he'd had to grow up faster, lean into his weight quicker, understand the reasons, the reasons behind things, for things, to do things, but he thinks he only grew younger. Clung to her playful eyes and smooth forehead longer. He thinks it wasn't until pale skin, blood-stained handkerchiefs, cold hands on clean white bed-sheets; he thinks it wasn't until then that he really grew older.

Beau inhales sharply as the water hits his chin, his movements indistinguishable from the waves themselves, body floundering to stay upright on the barest tips of his toes. He lets the cold of the waves seep through his thick coat, squeeze at his every breath with a vice grip, shove icy fingertips into the space between his ribs. He doesn't open his eyes.

Beau, I don't feel well, Beau, what is happening, he remembers his same toes curling back tears, his hand trembling as he placed it on her forehead, *Beau Beau Beau Beau, am I going to be okay, Beau?* Translucent orange bottles knocked over, her knees bloody when she collapsed, a hacking sound that ripped at the skin of her throat muscle as he ripped at the hair on his head. *Tell me everything will be okay?* And Beau would nod, that same reassuring thing from the beach, that twinge from then so small in comparison to the buckets of guilt he felt awashed in, sticky with sweat and unable to sleep, jagged nails catching at her dust-yellowed pages as he

murmured the stories on the pages out loud, words bleeding together at the ends. Softly to her, softly to himself, softly to the midnight moon like some kind of prayer.

He can't remember the day, and that feels wrong. It feels wrong somehow, that he can't remember the day, but he can remember with startling clarity the clean smell of the sheets, the harsh orange sunlight that stuck to the dip of his collarbone as he slipped from a dream-state. He can remember his scream, something sharp and piercing, he can remember the way his head seemed to fill with cotton, a dull pounding that would carry indefinitely into the future. He can remember the shatter of the dark red mug as it tipped off of the bedside table, after he lurched himself out of bed, flailing arms knocking it over, it's ceramic pieces stilling morbidly in a puddle of lukewarm tea.

And he can remember the way her hands lay unmoving, her mouth curved up in an almost smile. The way her skin had lost its clammy heat and took on an even grey stillness.

At that, Beau wrenches his eyes open with a gasp, only to feel something clogging his throat, something filling up his lungs, something stinging at the very middle of his eyes. The slippery water fills his body, his arms thrashing out, his eyes struggling to remain open but struggling to remain closed.

She looked peaceful. She looked finally peaceful.

Beau lets his arms fall loose, lets the weight of his out-of-place coat pull him down, lets his eyes glaze over as sea-level changes from a tangible concept to an intangible murk in the distance. He lets himself breathe, rake in the salty water, push out nothing, mouth hung open like a fish. His eyes drift shut again, his mind leaving the edge of his skull, the physicality of his weakened body no longer a concern, a dark feeling settling in his bones.

La Bella Vita. The Beautiful Life.

Suddenly, he feels himself jolt, his left arm shifting up, his head snapping sideways, pressure building and releasing in bubbles around him. He's not fully aware of anything. It feels like a dream, his thoughts tilting and swerving in disorienting swoops, wrapping themselves around his heavy body. *Is this how I get to the afterlife?*

His head breaks the surface of the water, someone's feet kicking near his own unmoving ones, his long coat ripped off of his body as he's yanked up onto a hard wooden surface.

"Hey! Hey, can you hear me?"

A sharp stinging feeling to the side of his cheek. His thoughts shifting between the there and the here, the then and the now, the maybe and the never.

"Can you hear me? Wiggle your toes or summat if you can hear me?"

Another sharp sting to his cheek.

"Do something, c'mon mate, don't die on me here."

He feels something jolt his body up and down, like he's being wrung from the inside out. There are icy wet needles jammed into his chest cavity as he struggles to breathe in, the needles shoving themselves deeper, closer, further into the grainy black of his smoked out lungs.

He needs air, he wants to feel the slick cold race down his throat, but he can't reach it, the hands in his head grasping forwards at nothing behind the pale gray space of his eyelids.

"Fuck, shit. Fuckin' hell!"

Something warm, warm warm breeze, sunlight, yellow, *yellow yellow yellow*, warm air rushes down his throat and into his lungs and he heaves in, reaches out for it with his whole body, keening up with the effort. There are lips touching his, hands pushing down over and over steadily on the center of his chest. The warm air, *yellow yellow yellow*, shoots its way up his spine and he turns over on his side and vomits, coughs, seawater, saltwater, the icy needles slipping out the back of his drenched body.

"Oh, thank fuck. Can you open your eyes, mate?"

Beau can hear him now, can hear someone speaking, can feel hands brushing the hair off of his face. He can feel a gentle rocking underneath him, like a cradle holding him above the sea floor. A boat.

“Can you hear me?”

He tries to blink, the pale grey space fading away slowly to a blurry figure leaning over him.

“Shit, okay. Fuck. Fuck, Jesus, fuckin’—” the figure cuts itself off, runs a hand through its hair. Beau blinks his eyes rapidly, his vision getting clearer and clearer. Yellow rain-jacket, sharp green eyes.

James. “James,” Beau gurgles out.

The figure above him stills. “Yeah, mate. Yeah, that’s me,” he says gently, runs a hand absentmindedly through the matted hair on Beau’s forehead again. Beau shudders, and jerks his head away.

James yanks his hand back like he’s touched a hot stove, and Beau can make out the uncomfortability set in the tight clench of his jaw. He misses the warmth of his hand immediately. *Green yellow James.*

“No,” Beau gets out.

Beau can’t remember the last time a hand ran its fingers through his hair, can’t remember the last time he craved warmth from the very tips of his toes like he does now.

Broken promises to return home before nightfall, a toddler alone with her older brother, a boyish *where are you going* with no reply. A drunken tumble of slurs called *mumma* stumbling in just before dawn cracks, the sun oozing out like the yellow of an egg. His ghost of a voice, *goodnight mumma, I love you*, her inebriated breath, *turn out the light, dammit*. Nudging her sleep-still hand into his soft fine tufts of hair, his nose nestled into the sharp of her hipbone as she snored, his eyes squeezed shut and pretending, always pretending. *I love you too, Beau.*

He'd felt so alone when she finally up and left, but it wasn't the kind of alone that shot through him suddenly, it was the kind of alone that settled bleakly, had been settling in the blood that ran through his veins every single day. A toddler alone with her older brother, a toddler who smelled like spit-up most of the time but sometimes like the rain, a toddler who grew to fill the hole in Beau's steady beating heart.

Soon gone. And Beau, Beau forgot the feeling of touch, forgot the warmth of another person's palm, forgot what it meant to be not alone.

"You can... sorry, I—" Beau stutters.

"No, s'alright. Uh, it's okay. Sorry," James cuts in, mumbling as he looks down at the space between Beau's body and him, a pink climbing up the sides of his face.

"No, I... you can."

James looks up, his facial expression somewhere between confused and distressed.

Beau hears his heart thrumming against his ears. He wants, *wants wants*, wants so badly for James' hand to return to his hair. Amidst the disorientation of it all, he forgets himself. He forgets who he is and who he's meant to be, who he's become and who he was supposed to become. He reaches out and grasps James' palm, places it on his head. James stares, silently, unmoving. The gravity of his actions catches up to him, and Beau squeezes his eyes shut, a flash of something weighty clenching in the walls of his gut.

James moves his hand then, carefully, painfully slowly, the pads of his rough fingers brushing Beau's scalp down to the tips of his ears. Beau opens his eyes, gaze weighted as he watches James watching him.

"You 'right?" James whispers, cautiously.

Beau nods. James pulls his hand back gently, and Beau's head tips forward unwittingly, following the heat his palm emanates. He steels himself with a lurch of embarrassment and a

bite to the inside of his cheek. It breaks skin, a putrid metallic scent replacing the flaccid salty taste swishing around in the saliva of his mouth.

James stands, walks to the edge of *La Bella Vita* and peers back towards the shore. It's not far, and that somehow embarrasses Beau even more. He rubs his palms into his eyes and tries to stand, wobbly, before leaning against the side of the boat and spitting a load of blood-speckled saliva into the sea. He shuffles over to James, arms trembling with exhaustion as they meet the frigid air. James glances over, before making his way inside the cabin of the boat. Beau watches him leave, watches him return with a dark green towel, holding steady eye contact as he places it into Beau's open hands.

Beau lets the warmth of the towel tide him over, the gentle ebbs and sways of the trawler lulling him into a dazed calm. His arm brushes James' as they stand, and he glances over, notices the swollen skin underneath his eyes, the fuzz that dots the meat of his cheeks.

When they reach the shore, the sun blanching white over the horizon like an orb of some distant light, Beau pulls the green towel around himself tighter, watches as James knots *La Bella Vita* to the rotted-through pier, climbs out onto the sand after him, his wet brown boots squelching with each step.

He stops, sudden. Heart pounding, he stares at James walking up ahead, unsure. *I don't know him. I don't know anything I don't know what I'm doing I don't know anything.* He turns to look out at the ocean, it's lapping mouthy tongue, licking and sucking at the sand, at the pier, at *La Bella Vita*.

I don't know anything I don't know what I'm doing I don't know anything I don't—

“Hey!”

Beau whips his head forwards. James stares at him expectantly from a few paces ahead, his hands shoved into the yellow pockets of his rain-jacket.

“You coming?”

And that. Beau feels something break within him, a swoop of something like relief flitting down from the top of his head through every water-logged muscle and bone in his body.

His toes too shriveled to curl, he begins to cry.

The tears drag salt into the corners of his lips, wet clumps of lashes sticking together as he exhales shakily, wipes underneath his eyes with the rough ends of the green towel.

“Yeah,” he whispers to James, his voice raw. The word is swept away with the wind, but he thinks James understands, *yellow green warm James James James*, an invisible string tugging him forwards, tugging him out of everything behind and into the blank slate of sky that droops around them like a heavy sigh.

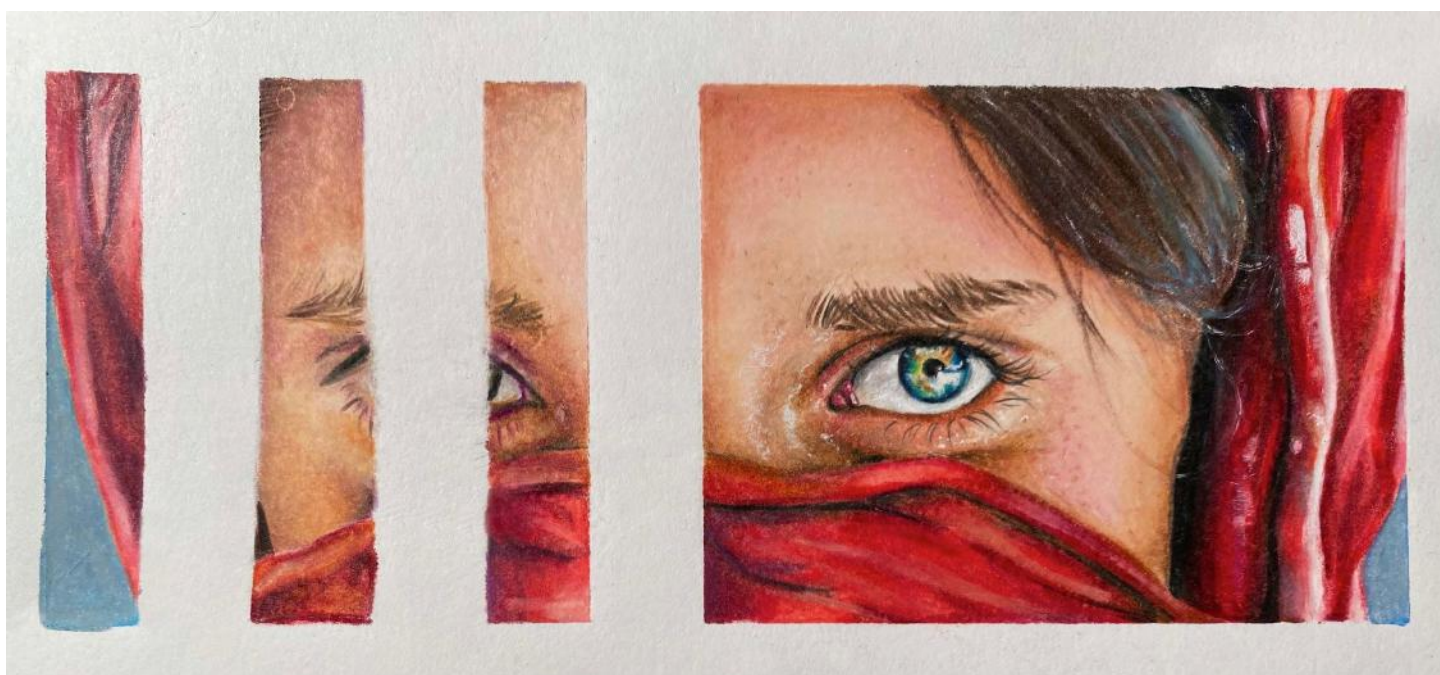
Beau glances back to look at the ocean again, it’s blue greed and unparalleled beauty, tears streaking his flushed cheeks.

Then he turns, and follows James up the shore.



Thumbelina Spring

By Haley Creighton



untitled

By Dilara Bahadir



Checkmate
By Victoria Yuan

pliant mind

By Mira menon

**warning: profanity*

thought she'd wake up again, smell something new, clear skin & vegetables
broken toothpicks linger, it smells like fucking toluene
an island, she's gone — drowsy waves & content feet, a little red house in the middle
the sun, wind & Whitman
milk down the back of her throat, eggs smell better than they taste

she's thought about spheres and femininity, leg warmers & *i like the way you die, boy*
behind inconvenient eyes, tiny squares, bleached shoes, her teeth taste numb with lucky
charms

maple on ice and halloween

she's magnificent alone and past the right time

a jacket with houses & an orange littered dress, windswept hair and airplane sex

when did you realize that smiles and shoes are the same?

there's a puppeteer that you have lost the will to find, curling toes and guttural moans
a black t-shirt from some fucking movie, red on my throat & rain kissed branches
headaches in bed, i want blueberries

when is wondering enough



Still Life

By Victoria Yuan



untitled

By Sophia Martin

the girl who loved lemon made his candy heart sour

By Stella Omenetto

*and so the story went,
that the girl who loved lemons
made his candy heart sour*

**because the day i met you,
you took my breath away.
you smelled like sweetness and pink leaves,
almost like honeysuckle**

you blame me for our only source of nutrients being
lemons;

at the end.

while you stick your fingers in my decayed teeth
from the acid, i apparently fed us.

i never want you to have to see citrus again,
i'll buy you a periwinkle house somewhere cold,
somewhere where my color will scarcely be found
(disregarding the sun and perhaps a faulty lightbulb)
anything so you'll stop spitting your food into my mouth.
though, you know i understand why you do.

a yellow girl

made not of buttercups as everyone thought,
but of sours and crab apples,
as you have told me so often.

i remember the days when you plucked blossoms to surround my hair

**and told me that a guillotine felt more just
than being the reason my eyes bled glass
the day you sobbed after one of the flowers was hiding a thorn**

an eye for an eye you say now,
as you pin me down and squeeze lemons over my eyes
“how does it feel?”
you’ll ask again and again
i hate it, i hate it
and you will finally smile
for revenge is sweet on your tongue.
the sweet relief of the lemon girl choking back her own poison
i am relieved you no longer fear hurting me.
if it worried you still,
you never would have been able to expel the traces of acid from your body
or laugh at the fear in my eyes everytime i saw
what used to be my favorite fruit.
(i was just getting used to it i think,
if you still need an outlet)

**you used to tell me everyday how happy i made you
you smiled the second i entered a room
and at the end of everyday the only pains i felt
were of longing and muscle tension**

*alas so the story went,
that the girl who loved lemons
made his candy heart sour*



Elevate

By Allison Liu



Logs

By Charlotte Shaw



plant thing

By Mira menon



untitled

By Victoria Yuan

Songs of Wilderness
By Victoria Yuan

I. Child of the Sky

My dear beloved—
I see you walking in circles
round and round
in the garden each night.
You unveil your secrets
to the night breeze,
whisper oaths
through dry cracked lips.

You're not frightened
of the same things the rest of us are frightened of. You speak so boldly about
darkness,
tread so carefully around light.

On that fateful day,
Your eyes were brimming with starlight, a jewel slid down your
moonstone cheek. The stone bridge finally crumbled
with the force of the rushing river.

I think you see into another world.
A better one
while you're trapped on this side.
A truer kingdom
Of shadowless knights

where the ferns grow wild and free.

I'm dazzled by your wings,
your fragile, white-feathered wings.
A burden on your back
yearning to take flight into the sapphire sky.

My dear beloved,
You're not made for this world,
are you my dear?
How do you survive,
day after day
in this earthly labyrinth,
when you were born to fly?

II. Evangeline

And graceful though she seemed,
as if a bird in flight,
beneath the still waters
begins a desperate fight.

Then turning, twisting, and grasping for light, for to break into day
she must dive into night.

On white salted beaches,
not a soul lies in sight.
Waves crash against the castle ruins and the moon glows ever
bright.

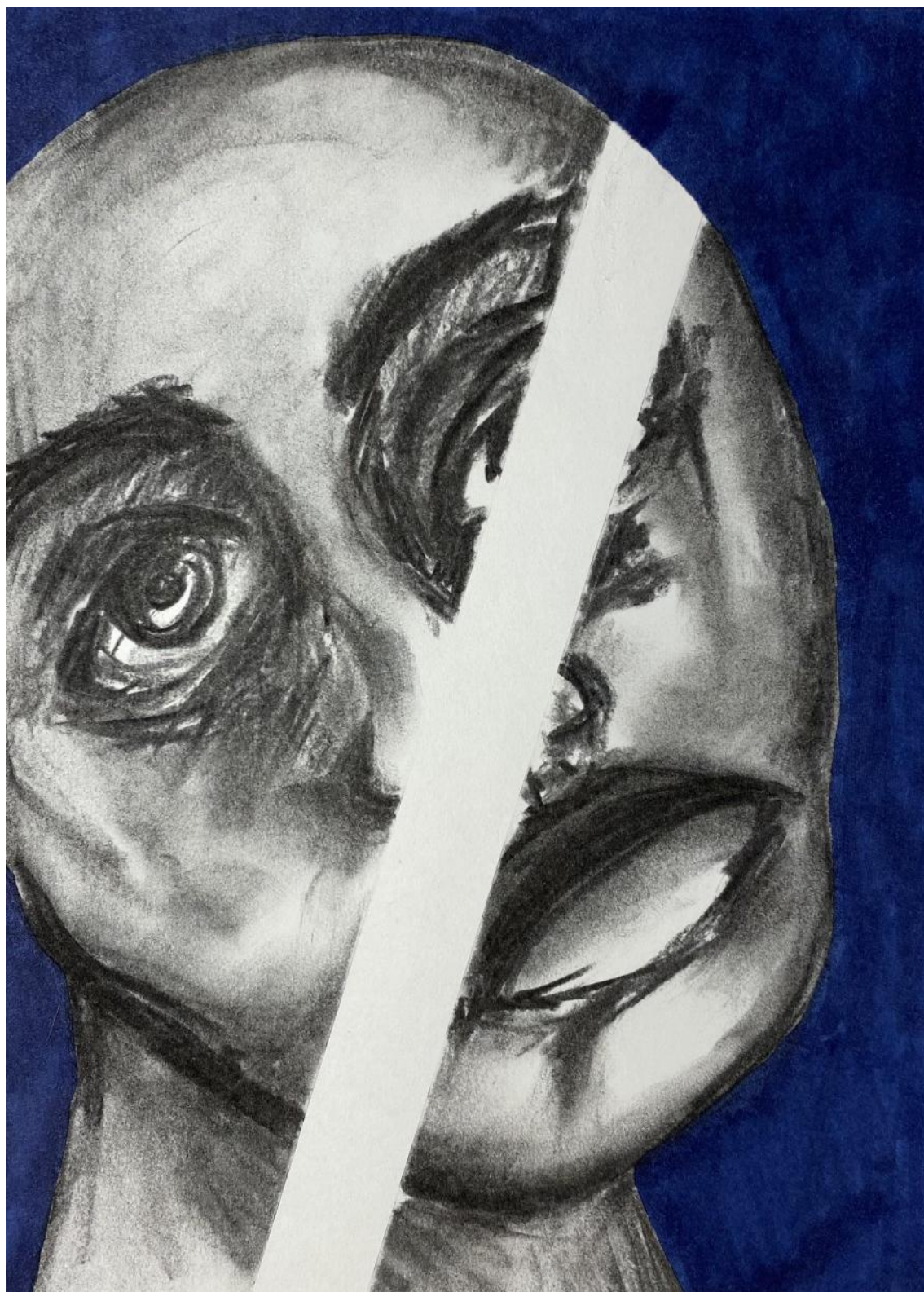
She opens her arms wide
to a flame-colored sky,
embracing each twinkling star
with a shuddering sigh.

With storms raging above her,
and bloodstained knees,
she bows to the wind
and flirts with the trees.

For though she is trapped in this cage— Still. She. Is. Free.
Dancing her way to soft insanity.



Oh honey
By Lotem Loeb



untitled

By Ariela Etingof



untitled

By Stella Omenetto

black Mercedes

By Mira Menon

**warning: death from car crash*

we took a Virgin Atlantic flight

landed, got in the car

one of those roundabouts in the road

the four of us sardines in the car

sweating, swearing,

swerving

i remember absolutely nothing

except for the car

black Mercedes

“a black Mercedes!”

you were so excited

“a black Mercedes!”

i am standing now

in front of a black Mercedes

there was a driver then

sticky bloke

inebriated smoke

we watched that film with

Adam

Driver

in the car with that driver

i am the driver now
 you aren't here now
 i can't remember
 what i am doing here
 now

the last time i said

your name

to you

we were upside down

i remember your face when

you cried out

my name

seats painted red your glassy eyes
 pain and red glass in my eyes

they said "*it'll be alright*"

it wasn't "*alright*"

you weren't "*alright*"

i am inside a black Mercedes
 i am crying inside a black Mercedes
 i remember absolutely nothing
 except for the car

black Mercedes

nothing
except for
the car

black Mercedes



The Archer
By Victoria Yuan