



The Woodsworth Review

Summer Supplement 2024

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land acknowledgement

The Woodsworth Review is produced out of Woodsworth College, University of Toronto. We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

masthead

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letter from the editor in chief

Dear Readers,

It is my utmost honour to present to you The Woodsworth Review's first-ever Summer Supplement. We launched this journal at the beginning of this year, and the response has been overwhelming. I am immensely grateful to all of you.

The Summer Supplement is unlike our annual print; it is a text-only piece of work. This edition of the Supplement is driven by a yearning for time. The voices in these pieces wish to elongate the moments they transport us to. Summer, by its very nature, reflects a similar attitude. For most, it is the longest period of vacation. It is perhaps the only time of the year we look forward to staying outside, or rather, experiencing the outdoors in its fullness. Nature presents itself in complete harmony. We, perhaps, feel fulfilled. But within summer are also moments that make us fearful of the forthcoming grey. Recognizing that the serenity of summer is temporary invokes a poignant discontent toward the colder winds that are to follow. Perhaps there's a desolation within these long months too. The bright days eclipse our melancholies.

As you read through these pieces, you'll see that the writers share a similar anxiety toward summer. Some bank on hope, while others cherish summer as it proceeds. There's profound grief, evocative reflections, and even calls for celebration, all explored within the pages of this journal. After weeks of hard work by my editing team, Emma and Diana, along with the continued efforts of Aleks, our lead social media manager, and the incredible talent and skill of our writers, I am proud to present this supplement to you. I hope you enjoy exploring the avenues as the pieces provoke you to do so. And perhaps, you'll find elements of your own summer within.

Devarya Singhania,
Editor in Chief

POETRY

I.



last summer

Audrey Lai

Those last summer days stretched
out, then, like a stray nimble cat, perched up on our windowsill
and sunbathing, unraveling like the peel of a tart orange coming
undone. Those last days tricked down our fingers
like melting blue raspberry ice pops straight from the freezer, dripping
into the pond we swore we'd never swim in, in fear of brain-eating algae,
until

Henry stepped in wearing his brand new swim trunks, leaving the
back of my car seat sopping wet by the time we arrived back home. Those
days, those last summer days— they were ours.



Portrait of the Young Artist on Benzodiazepines

Patrick Ignasiak

(TW: allusion to drugs, graphic language)

vertebral pattern recognition condescends to me: this is the subway
thin boy stringing bits of meat between his teeth
spread open out of time
still sorting
his memory snapped to his knee
they watch, circling around the
edge is widening through his skin
smell of ozone and the image of a horse
low-pass dialed wide
rubbing its cock
: this is his apartment
sulphur-growth pollinating
the tall kid is still dropping lit thiolate in flakes
strode through the undreamt
finger's bright past the blank
: this is his
sorry, this is



Someday You'll Love Bunny More

Julia Pelitis

Bunny, things will get better.
Squeeze your knees closer to your chest
And let the hot tears land on your cold bare skin
That is not shattered, but whole
Like a stained glass window that you simply can't see
In the dark of the night, in the solace of your room.
You don't have to be ashamed, Bunny.
One day you'll find the light that will shine through your glass mosaic,
And you will realize that it's possible to love the moon on the moon.
You will never again have to be alone
Crying yourself to sleep in your tall bed with the desk you
Once sat at while writing for hours tucked underneath. Bunny. Bunny—
Get up. The best thing about your body is where it's going.
One day you'll see your reflection and smile at the woman you're
becoming.
You can uncover the mirrors, Bunny,
And revel in the confidence a singular haircut and a beaded bracelet gives
you.
Don't worry Bunny. Soon, you'll realize that love isn't a verb, it's a noun,
But Bunny, you must remember that loneliness isn't a curse.
Three good friends are better than a hundred vague acquaintances
Who wouldn't care even if your heart was bleeding on
The high school washroom floor in front of their feet.
Don't be afraid of the winter, Bunny. It's icy claws
Are a canvas for knitted cardigans. One day
You will be walking down the street in nothing
But a plaid jacket in negative forty degree weather
And you will smile. You will frolic around campus with your
Best friend on the first snowfall of the year, and you

Will attend galas in frayed nylons on cold spring nights where you will
Be praised for your poetry. Bunny, things will get better.
One day you'll cut your hair and you will never look back;
The front door, is just wide enough to come back
For short stints of time when your heart aches but
Still, you'll leave home and never listen to the same
Four songs on the radio ever again. You might miss the
Bunnies in your middle school bed or the pink chandelier
In your childhood room, but they'll always pass
Through you like you are the wind chimes. One day
You'll know exactly whose embrace will carry you through the days
That you will spend grieving the person you were before you
Embody the colourful shards of glass that make you who you are.
Bunny, things will get better. Soon you'll wake up
In a strange room with a strange girl in
The bed that is a little too close to yours and you will smile as you
Long for the days you spent being ashamed of your nickname before
Your mother stopped calling you Bunny.



Moon-kissed

Leah Cromarty

(TW: allusion to self harm)

“They’re like little craters on the moon,”
My niece said, yanking on my arm.
She noticed—
I had let down my guard and she noticed,
Her auntie’s craters nearly healed,
Though perhaps still itching to betray
The thoughts that once burned her.

She would never know how my body fought back,
Against the force of embers and flood of anger,
Or how I clenched my teeth until tears collected,
In pools by my ears,
As I drove the cigarette deeper into my flesh.
I would never tell her how dizzy I’d become—
Flat on the floor with scotch spit dripping from my lips,
And raw, sickened arms.
Or how I lay there for some time,
Imagining papercuts of veins,
And ash coursing through a corpse

Hungry specters holding me down,
With yellow eyes peering through the haze,
And cold arms wrapped around my waist,
Stone pressure on my abdomen,
Squeezing sweat from my pores,
That I may have mistaken for blood.
Cheeks burning in barely-there punishment,
The red lashes of spindly fingers on my thighs,

Metallic mouth left screeching for words,
Against a void of ghostly faces,
Grinning at the searing scent.
Thank god, she wouldn't know.

But these scars remain.
Little chasms in my skin
That have yet to be filled with life again.
Craters.
And the moon, a symptom of chaos,
The scar left by devastating collision,
A war won by none.
I rolled my flannel sleeves back over my arms.
But she smiled.
"The moon is really pretty."



Compactness theorem

Minna Pelemis

The topological definition of compactness is as follows:

a set is compact if every cover has a finite subcover, or, as you would say, just a string of words, each falling on the other like clumsy children at the playground. *A closed and bounded set*, I'd say. You and I would be the last ones at the park, watching our breath fan out in the cold, little wisps of cotton candy in the air. You'd offer to push me on the swing,

but I wouldn't want to fly, just stay there with you, heels in the dirt.

Compact, you'd say, laughing a little. *I could fit it in my pocket. Like you.*

Your engagement ring, that'll fit too, the battered copy of *Poor Folk* you bought me junior year,

that counts. These things are physical, objective and stalwart. We know them to be true.

Same way I know that when I end up at the altar you'll kick down the door and object,

or else be my best man, hands shaking, flinching like you're watching a forest fire. Compact,

then, the corner of my heart where I let myself feel for you. Where I can imagine the snowflakes

settling in your hair, the slope of your face under the streetlight, every word you've said that counts.

Move out, drive me away, move on, bring her everywhere that used to be ours. Make me

reclaim everything I loved outside of your image, and here I'll be, perched on the seesaw, waiting for you.

Last Christmas you told me that a nuclear bomb could detonate between us and we'd still text

the next day, bashful about it. *Could we meet up at the bookstore? Could things be how they used to?*

You'd tilt your head. *I could fit you in my pocket.* You haven't changed, not in regards to me, not at all.

We'll never get married, never choose each other, but you'll be there in a heartbeat if I ever call.

Even in a playground in the middle of the night. Even at the end of the world. You'd tell me, time and time

again, that if it were between me and her, you'd choose me, and that's enough. If you and I are friends

then no one ever has been. If you and I are in love then no one ever will be. I'd kick up snow beneath

my feet, look up at you like a supplicant. I'd open my mirror, clean up the topography of my face.

You need me as much as I need you, you say, hands in your pockets, not touching.

So I know you better than anyone. That's my price. I snap my compact shut. *Yeah, I say. Yeah, I know.*



Brother

Ulis Bertin

(TW: graphic details of violence)

Call me brother
again,
this morning –
it kills me.

The mad scramble
just took
the city
by the gills, flung it
 up the shore
gasping for
Sedate routine;
Ten million voices breaking on
the dishes
stagnating like battered crags in the
 sink;
The bin bags' bloated bodies –
as sunstroked nouveaux-riches
Vacationing
In the cupboards beneath...

"Brother,"
he said – swept
his officious
finger,
afore Queen, country and civilised worlds;
summoned silent armies of
upstanding young men
to judge from the stands behind him;

Who take their
 coffee sweet,
 their lawns
 smothers trophy-wives' legs,
 cars
 gleaming chrome-lethal with
 mothers
 wrists-deep in expense accounts, their
 wives
 destroyed by facile beauty,
 Paternosters
 permissible, pot-belly-high-blood-pressure-belligerent, eminently
 fascist, and
 foreigners,
 depending on colour,
 mulched or squashed, with extra pulp;
 neighbours unobtrusive as a favour
 servants silent as a grudge
 gleaming white plates stacked
 in towers of superiority.

and so I stared
 slack-faced
 hoping against hope
 I'd dislodge some tooth and it would hurtle echoing down your throat.
 What's

that
 Dispatch! bark I,
 Orders' been telegraphed
 ATTENTION: STOOD.
 COUNTRY: DIED FOR.
 " *'bin gar keine Schnorrer,*
stamm' aus Privatschule,
echter zuverlässiger" -

At ease.
 well, it was your turn,
 brother.
 Just don't forget it,
 brother.
 We set those rules,
 brother.

Does that word blister raking your cheeks,
 scrounging undigested scraps
 to bribe the doorman of my mind?
 He's sprawled stone-drunk with flattery.

And how many men,
 Tell me how many
 soldiers who were once children
 priests who once were decent boys,
 politicians who once were true
 has that word been slaughtered or subdued?

It's a
 slippery
 slope,

my friend.

I've felt your hand on my back,
 your gun grazing my spine

in those two syllables

which spur me into no-man's land:
 Hang this grin from my bombed flesh
 quivering puppy-eager
 for your go-ahead.

Now, send me down in the precipice
On which my blood will stain the ice,
Motor me down with your gun-machines,
Give all this life a facile price;
I won't stay your sovereign hand.

Take just one small piece of advice:
Don't speak your curses with a kiss,
Don't ridicule my sacrifice,
Don't let that false word seal my fate;

Or all the love I bear, my friend,
will find you too hard not to hate.



The Regular Feelings

Sharanya Tissera

Every morning,
The emptiness blooms,
The wind hits my windows,
And the clouds cover my room.

Every morning,
I reach my hand out,
Touch the edge of the bed,
Increasing the doubt.

Every afternoon,
I sit and watch the news,
Listening to the weather,
Craving the blues.

Every afternoon,
I pick up my phone,
I click on your contact,
And feel so alone.

Every evening,
I think of what to say,
I imagine you miss me,
And it passes the day.

Every evening,
I try not to cry,
Reading your last text,
Saying your goodbyes.

Every night,
I stand at the sink,
Where there was room for two,
Only one stands to drink.

Every night,
I lay down in bed,
The cold is now warm—
The noise is dead.



Red Light

Joy Kim

(TW: implications of abuse)

You, who swerved and shifted across the road in aggressive impatience, veiny hands gripping the wheel with bony knuckles and thick forearms, gold ring glinting yellow in the glow of the next red light, its rounded promise nestled between rows of tightly wounded fingers. *You*, who kept your eyes drawn to my lowered head instead of the front window, head whipping back and forth hastily between the asphalt road and your daughter, spewing a flurry of spit with every bite of a sentence, twisted words raving on for the blessed life you have graced upon me while making sharp turns at every corner, swinging my lithe body into the car side door.

And when you pressed heavy boot to the pedal, sent us both flying backwards into the tape plastered leather seats behind us and you were still going, ranting about unfairness and the inequality you've had to endure for my sake; anger and despair, shaky voice raising in volume at each word that went unreciprocated, since I couldn't pry my lips apart, couldn't start the engine for my voice.

Your face hardening as you sped us up further, the car recoiling from the accelerator, eyes twitchy and wild, a certain tremble in the way you switched on the radio, as I stared unmoving at the mundane motion, turning distantly to peer out the window at the blur of pine trees and suburban houses, I didn't want to look at your face anymore; those unseeing eyes sending cold uneasiness through my frame. Time seemed to slow as your hand hovered over the steering wheel, your white-knuckled death grip gone, your anger slowing into a stream as you contemplated the car coming in front of us.

And then. You, who braked abruptly before we could crash, who stared blankly at the car ahead before breaking into a soft hum, eyes once again peeled towards the road and dark face turned away from me.



May Flowers Decay in My Mouth Like A Garden Rotted by Poison

Liz Nesan

(TW: rot imagery, tense family relations)

I cannot read sweet things about mothers and daughters
Without having a sinking feeling in my chest,
Bitterness surging up my throat like bile,
So I will continue to read about heartache and refuse to heal.
It's almost comforting, the way it squeezes my heart
And turns sour in my mouth.; I've grown used to the rancid taste,
Familiarity blooming in the buds.

I am scared I'm going to become my father.
I fear I am already too much like him.
Yet sometimes, I look in the mirror and see my mother
Looking back at me, and I look away;
I can't stand to look any longer.
My stomach churns and my heart feels heavy, bloating with emotion,
Before rising up my throat, decaying on my tongue.

An uneasy feeling settles deep within me, festering.
The image sears itself behind my eyelids;
I try not to blink.
My eyes water and my hands begin to tremble.
I reach out to touch my face in the mirror,
The glass quivering beneath my fingers—
I do not feel comforted by the unfamiliar caress.

I don't want to be like my mother,
Void of the warmth summer brings, fingers cold like April rain.
I worry I'm becoming angry like she is, thoughts ringing in my ears

Like bells and disrupting any sense of calm, pooling like water
In the basin of a valley, trapped by a dam of fear and regret.
Heart constricted and beating too fast, saliva thick in my mouth,
I swallow my words, and she vomits hers.

My voice wavers and tears spring to her eyes like a child,
Paralyzed by her own poison. I find myself looking away once more.
Now when I look in the mirror, I see her tear-stained face
Looking back at me. Leftover words seeping through my skin
Like residue, poisonous to the touch.
Guilt and hurt flit across my eyes in my reflection.
That familiar taste blooms once again.



Early December after the first snow

Aziza Reddy

I took the subway to the marshes, gray after the leaves, surrounded by the kind of fields you let your dogs loose in so they can run like they've always wanted to. The snow was halfway melted and the mud squelched splendidly under my boots as I combed the underbrush for color: plenty of crimson—dogwood and sumac, all kinds of berries. The requisite cigarettes. And enough pines and silk moss and crushed cans to make the place seem lived in. Then, once the simulacrum of rain of dripping snowmelt had me lulled, the shock of the spindles: sudden fuchsia and orange peel in alien bundles like yawning creatures, impossible to miss—although I had, the first time under the iron scaffolding of the bridge, walked right by this cacophony of color—little bits of summer sunset floating there, patient, waiting to drop and germinate or be plucked, just two twigs, though I'd nowhere to put them so I held the delicate husks in my hands all the way back to the station and the whole ride home, marveling—no miracle, just this.



Sun limbs

Sarah Costa

What to do with butter in the sun limbs
And composting organs
Looking up at the surface
Ripe gleaming orange
Boiled clean gritted girls
The line of dead wall flies
Spilled on the windowsill
I think of you
And my heart, drum-taps
Walk through the laneway
And watch the king of flowers
Stick their necks over the fence
Back groove paths
Fogged summer air
Hanging onto her lips
Dragonfly stares
Wild grass grows
Between the laneway houses
In that moving air
Stand between split trains.



flight cage

Caitlin Mab

I write down your name and I'm dizzy:
 you're the salt in my wounds
 and me, this dumb bleeding dog
 licking at them & as of last month
 I'm liking the taste.

When I think about my hands on you
 I only hear the storm clouds before
 the thunder before
 the light of the pale cold dawn,
 the flashing arc of heaven across the sky.

Undress me (please, if you want) in the house filled with light
 scatter (please) my ashes in a lotus garden
 tonight the whole west coast is on fire
 all the king's horses and all the king's men
 are looking at my bones and teeth.

I remember the first dream like this:
 we are braiding each other's hair at the lake,
 you tug a lock aside to touch my neck;
 I am dead like a shotgun marries a waterfowl.

When I wake my eyes are wet,
 your name glistening in my chest the way sound
 takes flight across water
 and you can smell the soft scent of hope
 or want burning all over my skin.

PROSE

II.



On quiet hopes and loud horrors

Ayesha Siddiqui

Loving God as a child came to me as did running barefoot on grass or braiding my hair or wobbling my milk teeth with my tongue until they fell out; at once both natural and learned. It was a time when I could sing the praises of my Lord out loud and know that there was a space for the two of us and His existence did not require the cost of mine. It was a matter that was at once intimate and public; deeply personal yet equally shared, and was as much mine as it was yours. To love meant to be loved and of this I was certain. I do not know when that changed but I came to believe that to know God was to know shame and to love in secret became the only way I knew how. To love God from where others could not see; if they did they would remind Him that I was to be damned.

It was a terror disparate from the kind encased in beards and loudspeakers but one I met in my reflection in the mirror when I wondered if I was bad for adorning my hair with the colour purple and not invisibility. I think of the scrawls in my diary written with the zeal and exhilaration of being eleven years old and hiding in a wardrobe so that no one would know you were writing about a boy. A boy who made your tummy feel funny and a boy you wished to hold hands with because truly, that was all you would have liked. And then you also remember being eleven and reading a borrowed copy of *The Fault in Our Stars* underneath the covers and feeling your cheeks burn when you learned something you did not know before, and perhaps that was the first time you found yourself meekly glancing at the ceiling and not your surroundings because you know what you most fear does not live within the walls of your home. Can you still be saved if you dream of more? But scratch that because who cares what you dream of when you're a good kid, a good kid they all tell you, and you are nineteen now and a good kid above the cheap and vulgar desires of girls your age. You're a good kid and you know it and no one needs to know how in the nights you pray for a love so fierce it makes your skin tingle

and a lover whose soul you drink up like it is an oasis in a desert. I used to wonder if I prayed too hard. So hard that it turned ink into blood and paper into flesh and prayers into the man I prayed for.

My beloved. Whose scent lingers in my memory as though it were a more tangible sense I could hold in the palm of my hand and remember the way it feels when I close my fingers around it. My darling. I know the slope of his nose to the nape of his neck and how I have been able to pick out his laugh in a room full of people since the day I met him and that the glasses he wears now are not the same as the ones from that day and that they remind me of that one thing I read somewhere on the Internet about how to love someone is to attend a thousand funerals of the people they used to be and when Hozier said that no grave can hold my body down because I will emerge from the ground with you each time. My love I yearn for your hand the way I seek warmth in the snow and I miss your voice when you are far away. My lover he is kind and he makes me want to be kind. I wonder if I am bad for loving him.

Do they look at you and think that you too are one of those girls on the wrong path those girls that have that thing called love that is cheap and vulgar and dirty. When the nice lady at the mosque asked you if you wanted to come inside and you said no, thank you, that you were just waiting for your friend, would she believe you if you told her you prefer to pray alone? Would she believe you if you told her you still ask for forgiveness every night and you still thank God every night and can you still be saved if the things they told you you were damned for are the things you thank God for? I think about God when I see my cats curled up with their paws over their eyes and I think about God when I hear my grandmother singing to herself and I think about God when I think about Karachi and I think about God when I spend the day reading a book and I think about God when I see my mother at peace when my father watches has a day off when I am watching The Boys with my siblings when I see my roommate's light on when I throw a frisbee with my friends on front campus when I am dancing when I am eating sushi when I am sweating

and I think about God when I think about you and suddenly I love everybody because I love you. I think about God when you think I couldn't be further from thinking about God. I thought I believed that to know God was to know shame, it was to know fear but your love is the purest miracle I have ever known and you make me want to be good. And when you tell me an anecdote from your day and I find myself laughing with you underneath the sun I think that to know that to know God is to know love.



Orlæg

Jess Mancini

The crunch of pebbles dancing under my feet was quite the comforting sound when all you're used to is pavement. For the first time in a while I walked without the distraction of music blaring through earbuds. The shine of a six o'clock sun glared in my eyes as it peeked over the tops of cathedrals and the medieval architecture of Oxford University. It was my first time roaming the campus; my class had ended and I wanted nothing more than to explore the city and revel in my achievements. I'm a Rhodes Scholar for God's sake! For once maybe I could finally relax, the breaths stolen from my lungs and tears of frustration lost in determination to "make it" were all worth it. Then why did I feel so... undeserving? Perhaps it was that imposter syndrome I hear about so often. I suppressed the feelings of inadequacy and carried on down the winding roads of cobblestone and brick. Trees and foliage lined the roads and just up ahead I was supposed to turn left to my dorm when I continued onward. Just one more road, let's see what's up ahead I thought to myself. Another quaint café and another bookshop – noted, but nothing special.

Between the shops and restaurants were many alleyways and paths – a common shortcut – but one in particular drew me in. The dirt path was vast and wide, along its sides were houses gradually older as the path progressed, and at its end was an arch with a cast iron gate ajar. I had nothing planned, I could explore this plan if I wanted to. You know those things that happen in life that you can't explain? Like finding the perfect amount of money in an old jacket pocket to pay for a coffee, or a desire to do something before it's too late for no inexplicable reason? These moments that are so spontaneous and random they remind you of your humanity? This was one of those moments.

Without a thought I was drawn in. I walked noting every intricacy of my surroundings – something was forcing me to. The houses were decorated with leaves and garden statues, like gnomes and those kinds of things. The sun was once again poking through leaves, demanding the fullest attention of my eyes. In my moment of blindness I swatted a fly from my face. As I regained sight I avoided a low hanging branch – quite nasty terrain for such a commonplace path, but before I knew it I was at the arched gate. I peered through and was greeted by a cemetery. No, not a cemetery – graveyard. Rows upon rows of headstones and monuments lined the field of tall grass. I read as many as I could – it would have been impolite not to – before sitting on a stone bench in its center. I place my weighty satchel next to me, finally some relief from carrying Wilde, Orwell, and Christie with me. As I sat I saw a modern looking woman enter – same as me – from the entrance. She walked with purpose. She was odd; her eyes did not move from their target. She didn't even glance in my direction. Too strange to be alive, too modern to be a ghost – I felt she was the latter.

What am I doing here? I thought to myself. Of all the places I could be, and I'm in a graveyard. I wanted to feel silly, to acknowledge the absurdity of my situation – I have a whole university to explore yet I'm sitting here with centuries of people who have no other choice than to rest. Between my pensive thoughts I could hear a faint whisper carried in the wind, no words in particular but I did not feel so alone – nor maliciously watched. I can often feel quite lonely. A research-heavy academic? You might as well ask to be locked in solitary confinement with how little interaction you get.

As I looked out into the headstones I saw movement – grass and flowers rustling. From behind a cross, a white little dog appeared – blindingly white – it was almost glowing as it sniffed and growled at the headstones. It was a cute little thing, with its pink tongue slobbering and stubby tail wagging. I knew I wasn't alone. The dog came and sat with me as I pondered my mortality. Poor little animals, they deserve so much

more than this life has to offer, especially for a stray. Stray. Stray! Was this dog a stray? No, it has a collar. As I tilted the bone shaped tag, I heard what could only be described as an avalanche. I quickly looked at the path from which I came – the gate and arch were gone. There was nothing in its place but a wall of large rocks. Another whisper was carried over the wind, louder than before but still indiscernible. I looked back down at the dog tag. Her name was not written in English, or any modern language for that matter. Orlæg was written in a medieval style across the little metal bone. They were old English characters I was, embarrassingly, not versed in enough to understand – one of my most guarded secrets. What Literary Rhodes scholar can't read Old English? I better start on it when I get back, I thought – but the small dog had other plans. With a nose twitch and a bum wiggle Orlæg darted away, weaving between graves far into the fog. I quickly arose from the bench chasing the wee dog; I felt a sense of responsibility for it despite not knowing what I would do once I caught up to it. Orlæg! I called out, but the pup kept running.

Orlæg kept her pace alarmingly well. However, after a few minutes of chasing, I had to take a rest. I know what you're thinking, a few minutes is a pitifully short amount of time to become over exuded, and I'd agree. Yet another thing I had to revisit at a later date. I leaned on a grave to catch my breath. It took me a moment to realize how disrespectful essentially sitting on one's grave must be and quickly jumped up from the grave and glanced at its inscription to see who I had thoroughly insulted. I may as well have dropped dead right there when I saw the name: Walter Pater – the mentor of Oscar Wilde – written boldly across the front of the headstone. My first interaction with Walter Pater was my bottom on his grave! With a newfound desire to run away I continued running away after Orlæg.

Eventually I caught up, and watched as the white dog squeezed between the bars of yet another rod iron fence. However, when I reached out to grab the bars... I couldn't. With a blink, behind the fence lay a garden, and a large table set for afternoon tea

Ornamental tea sets were scattered along with three tiered trays of desserts, sandwiches, and scones. Orlæg jumped into the lap of the modern looking woman who sat to the far right of the table. However, people were dressed in Anglo-saxon garb from the eight century to suits of the nineteenth century. Some notable names were scattered among the guests: Walter Pater laughed as he placed a hand upon Oscar Wilde's shoulder, CS Lewis cheered with the Inklings, and George Orwell and Agatha Christie partook in intellectual conversation. I waved my hands incessantly hoping to catch their attention, although it seemed like they glanced in my direction a few times but couldn't see me.

The only person who could see me was the modern woman. She stood up, leaving her esteemed companions to walk over to me. I was scared and confused – how cliché – as she reached out to hold my hands from between the iron bars. The moment I got within the vicinity of her heavenly glow I could feel the everpresent tension begin to ease from my shoulders, and when she grabbed my hands a sense of peace flowed within me. She gazed at me – not who I tried to be – but me. For a moment I felt my flaws disappear; she didn't care that I didn't know Old English, or could run very far, or the extent of my achievements.

My entrancement was broken as she uttered:

Gehieran mé! Blād sy ametendlic ac whonne hit sy gearu,
ælcuht deaplicnes sy belifaþ. bróðorlufu ond ferhþ caldor á ðu,
cnafa.

Gifeþe gecuman geslean.

She smiled and nodded as she tightened her grasp on my hands as if to indicate a genuine sincerity of whatever she said before returning to the party. I stood there a while watching the scene until one by one each person left the garden. One by one, both authors and townsfolk took their leave through a small wooden garden gate on the other side of the courtyard – it was oddly familiar, I knew I'd see it again someday. Once the table was empty, and I had the peace of mind knowing Orlæg was with his rightful owner, I took my leave. I turned to begin the journey to

the entrance, but the once disappeared exit was now right in front of me. In fact, the fog was gone, the sun was out, and some leisure joggers were giving me side eyes from the main road. I heard the man utter to the woman “what’s his problem.” He was right, what was my problem? Nothing. For once, nothing was my problem. For the first time in my life I realized I was not worried about a problem, a worry, or a flaw! All I had to do was translate the modern woman’s words - no. I wouldn’t. Besides, you’ll learn its lesson soon enough.

With an adjustment of my satchel and a wipe of my nose I continued with my day, far happier than I was before.



Old English Translations:

Orlæg: destiny

Modern woman’s speech: “Hear me now. Life is brief, but when it’s gone we leave behind all mortal titles and begin anew. Love and live for you, young one. Fate comes faster than you expect.”

contributors

poetry contributors

Audrey Lai

Audrey Lai is a third-year student studying English at the University of Toronto. She is the co-editor-in-chief of The Trinity Review and an assistant editor for The Hart House Review. Her work has been published in Acta Victoriana, The UC Review, and Cleaver Magazine. She has an affinity for lychee fruit, Taylor Swift's folklore, and platform shoes she tries not to trip in.

Patrick Ignasiak

Patrick is a third-year student at Victoria College. He is studying Literature and Critical Theory. His hobbies include male yearning and being 5'8. He's a good guy. A bunch of his stuff floats up @ignasiak_chemical_group. You can find him. He's just repeating himself; he doesn't know a thing.

Julia Pelitis

Julia Pelitis (she/her) is a second-year student at the University of Toronto pursuing a specialist in English with a double minor in creative writing and creativity and society. Growing up in rural Ontario, Julia spends most of her time reading and writing, while occasionally finding time to bake, swim, and practice the trumpet. Currently, her favourite poets are Sylvia Plath, Ocean Vuong, and Wendy Cope, and has taken a lot of inspiration from reading their work obsessively. She is absolutely honoured to have her work featured in the Woodsworth Review, and hopes you enjoy her piece.

Leah Cromarty

Leah Cromarty is a fourth-year student studying English, philosophy, and history, analysing the ways in which these three disciplines overlap. She plans to pursue a career in education while working on her collection of poetry, short stories, and several depressing novellas. Her lifelong goal is to read through the entirety of the Literary Canon. When she is not diving into a new writing idea, she may be found creating music, drawing aimlessly in a hole-in-the-wall cafe, or surviving an existential crisis.

poetry contributors

Minna Pelemis

Minna Pelemiš (she/her) is a Serbian poet currently based on Treaty 13 land. She's pursuing an undergraduate degree in math and physics at the University of Toronto. When not studying or writing, you can find her watching television or reading Russian literature on public transit. She also has a penchant for drinking iced coffee. Her poetry has been published in the UC Gargoyle, Trinity Review, and online. It is primarily concerned with the pitfalls of love and how to live while haunted.

Sharanya Tissera

Sharanya Tissera is an aspiring editor and novice writer at the University of Toronto. She's the author of This Much Remains for End of the World magazine, a prose piece full of yearning, and poetry piece, The Fool Begins Again in the Funky Monkey Zine. Check her out on LinkedIn @Sharanya Tissera to see more published articles, poetry and short fiction!

Ulis Bertin

Ulis Bertin (20 years old) is a writer raised between the bounds of countries, beliefs and languages. Named for Ulysses, the only home he has found is in writing. His poetry reflects the violence, lust, and true love of our often irreconcilable world. At its heart, you can always find that beauty is the only way to transcend the human sin. He lives between Toronto and Paris with animals and pleasant friends. Ulis is a journalist, prosewriter, and playwright and an actor in his spare time.

Joy Kim

Joy Kim, a third-year student at UofT, has an immense interest in forms such as poetry, creative nonfiction, and short stories. She has been writing poetry for a long time, having first started getting her writing out there in the form of Instagram posts when she was younger. In her free time, she enjoys watching old romance films and over-analyzing cartoon characters. The most important thing in her life is her 10-year-old tabby cat.

poetry contributors

Liz Nesan

Liz Nesan (she/her) is an undergraduate student studying English at University of Toronto. Liz has always had an interest in writing and other creative works and is beginning her journey in published pieces and letting the world glimpse into a fraction of her mind. She hopes to reach an audience that connects with her work on any level, but especially those who can feel her words deeply, even if it's just a few. Liz finds that art is like a place in which you dwell in and then leave with new understanding. Having called many places home, her works hold a permanence like no other, left to be consumed and interpreted by others.

Sarah Costa

Sarah Costa is a third year student at the University of Toronto studying English, Cinema, and creativity and society. She is interested in multiple areas of self-expression such as screenwriting, short story writing, and poetry. She co-founded the Toronto Poetry Society which is a collective artist community based in Toronto. She is an aspiring writer and poet. Her writing is important to her as a way of connection and exploration of life.

Aziza Reddy

Aziza Reddy is a third year student majoring in Human Geography with minors in GIS and Digital Humanities. Outside of school, she enjoys gardening, listening to music, and discovering new parks to wander through. This is her first publication.

Caitlin Mah

Caitlin Mah is a third-year Political Science and Literature & Critical Theory student. Her work has appeared in *The Walrus*, *Trinity Review*, and more. She is the 2023 winner of the Goodison-Chamberlin Poetry Prize and the 2022 short story category winner of the Amazon First Novel Award. In her spare time, Caitlin enjoys almond croissants, visiting the cat at Seekers Books, and going 0-6 in Fortnite.

prose contributors

Ayesha Siddiqui

Ayesha is a third-year student studying English and History at the University of Toronto. As a result of having spent her life moving between various countries, her work often features themes of identity and culture. Lately, she's been exploring more experimental writing forms and is particularly fascinated by the intersection of history, literature, and pop culture. When she isn't struggling to meet the soul-crushing demands of university, she can be found taking long walks discovering the city, trying to figure out her future, or having a good laugh with the people she loves.

Jess Mancini

Jessica Mancini is a final year English specialist and prospective PhD student. She is a connoisseur of mundane beauty, taking inspiration from high fantasy, classics, and fairytales. Orlæg is inspired by her experience studying abroad at Oxford University. She spends her days her days writing, drawing, crocheting, and overthinking.

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