

Tower

A magazine for the literary and visual arts



Fall 2014 Edition

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Ebony 'Soon

Kirsten Rickershauser

Wandering through the tropical storm
 the summer storm—the powerful monsoon
 White behind me, color beside me
 and before me ebony so black

Ebony so black—
almost nothing

Ebony so black—
almost gone

Ebony so black—
almost not meaningful but—

Totally unseen

I wander more deeply into the storm
 -into the roaring monsoon-
 Away from the white, past the color,
 and into the black so ebony

Black so ebony—
almost colorful

Black so ebony—
almost full

Black so ebony—
not meaningless but—

Shiny and textured with possibilities concealed

Into the eye of the storm—the calm of the 'soon
 where all the choices lay
 Away from the known and into the *not*
 the Realm of Possibilities

Past the lightning, the thunder, the wind
 --Much past the sunlight so dear,

I wander past the living and life itself
 Into the Ebony 'Soon.

I wander there for a second
 an hour, a day, a week, a year

I stay there for a lifetime
a thousand lifetimes

To tell the truth...
 ...I never made it out

Little Controlling Communities

Brianna Warwick

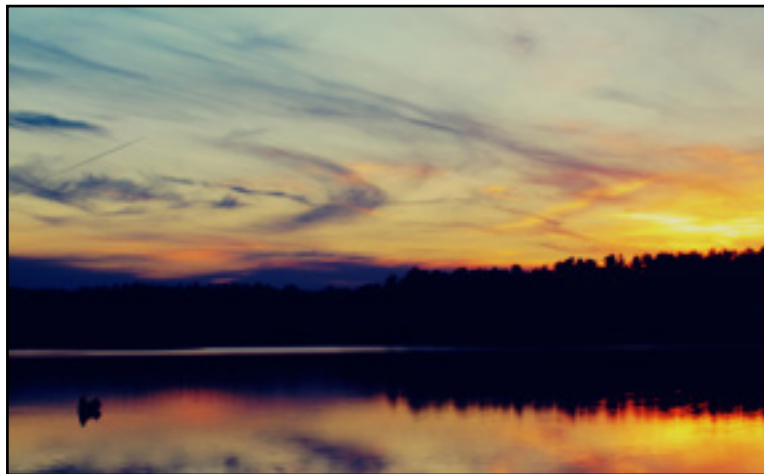
It starts off in levels of one, then two, then three
Next thing you know it's at a thousand
Little communities grow inside you
Migrating to every part of your body

Tingles immediately shoot in your hands and feet
Little people scrambling through your veins
Plunging into your stomach they go
Now at war throwing bombs to your gut

Spears dart down your legs, tearing you apart; weak
Knowing you're about to plummet, reality seems to fade
Controlling voices threaten you're going to die
Repulsively sewing your mouth shut, no longer having the right to speak
Twitches involuntarily; you do not have a choice, deal with it

Worthless; No reason to look people in the eye
A gun shot goes off in your stomach as you plead to collapse
Your heartbeat is increasing like a wildfire
The community wants to put out the fire with buckets of water
This only makes your palms rapidly drip, a downpour sensation

Your head always down
Your head uncontrollably shaking, an earthquake in the community
Wanting, needing, to run to a safe place, but that place never to be found
These no longer "little" communities have taken over
Your body, mind, feelings, and hope is in their hands



Painting with The Sky

Laura Rounds

Body Dimensions

Aubrie Flanigan

It doesn't have to be a war.
real versus fake.
a real-women-have-curves kind of war
a her-boobs-look-fake kind of war
a she-looks-unhealthy,
somebody-give-that-girl-a-sandwich kind of war.

If a person has feelings
if they are tangible, touchable
if you can see them
standing
in front of your judgmental eyes,
from in front of their pain-stricken face
where you talk about them,
then they are real.

Maybe you feel insecure about your body,
but just because
their grass is greener than yours
doesn't mean someone else's isn't greener
to them.

There has been enough of this war.
You can't win this one
by attacking someone else.

I'm tired of hearing songs on the radio,
seeing images on social media
praising one body shape over another
telling girls what boys like
or boys what girls like
or human beings what the world likes
as if the world is some homogeneous blob
that isn't itself
made up of human beings.

The only way to win this war
is by making every shape equal
even if the dimensions
in numbers
aren't.
the only way to win this war

is by embracing
everyone
no matter what their shape...
and that includes yourself.
the only way to win this war
is to stop it.
stop wounding others,
and you'll stop wounding yourself.

Shadow in Back Light
Jamie Halloran



TITLE THIS
Laura Spingel



The Fine Line

Emma Garner

Pride,
a consuming parasite
that clouds your mind and morals
with the delusional
“I’m-better-than-anyone-else”
attitude.
Patriotism,
a noble belief
that strengthens your will and confidence
with the truth that your country is worth praising
with the
“we-are-strong-and-united”
attitude.
Where did we decide to draw the line?
What is the big difference between the two?
How come it is more acceptable to take pride in yourself
as part of a group,
than praising yourself
as an individual?
Why is it better to look down upon the millions unseen,
than to scorn the ones you see everyday?
Our minds morph ideals that aren’t too different,
but we still see them as opposing forces.
Nationalism,
the “we-created-freedom-and-McDonalds-so-we-are-awesome”
notion
is considered important because
we see it as a thread that bounds the country together.
But-
doesn’t a single person also need an adherent
to keep themselves from falling apart?
The chain is only as strong as its weakest link.
When we find so much esteem in our culture,
is it really necessary
to find so little esteem in others?
What is wrong with thinking highly of yourself,
having confidence, and being grateful with your existence?
Is “I’m” better than anyone else
really worse than “we” are better than anyone else?

The Haven

Kristen Morrison

The big, brown wooden doors
worn by time,
Yet the modern, light blue tiles on the floor
bring it back to present day.

Colors of the rainbow
stain the mosaic glass
that surround the building
like soldiers waiting for command.

Emerald green pillars
structure the building
Standing tall and powerful
nothing can take it down.

Walking in, the music hits you like a tornado
Fast and determined,
sounds from their voices
with the beat of the drums
calms the spirit.

The people here are warm and welcoming
arms open wide
A new found relief and peace,
A place to forget all of your troubles.

Statues guard the small, white candles,
symbolizing hope
Hope thrives here
latching on to anyone who needs it.

The light from the candle shines bright
guides people here
reunites and recruits
the idea of a safe haven
brings solace and comfort.

Untitled

Amber Owen

What role is played
by the undefined?

What do the unmarked boxes
in the glazed over corner
hide inside?

Why do we forget
things without words
like dreams mystified by lies?

What did we think
when our infant mouths
spurred bubbles
instead of syllables?

Why do we draw blanks
at smiles whose name
was never voiced?

What happens
to the organs of books
never discovered?

Why do the unencountered
stars beyond our sight
still create?

What is below
Graves who do not show face?

How can existence
go erased?

This Hand

Brianna Warwick

Pick up a piece of chalk
Trace your hand
This hand is its own hand

Look closely
You see an individual shape, size, color, texture.
The hand has many priorities
Some the same as an everyday human being
Some are only done by your hand and no one else's

This hand plays piano that hand doesn't
That hand does play piano but doesn't the same way
This hand paints a picture
That hand also pants a picture; a different technique and picture is created

This hand holds a partner's hand
This hand may only fit into that hand a special way with connection
That hand was formed to fit its lovers hand and no one else's

This hand points in authority
That hand doesn't
This hand leads that one won't
This hand shows another that one may not

This hand touched a heart today and so did many others
But this hand touched someone special that the other hand didn't
The hand is one and only one
Pick up the chalk and trace your partner's hand
This hand is its own hand

Slam Poem

Sam DeMio

It's brand new.
It's for people like you.
Says the doctor,
About the one trick pill.
That keeps the pain away,
That keeps the hell at bay,
Says the doctor,
You want to go to this place to pick up,
Where the right people can hook up.
Those with pain,
Say it's fine for your brain,
Say it puts you to sleep,
Say that it's good cause the government approves of it.
But the same government approves of missiles aimed at foreign kids.
But you get the directions from the dealer, I mean doctor,
To go score some high-night-and-day drug offers.
Unlike a crack house, it's pristine, clean and secure.
Like a crack house, it's filled with addicts searching for burns.
Unlike a crack house it has candy and a drive thru.
Like a crack house it has pills for you to buy to,
Keep you from thinking,
Keep you from drinking,
Keep you from crying too,
But, these are all good things
Isn't this all good for you?
But then you mix them with thinking,
You mix them with drinking,
You mix them with crying,
You, used to be fine.
You, used to not need these damn pills all the time.
You, were the strong, I-survive-on-my-own-type-of-guy.
But a commercial told you that you weren't right,
That you needed Xanax Vicodin Valium to keep tight.
Dark-alley-dealers are jailed behind bars,
But who's gonna jail a doctor that gets paid above the bar?
That prescribe killing substances like bartenders at bars.
You see a problem?
Just take some pills.
'Cause pharmaceutical companies have prescribed you as ill.

The World Outside the Window

Morgan Sansing

You could say
that I'm a tree-hugging, nature-loving, self-proclaimed
environmentalist
or that I possess
an I'm-going-to-save-the-manatees attitude.
But really,
I just appreciate the world
And not the man-made world,
You know? The one contrived of money
and material things.
But I feel blessed by the other world,
the world outside the window.
How often humanity scorns nature.
The sun shines too much, but then not enough.
The breeze refreshes one day, and freezes the next.
And why does the sky have to be blue?
As if purple or orange or yellow might mean something.
So they say let's just forget about nature
and enjoy the comforts
of the great indoors.
How often humanity overlooks nature.
Doesn't anyone notice the first signs of autumn
painting the veins of the trees?
Or the flowers beginning to blossom at your feet?
And have you ever regarded the way
the frost traces the grass?
Or how intricately built a bird's nest is?
No.
Because the stars extinguish
in the artificial light
of television sets.
And while you tap away on your iPhone, your iPad, your iWhatever,
I'm outside.
How often humanity deems nature as worthless
Because what does a stick have anything to do with the world?
But I know the power
of a late afternoon walk by the trees
and the connection
I feel when I take time
to sit in the grass
and just think.
A connection that social media
would die for.

And if you can't appreciate nature,
then at least don't make it a worse place.
Because I'd like to grow up
and have my children know
what rainforests are and
what tigers look like.
And I'm not a you-have-to-recycle-everything-all-the-time-or-else maniac
but if you can't move your hand
two inches
to toss your water bottle
in the recycling bin,
then I guess you really have no understanding
of what life is.
Because it's the world
outside the window.
And that Pop Tart wrapper you leave on the ground?
Well, that's killing life.
Because the pavement isn't going
to throw it away for you.
Well trees don't have feelings
you might say.
Why should I care?
But do you ever stop
to think
about what trees do
for you?
Remember that extremely hot summer day
when you sought out shade
under the maple?
Or that time in which you inhaled a
glorious breath of crisp, fresh air?
Well the world gave you that air
and offered its shade,
in the hope of receiving
a genuine thank you.
But maybe you don't remember.
Because the last time you poured sweat
you plugged in the air conditioner
And the last breath you gulped
was contaminated with the stuffy
particles of a
closed off room.
And so see, nature really has no purpose.
Because the sound of the waves
or the woodpecker
or the rain

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or the crickets
is so flawlessly replicated.
But I can tell you it's not.
Because you can't replicate the awe of
a winter sunset
or the breathless feeling that swells in your heart
while standing
at the summit
of a mountain.
But no, you decided you don't
appreciate nature.
Well, that's fine.
I'll make my difference without you.
But the day you finally look up
from your screen
and glance outside the window,
you'll discover
that the world outside it
is already gone.



Summer Ducks
Kirsten Rickershauser

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Art
Amber Owen

Art is the theory of time
And how it branches out
with all sorts of outcomes.

Art is the slightest of difference
and how it influences people
with all sorts of outlooks.

Art is the amount of moments
and how it creates memories
with all sorts of outtakes.

Art is many of details
and how it comes together
with all sorts of outturns.

Art is the endless of possibilities
and how all can be chosen
with all sorts of outcomes.

Art is the point of lost control
and how it can take it's own shape
with all sorts of outturns

Art is the variety of emotions
and how it is contained
with all sorts of outlooks

Art is the many theories
and how we all define it
with all sorts of outtakes

Art is the definition of time
and how it renders all
with all sorts of outcomes

At night I do not feel alone

Amber Owen

The night-blanked in the sky
with speckled gaps in its wove
makes summer heat appeal
Thick and heavily draped
over loose-focused eyes
and heavy-focused drinks.
Scattered noise and hearty insects
make deep and loud thoughts
recently unnoticed when all of life
functions as such a bright light
too busy for such things.
Blue tinted hard light
makes spacious range appear
deep and slow footed
with air pocket seems.
Shifting pops and fallen lids
make treading detailed spiraled waves
seemingly forgotten when all of life
react like mechanisms
too used to such things.
With the night-blanket in the sky
and all its textured glows
All the lights are out and
All goes noticed now.

Alaskan Sunset

Bryan Kerman



The Storm Before the Calm

Aubrey Flanigan

exhaustion lurks
behind eyes
throbbing, churning
like an angry sea

mind tingles
as waves
crash
on skull's rock cliffs

body
stiff
from beating surf,
brine crust

jaw's gates expel
gusts of wind that
buffet, buffet
sails of reason,
organized thought.

lips,
throat
chapped
by ocean spray,
yearn for fresh water
eyes
sting
from salty wash

heart drums
slow rumble of thunder
ears muffled
by laughing water

can't keep treading,
can't keep up,
going nowhere,
sinking
down,
down,
down,
water floods lungs,
drowning,
drowning,
falling,
asleep.

TITLE THIS

Christina Peltak



Too School for Cool

Rebekah Terry

Since when has incompetence become cool?
Since when has ignorance become hip?
Why is it that teenagers seem to strive for mediocrity?
The constructs of teen society
Seem to have built up walls
Condemning over-achievement.
Walls
That alienate
The population of why-do-anything-less-than-my-best.
Hurtful phrases
Created for the sole purpose of discouraging brilliance.
It's as if intelligence
Nowadays
Is a plague of the pretentious.
Since when has dedication become lame?
Motivation considered weird?
Academic clubs are dubbed social suicide
But why?
Because they offer teens opportunities to utilize their intellect?
Academic standards tumble down the slippery slope of if-I-try-too-hard-people-
won't-like-me.
Why is it that being smart spoils popularity,
While being athletic is appealing?
What is the big difference
Between agility of the body
And that of the mind?
Since when has the standard of writing become
A bullshit-analysis-partially-copied-from-sparknotes sort of paper?
Since when does knowing an answer make you a nerd?
Why does getting an answer wrong give you bragging rights?
Our generation is so messed up
That teenagers no longer crave knowledge.
The idea of intelligence has become so soiled by the stain of "social acceptance"
That the presence of scholarship is poisonous.
Until the idea of intellect is cured of corruption
There can be no progress.

Untamable Beast*Aubrie Flanigan*

sit.
 nothing.
 Sit!
 I taught her playing dead,
 not playing dumb
 SIT!

she smiles
 tongue hanging out
 mocking, laughing
 her tail pulses,
 a heart beat.

Man's best friend,
 insurgent piece of him
 that refuses to obey.

I endeavor
 to force her down
 her muscles tense,
 resisting.

She grew too big,
 ungraspable.
 that's when I see:
 not dog,
 but wild horse.

So I try on
 something bigger.
 exchange leash
 for saddle and bridle.

but she kicks, neighs.
 judgement won't balance
 on her back.
 morals, logic won't guide her.

determined,
 I clutch her mane,
 clamber up,
 sigh relief,
 relax in my place of power..

for one second.

a jolting kick
 launches me
 in the air,
 reaching frantically
 for stability
 I strike
 the ground
 with a painful
 electric
 shock

my eyes spring open,
 I find myself
 not at hoof of a horse,
 but the foot of mountain.

Beyond Repair*SR Rose*

an anvil rushing
 to the ocean's floor
 no one Notices.
 no one Cares.
 and then the surface settles
 and it would seem
 that there was
 Never even
 a ripple.

No one could think
 that there's something sinking
 beneath the surface.
 something that crashes down
 upon the coral
 and scratches the stones
 and finally damages
 the sea's delicate floor
 beyond repair.

Broken, the water seems
 no longer perfect
 and perhaps it on no occasion was.
 the waves aim to
 restore the ocean's base
 and protect it from
 further damage.
 however, the anvil causes
 all of the water's strength,
 that it once possessed,
 to weaken.

sometimes the water is still
 they say
 it's simply just a phase...
 but the ocean will Never
 be the same as it once was
 and the anvil
 will Never leave.

Black Feathers and a Sour Tone

Charles O'Leary

Anxiety is a little bird,
That nests inside your head.
Always humming bitter tunes,
That seem to never end.

Time expands the black wing's length
And slowly more space is filled
With ebony feathers that absorb all light
That attempts to let itself in

Its long black beak feeds upon your strength
Sip by sip it lays in wait
Till the day you've lost control
Of the Panic in your mind

Its crowing gathers in your breast
Where Hope once sang you songs
Now haunting tunes fill once sweet dreams
And will never leave you alone.



CAR

Ocean Valdez

Bleeding Red and White

Kaitlin Nash

You put forth all the passion in your body
for no reason other than you were told to do so.

Have you no working consciousness?
no independence,
or pride
or self-awareness?

Are you that easily persuaded
that you will forget any previous doubts
and barrel, full-forced, straight into them
without a second thought,
simply because everyone else was too?

There is nothing more dangerous
more terrifying
or more disgusting
than a blind sense of pride
and overlooked conformity.
Propaganda forced into eager eyes and ears
but no one is able to see or hear it.
Voices scream in undeniable agreement
until they are lost and silenced forever.

And still the frenzy ensues
until the overwhelming patriotism
bleeds red from innocent eyes, ears, and hearts.
Until there are no more doubts.
Until we are convinced that we love
what we've always despised.

They feed us energy
and grow furious when we act like animals.
But that's what we truly are;
anyone so easily persuaded by the masses
surely cannot have a human consciousness.

Breaking Out

Julian Leclerc

Locked up in this tiny town
This small world that they
have always known,
The only world they have ever known
To them it's like a prison,
A cage that they can't break free from
Until they know,
They can make it
On their own
But, even then
Some part of them
Wants to stay there
The comfort of this world
Has always pleased them
It would always give them
Some sense of home,
And home is a safe place.
Yet, a part of them
Wants to abandon this safety
Leave behind the cushiony pillow
In which they have always known.
A part of them speaks rebellion
While the other part speaks of safety.
Ultimately the voice of rebellion
Will overpower the voice of safety.
Rebellion means a lot to people,
But, it also means taking a risk,
Going on an adventure.
And the human spirit
Is always hungry for adventure.
It is this reason alone,
That they shall cast aside
The warmth of a fire,
A feeling of fullness from dinner,
and ultimately,
a portion bit of their family.
So let them go when they wish to,
As nothing will stop them
From filling that hole.

Butterflies

Rebekah Terry

butterflies in my stomach
nestled down deep
so easily excited
at just the thought of you

the sight of your smile
causes them to flap their fragile wings
tickling me from inside
forcing my mouth to crack an unconscious smile

the sound of your voice
causes them to swarm sweetly
hundreds of delicate beings
circling within me
filling my body with vibrant emotion

the sound of your laugh
resonates in their cage
hastening their excitement
their wings flap quickly
mimicking the pounding of my heart

the feeling of your arms
embracing me gently
warms the tiny creatures in my gut
causing them to venture toward my heart
making me giddy

and finally
the feeling of your lips
pressed softly against my own
causes my butterflies to flee
bursting from every pore of my being
leaving my stomach capsized
and my heart ablaze

Cactus Child

Emma Garner

Using the solemn whispers heard above
in the night sky
to distract from the bellowing
that ensues on the ground below

Looking ahead at the wide open possibilities that await,
rather than concentrating
on the privations occurring behind

Transformed by thoughts
of joyous cries and quiet contentment,
instead of tears of agony and aches of regret

Using the soft caresses of hope and optimism
to pursue the path
to the salvation so frequently
visited in speculations

Rather than letting the incitement of anger and hatred
thrust into the oblivion the
passions that want to be touched

Although prickles have surfaced
to create isolation in a barren desert
an essential solid exterior develops
for protection from the cold nights of disappointment
and the scalding days of remorse

The sweet nectar of life
kept safe and secure
behind barbed armor

Nothing penetrates,
nothing escapes,
only untouched and untainted hopes
for the Cactus Child.

Cleaning House

Anna Tremblay

Mind screaming
racing
reeling
thoughts crawling
creeping
squeezing through cracks
shooting around corners
oozing through lips
rolling off the tongue

Wracking an empty brain
scratching at the walls
dusting the cracks and corners
shuffling
through memories
for that last speck of muse

Watch Me

Brianna Warwick

An eleven year old blonde girl walks into middle school wanting to join band. Her friends try to convince her that it is weird. They say "You can't, don't do that." She's now 12 and wants to tryout for the talent show, her sister explains "You're not good enough yet. You can't" The blonde girl is now in high school and her family tells her she can't pass math. It will be impossible. This girl now wants to tryout for the gymnastics team for high school, but classmates overwhelmingly explain that she can't because you have to be really good. She's now ready to go to college but paperwork shows she can't go to the college she wants because of a test score. This girl would like to do a career that's not easy or "normal" Her teachers overpoweringly encourage her that she can't. This blonde girl was me and this is me. I'm going to say what I always have said. Whenever someone says I can't, I'm going to turn around and say "Watch me."

What the Heart Left

Aubrie Flanigan

mysterious ripples
fish?
bug?
no matter.
Suddenly
millions of tiny circles
dance in delight
sprinkling
cold tingles
on an oppressively warm,
over privileged day.
addicting.
gentle breeze turns
passionate wind
dragonflies, butterflies
blown away
chipmunks, squirrels
hide in holes
birds tear the air in fright
a pack of dogs reduced to one.
can't get enough.
Downpour.
Sheets
strip to the bone
slice to the heart
tattered flesh, like torn sails
clings
soaked.
frozen.
paralyzed.
water, boiling cold
sputters violently
splashing piercing ice daggers
pain, once soothing,
now too sharp to bear.
No return.
and when the heart
has played enough
sun melts through clouds,
The air hangs, still...
beside the trail
a pile of bones
dried out by sun's shafts
guarded by a shivering dog
scrawny and scraggly from the wet
dragging down whiskers and tail
who refused to leave.

Creativity

Morgan Sansing

The boat that forever sails the world,
floating along on turquoise dreams
and drinking the air of endless imagination
In the quest for the horizon's perfection.

Calm seas and the boat glides smoothly
Soaring across the surface in passionate fervor.
Filled with inspiration at every turn of the mast,
Basking in the glory of sunlight and blue skies.

Or maybe the boat flies into a storm
And struggles against the beating waves
diminish its energy and leave it ready to sink
in the gray cloud of an unfamiliar place.

The boat encounters all sorts of possibilities,
Skimming the sea with the deftness of the gulls
Navigating with the echoes of the whales
Stringing together ideas like a school of fish.

The boat constantly changing
its design, shape, and color.
Always susceptible to the powers
of the mind.

Overcoming every hurdle
the boat manages to find the right course.
Its progress sometimes halted,
but never wholly abandoned.

Seeking to chart new waters
and explore the map
Poised for the spark of inspiration to strike
and reflect back in the mirror of the sea.

Then comes the day in which the boat docks
in the exotic, foreign harbor
of untraveled territory
that means its journey was a success.

Excerpts from an Unfamiliar Party

Rebekah Terry

8:34 am
silence.
wiping sleep from my eyes,
I take in my surroundings.
two other bodies share the space around me,
the floor covered with a dozen more
deep in slumber.
carefully, quietly
I tiptoe around the sleeping strangers.
the morning hazy with torpor,
alone in a reticent reality.

2:46 am
voices saturate the air with life.
I find myself crammed
between a friend and an unfamiliar face.
laughter.
each mouth participating in an energetic cacophony,
except my own.

12:23 am
following a friend
the only face I know
through a foreign crowd.
stealing swift glances
hoping some façade sparks recognition
in my frazzled mind.
I get lost
in the hectic festivity,
consumed
by the boisterous mob.

10:43 pm
faces slip by,
names pressed into my ear
only to ooze out the other,
forgotten.
my mouth strained and sore
from returning the strangers' requisite smiles.

8:03 pm
"it's not a big deal you won't know anyone.
you'll meet people."
she proclaimed
each word stained with indifference
and so
I decided to go.

Silver Notes

Jackie Bogaczyk

Tumbling over the tree tops,
dancing through the air. Rattling leaves
and bowing tall grasses to their knees.
Sweeping a tunnel with refreshing gusts.

The wind comes from whispering trees.
Murmuring secrets and chattering through the branches.
Holding messages beneath the painted ceiling,
Arriving safely among the green teardrops.

Careful and dulcet, the whisk squeezes the silver notes
into sweet tunes, lifting the singing
bells with its breath to play to the
cottoned air pressed against the glassy canvas.

The blinking melody serenades
the oaks, waltzing and swaying with the pines.
The gentle acoustic flits away, the cotton shadows.
Sobbing into the wind's spread arms.

Roaring, blowing, soaking and fierce,
the squall bangs against the branches
raging through steely space.
The strength and wrath, the temper of the tempest.

Gasping, weakened, drained,
the once whispering billow naps tranquilly
in the newly cotton that rests atop the dewy sights.
Trees dip toward the sharp green, their branches desolate.

Creeping back down from atop,
amiable gales pipe into the arched trees,
dancing afresh. Wiping away the
dusty air with a pressing, blustery hand.

The whooshing whispers glide across
the vacant air, sharing their gentle, breezy secrets
with the Earth as the wind rushes through,
awakening the world with its breezy song.

Skydiving

Kirsten Rickershauser

Propellers turn, the engine purrs,
plane starts to go
Anticipation

Plane rises through the air
Over the clouds, a
single bird in the otherwise blue sky
Tranquil

Extended moment of peace
Moving, but passing
nothing by
Pause

Door opens in the plane
wind blows in, the
aircraft sways
Nerves

Take a breath, focus,
close your eyes
Jump

Suspended in the air,
going nowhere but
still,
Falling

Wind rushing by as you're motionless
You break through the
clouds and see the ground
Fear

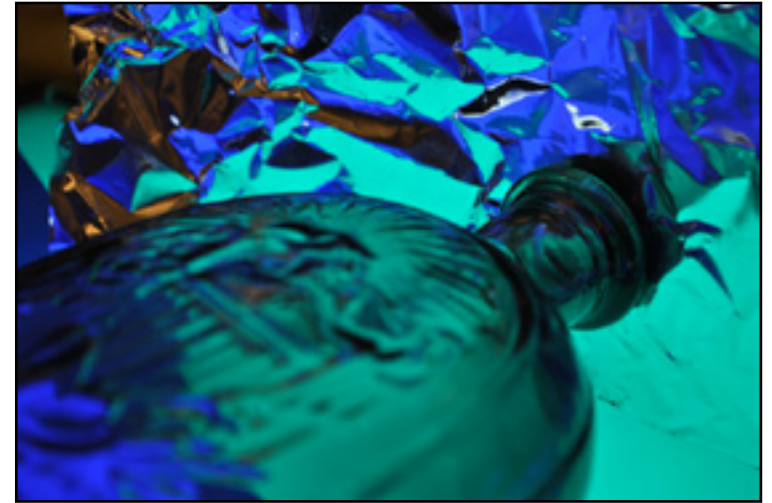
Mind lost for a moment
Emerging of its own
accord, the 'shute
Deployed

Floating down now gently,
gliding toward the
ground
Peace

Earth grows nearer, the ants become
bigger
Your feet touch the
ground

Without wind,
'Shute keeps falling
Entanglement

It creates a vacuum
In the dark, in the
silence
Nothingness
but the memories.



TITLE THIS

Andreas Braz

They are falling

Lauren Batchelder

Hurling themselves towards death
A devastating choice
Smoke claws through the windows
And stains the sky
The fire attempts to lick the sun
And the cacophony of screams
Drifts through the air
Piercing eardrums
And hearts
The smoldering embers
Dance lazily through the breeze
Recklessly landing
The world is on fire
Yet the chill of evil
Parades through the streets
And through the darkness
The cloud of decay
See that they are still falling
From the tower
Whose twin watches silently
As her destruction is imminent
Until the second plane makes contact
Hell

Trash

Kristen Morrison

This wasteland has grown to a metropolis,
Pure beauty is now hard to find,
Human kind has poisoned the earth,
Once clean and full of life.

Smog filling up our lungs,
Garbage scatters the world's floor,
Chemicals so toxic....
We are KILLING ourselves,
Slowly, but surely in our descendant's time.

Not only will death come upon ourselves,
Every creature walking this planet suffers.
Air polluted, water contaminated.

New ideas like "hydraulic fracturing"
Another word for death,
Only benefit the corporations,
That receive billions.

Why would you need so much money?
Is it worth the slaughter of many?
The light of the world is diminishing,
While their profits are only increasing.
Most do not notice nature's destruction,
If you want proof, just look outside your window,
And witness mother earth's demise.

The Thunder

Jackie Bogaczyk

Sometimes I feel like those weather people.
The ones who wave in front of a screen and
predict the future. I can predict a storm before
the clouds even start churning in his eyes.
It takes one slip to ignite the thunderstorm that
strikes the world beneath it with
rage rather than rain,
shouts rather than thunder,
flashing glares rather than crackling lightning.
A man rather than a storm.

He sets a famous eyeballs-about-to-pop-out-of-the-socket look
at our dripping wet cluster. Thunderous commands
with a side of roaring rain slap against us as
we, his slaves, shuffle to obey the almighty
gymnastics coach. Swinging and swinging on
raw, red hands, Mr. Thunder rumbles about the
blood on the bar. Because in the mind of the
Thunder King we only do such things to
aggravate him. The blood on the bar has
nothing to do with the peeling rips on our
hands from swinging around and around for
and hour and a half. Of course not.
That would make too much sense.

When the thunder man has had enough of our
miserable-teenager-just-complaining-to-complain
attitudes, he blows us over to beam.

Don't fall. We fall. Don't fall. We fall. Don't fall!
But, Sir Thunder, Your Majesty, how do we not fall?
You stay on the beam, obviously.

Oh. Now I get it. Why didn't I think of that?
I tumble across the floor, thunder clapping
against my ears. I sprint toward the vault
through a spray of electric rain.

More thunder through the push-ups.

More rain through the chin-ups.

More lightning through the rope climbs.

Lord of Thunder, maybe we should give
our arms a rest so that the muscles don't
disintegrate and fall off or something.

Smashing thunder accompanied by a
your-opinion-is-stupid-so-shut-up-and-do-what-I-tell-you-to-do glare.
Dearest Thunder One, it's time to go home.

Practice is over; look at the clock.
You leave when I see some effort!
rattles the caging walls.

I grab my raincoat for next time.
I bring an umbrella and pull on some rain boots, but
nothing can keep out the raging thunderstorm that
has become a usual forecast.

Melting clouds into slamming thunder, the
storm stretched into the eternity of the thunder man.

But it all reeled back one day.

The sun overcame the bursting clouds,
and the thunder man was just a man.

Smiles rather than sun.

A bouncing laugh rather than a slicing gust.

When he was just a man rather than a coach, the
rain would be soft and gentle, never the
roaring, raging storm we know now.

We have learned to live in the rain without getting wet
and to hear the thunder without ever listening.

Perhaps one day the storms will die down for good.
And the man who is the never ending thunderstorm will
stop his roaring and raging and will remember
that a bright, shining sun is just beyond his
stormy clouds.

Zzz

Jackie Bogaczyk

Sinking into the one, two, three sheep's wool
and shading away the world. Ideas creep
around, BARbarically BAttling BACk and forth,
bleating to build into cemented thought.

Shepherded around the pickets, thoughts
leap over the fences into the herd,
hooves thumping the the green blades
before joining the fleecy mass.

Blankets of creamy haze wrap each idea
Layers of cozy quilts bundle every memory.
The heaping thoughts seep into the mix,
Churning into a stormy jumble, Swirling into a dream.

The adventures of the mind roll ahead,
Facing the worst without a single twitch.
Achieving the best without achieving at all.
Being everything while doing nothing.
As the fears stomp in, the vibrating world
melts away from the creamy, cozy dream.
Sheep hooves dash away, fleeing in terror.
The caged monsters have broken through.

Hissing and spitting, spraying streaky flame,
inevitable destruction for a once quiet dream.
The time to strike the mellow valleys passes forward.
In the midst of relaxing peace, they attack.

Through a shift of wavering color, the end has slipped behind,
monsters and sheep have receded into the blurry edges.

The world is steady, the world is awake.

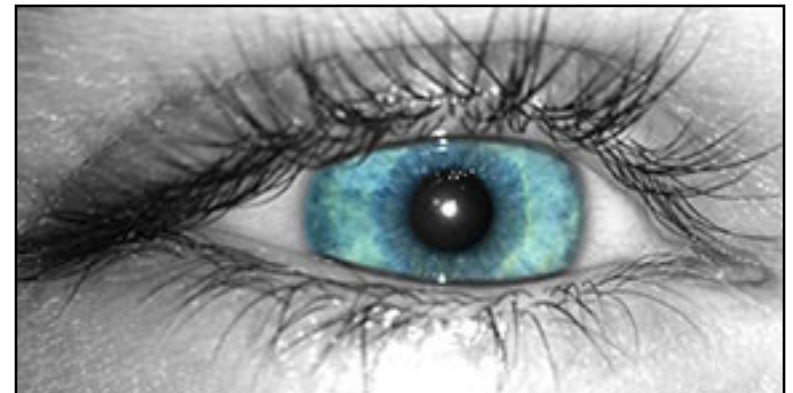
Falling back through the pillow, herding the sheep in.

Sinking into the one, two, three sheep's wool
and shading away the world. Ideas creep
around, BARbarically BAttling BACk and forth,
bleating to build into cemented thought.

The swirling thoughts fight once again
to take part in the ongoing hazy dream.

Blue Eye

Christina Peltak



Those People

Kirsten Rickershauser

There are always two types of people in this world:
The 'Us' and the 'Them'
'We' are normal, 'They' less so,
 But even worse than the conventional 'Them' are those people.

You know the ones.
Not those people as in those-people-over-there
 but rather those people—
 The people who make you stand up straight just so that you may
look down your nose at them and say in a deep, almost Victorian grandmother like
voice,
"those people"

Of 'those people,' there are infinite types:
 There are those so-like-totally-girls who chew gum and flip their hair
 Those I-know-I'm-sorry-I'll-do-better-next-time people
 Those yes-I-just-cut-you-off-but-I'm-in-a-hurry-so-GET-OUT-OF-MY-WAY!
people

 Those yeah-right people
 Those I-just-insulted-you-Just-Kidding people

 Those rich brats,
 Those white chicks,
 Those people always attached to their phones

 Those red-heads,
 Those blonds,
 Those I'm-right-you're-wrong-DEAL-WITH-IT people

(but seriously, I'm always right)

'Those people' are always those you disapprove of—
 at least in the moment—
and they're normally clichés,
But keep in mind that when you point, three more fingers point your way.

So remember that next time you judge—
 You criticize others, but you say more about yourself.

Bobbing for Apples

Charles O'Leary

 Gasping and hopeless
 You rage against an unyielding force
 Paddling hard till what little strength leaves you
 To be chewed out by an angered sea

 Your body sinks,
 Though your mind won't let go of the fight,
 And slowly pressure works to smother you
 Until there's nothing left

 You know that if you breathe
 One great big, salty gulp of blue,
 Your misery will be ended
 And peace will reign again.

 But how could you knowingly open the door
 And set your fate in stone
 When maybe,
 Just maybe,
 If you fought it out...

 You could be miserable for longer.

Fling

Anna Tremblay

Black and dreary
suddenly all becomes bright
a shooting star floats gracefully through
senseless dark skies

Across the empty nothingness,
another emerges
sailing on the whim
of nonexistence
bright, glowing
meaningful

Two shooting stars
different courses of travel set
they brush past each other

rugged edges meet
erupting, sparking, hopeful

They leave the embers
of their fiery past behind them
They float
into the barren void
The future does not hesitate
to consume them

Two lonesome stars
with overlapping orbits
time is fleeting
our cherished collision, done

The Laugh

Emma Garner

The all too familiar sound
that always seems to waver at the end
as if the creature doesn't know how long
the façade should go on until the audience
is truly convinced and fooled.

It seems so obvious
that the laugh is a fraud
a scam
appearing whenever it needs to be heard
always strained and artificial
not a single part of sincere or honest.

It seems so obvious,
that the enjoyment shown through the grin
is not really there-
that it is all a hoax
to the weak-minded
who earnestly want to conceive that
someone discovered humor in what



Jackie's Shoes

Andreas Braz

Timid

Lauren Batchelder

Fair of skin
Charcoal eyes which gaze into souls
Auburn Hair
She is the Peddler's daughter
At night when the sun dips into the sky
Allowing the land to be cloaked
In ink
Devoid of light is the peddler's daughter
Father comes home
With a crunch of the boots
Upon the decaying leaves
Towards the door
Which bars the wicked from the pure
Until it opens
And bellowing
Mouth drenched with alcohol
He comes towards
The timid Peddler's daughter
Running
Fleeing
Bare feet scraping the wooden floor
Red mane flying
Gray eyes searching for escape
Which does not exist
Until father grabs daughter
Screaming sobbing
Boots clicking
White hands clawing
Moaning
He places her on the bed
And satisfies himself
Empty now is the timid peddler's daughter

Dear Reader,

The hours of work behind this magazine have finally paid off, and here we are with a finished Tower magazine in your hands. Thank you for being a part of this journey from the first rough draft the author scribbled on the back of an envelope to this shiny, smooth paper. Writers, as I personally know, write to be read. and your choosing to read this magazine validates not only their work, but the hours that the staff of Tower put in.

If you like what you've read and seen here (and that wouldn't surprise me, because this edition is one of my favorites), we strongly urge you to contribute to the next edition. Write what you want to read, and become a part of those who have supported Tower with their submissions and unbridled creativity.

And even if writing or other arts aren't for you, continue to enjoy what we have collected here for you. Pick up the next edition we put out, and know that in addition to experiencing your own enjoyment, you are giving meaning to the work of your classmates and peers.

Read. Write. Continue to make the world a better place through the development and consumption of literary material. And once again, on behalf of the entire Tower staff, thank you, reader.

Liza St. Jean
Tower Editor-in-Chief

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Colophon

col·o·phon *n.*

1. An inscription placed usually at the end of a book, giving facts about its publication.

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