We are all “howling at an electric moon” at one point or another in our lives. At least we should be. We want better. We know what is wrong, but we don’t always know how to fix the fault in ourselves, others, or the world we live in. We scream and shout and stomp and howl. We do it with our writing. We do it through a lens. We do with a paintbrush or charcoal or clay. We do with anything we can get our hands on. We purge the toxins hoping for some peace at the end of the day.

The students of Franklin High School have been howling all year long with glorious and gorgeous results. The art created in these halls is sometimes pointed at the Electric Moon and sometimes against. It only matters as long as we are singing and screaming for a change. Something better. Someone must listen.

Thank Yous

Ricky Bridges and Rosie Rich and Kylie Leeks – Never stop howling.

Ms. Molfino and the Art Department for their generous art contri-
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A Personality Disorder
A hole in the Wall
A breach

Lyric Muse-Costley

Translucent summers
Held down through heat waves
An eternity likes to cover
All over its own ways
I sleep still crying to be wide awake
I pray for eternity to crumble and quake
Today is okay
Tomorrow is sweet
yesterday is unknown endless you experience its peak
It’s all over and beneath
I wonder still if the grass is even green
I ponder still the chair that its in front of me
I lose myself to be found again and again
I can’t control what’s never content
I grasp for an electrical rope gone shocked before you can count
to10
I’m breaking a locked door that likes to bend
I grasp and grasp while hiding white into a linen
I cry for failures and I’m the cry within
I see them scream
I lie to be content
I annoy me i always have something to speak
I have a big mouth never for tomorrow
It’s just too neat
It’ll bounce and pounce like a cheetah in the night that roams freely
only when it doesn’t know to fight
A panther fights through its own ground
And a lion knows its luxury
Mice are sweet and like to speak
Rats are kind of will if tales are told
Energy and greatness beholds
Chapstick is meant to be red
And lip gloss is might
Bandanas work long nights
I like Mike-n-Ikes
All is good and all is fight
Character Sketch -- Aeryn Adedji

This one time, it was a few years ago.
Back when I still lived in La Jolla.
I would walk past these street games of basketball they were usually littered with people usually men the occasional girl grappling to hold her own. Today was an odd day you could feel the whole town on edge. As I started my trek to work past the courts, I saw a kid, he looked no older than 14 maybe 15. He was alone bouncing an old Wilson basketball back and forth no attempt to shoot or do anything other than bounce it.
I continued on.
It was a grueling shift and all I wanted was to curl up in my bed, my thoughts were distracted by the steady beat. Thump. Thump. Thump. I glanced up and low and behold the same reddish brown hued hair stood at the end of the cracked grey cement right before the beaten down hoop with no net or chain the same boy bouncing the ball back and forth.
I stopped.
6 hours had passed, the sun was starting to set, and the deathly heat was starting to turn to the humid dusk. And here was this kid bouncing his ball.
And so, I did what anyone else would do, “Hey!” I called out to him. He looked back at me his ball finally stopping. “How long have you been out here?”
“How long have you been out here?” he questioned.
“I saw you this morning, have you been doing it all this time?” I asked. He barely gave me a spare glance before continuing his practice. I gave a light eye roll taking the hint. “Just wanted to tell you that you should be careful.”

I started to walk back but a scratchy voice called out, “Why?”
I stopped turning over my shoulder, “Because kids shouldn’t practice for six hours straight.”
“You barely look older than me.” He responded.
“So?”
“You should look out for yourself not me.” He turned back.
“Everyone needs someone to watch their back.”
His eyes were dark, I don’t think I’d ever seen black eyes before, but this kid had me second guessing. But even with those black eyes I felt a chill deep down my spine and into my stomach, the rolling feeling as he held my gaze and I watched this 15-year-old say, “I don’t.” and I nearly believed it if not for the slight bloodshot in his eye offsetting the black, the dark circles that screamed sleep deprivation, and the way his hair looked like it had never seen a brush.
“Take care of yourself then.” I responded.
Heading home to the thump. Thump. Thump. Thump.
I saw him a few more times. Didn’t see him a lot more. But the circumstances were always the same.

It was an early November morning, a few months after that first encounter. Nothing was different the same kid the same ball the same movements, all alone on the cracked court and yet the air was on edge. It felt off. Like someone flipped the switch and altered reality.

I walked onto the court not entirely sure what I was doing. He heard me. Those black eyes met mine and I lost all my words. He didn’t try to fill the silence, seeming to thrive in it. His face was flushed, eyes puffy and red. He was crying. I wondered if he knew his face looked like that. Or if he really believed the neutral look hid his emotions. The pain etched across his brows.

“You ever gonna shoot?” I asked trying to break the ice as comfortably as possible. Glancing at the dribbled ball to the hoop. He followed my gaze to the hoop, looking back to me, stuck on the words. “Guess it’s just dribbling for you then, huh?” He turned back throwing the ball up and watching it sink effortlessly through the hoop my jaw going slack.

a small laugh escaped him as he watched my face. The split in his grim face revealed crooked teeth and a crooked smile. My chest warmed at the sight. But the joy didn’t reach the upper half of his face. “There’s no point in practicing shooting if I’m not good enough to get to the hoop.” His voice was raw, the sound I expected from someone having just screamed bloody murder.

“You really like basketball?” I let slip out as I think it.

He narrows his eyebrows in confusion of my question, “Yea.” He responds even though I doubted he would.

“What’s wrong?” I whisper, confused as to why I’m finding myself concerned for this kid I don’t even know.

He didn’t look confused by the question, simply picked up his basketball and spun it on his fingertips. He was taller up close then I had realized. Maybe 5’9-10” he was lean not bulky, his demeanor was controlled, mature, but as I watched him sit back against the fence, I saw a child no older than five, lost, desperate.

“Nothing.” He responded. I waited; I don’t know what I expected but he looked like he could use a friend? Someone to listen to him? I didn’t know but I felt like I had to help. “It’s my brothers birthday.”

“I’m sorry?” I said somewhat confused.

He let out a laugh with no humor. “Me too.”
Losing - Simon Stanford

Bloodshot eyes a man awakes screaming
Seeping, leaking and weeping the man keeps screaming

People who hear cover ear after ear
But soon they fear no more they’ll hear, screaming

A shill shriek shatteringly chartreuse, vomit?
Dying in a wispy whistle once throat dry, screaming

Continue past crux, past climax once thought. At flux
Man grabs hair and yanks, but nothing resolves, screaming

Silence starts childish violence, screaming is violet.
Field of poppies brings peace to foul mind, screaming

My penance gives little to feed this infection, rejection.
A needle rejection brings on sick complexion, screaming

Noble Simon on throne of trash feeds raccoons and rats
Worried fingers feel wrist, the pale face stopped screaming
Comedy
By Kylie Leeks

Brave of you for refusing tragedy
But this life of yours is oozing tragedy

Played out on stage, Shakespearean
Look at you go, diffusing tragedy

The sweet lies on your lips
Go about excusing tragedy

Years upon years have passed
Aren’t you tired of choosing tragedy?

Finally, Kylie, you’re breaking the loop.
What a feat it was, loosing tragedy.

Tragedy
By Kylie Leeks

How’d you go about defining comedy
When your life is full of benign comedy

In a society full of bubbling laughter
Quite idiotic, it is, to decline comedy

In your falsified world of lies
You begin to pine comedy

Unwittingly, you’ve plucked out your eyes
Blinding yourself to this malign comedy

I’m sorry, Leeks, but I regretfully say
You can no longer hide behind comedy
Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown Obituary – Stephanie Huynh

Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown, 53, passed July 9th of 2021, in the forest of his backyard due to an unexpected attack from a brown bear.

Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown Bear was born on September 21st of 1968. Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown was an active member of his community, a husband, a father, and a history teacher at Chester High School. He graduated from Brown University and donated to many environmental causes. Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown belonged to the Washington Book Club.

After graduating Brown, Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown moved to Washington and met and married his wife Wisteria. They had 3 children, 2 sons still attending high school, 1 daughter attending their second year of college at Brown University as well. His parents, Outer Space and Tumbleweed, have passed, and his younger brother Mahogany resides in Maryland.

Fuzzy Wuzzy Brown’s interests include historical fiction books, gardening, and going to softball games with his children. His time was devoted to his many students, hosting after school history clubs and extra classes, and his family.

A memorial service is being hosted Friday July 30th at Washington Memorial Park in Washington at 3:00.

Flower donations are welcome at the memorial service.
The bunny with light brown and floral ears
The bunny with very soft and fluffy fur
The bunny that was my favorite stuffed animal
The bunny that was small and delicate
The bunny that brings me back to my childhood
The bunny who I fought for to keep
The bunny where I would find comfort
The bunny was my best friend
The bunny I gave to Goodwill with a price tag
The bunny that is the last memory I have of my grandmother
The bunny that I played with
The bunny that I cried with and threw across a room
The bunny I found in my attic
The bunny I bought back from Goodwill
The bunny I preferred over a phone
The bunny I buried in a grave in my backyard
The bunny I tore apart into pieces
The bunny was sewed back up
The bunny I washed in my washing machine
The bunny that laid on my bed
The bunny I was made fun of for having
The bunny that lays on my floor
The Stuffed bunny of my dreams
The bunny with both eyes back on
The bunny I grew out of
The bunny I would talk to when I had no one else
The bunny I lost
The bunny that was irreplaceable
The bunny that is forgotten

The bunny that is missed forever
The bunny I have pictures of in my camera roll
The bunny I found in a trash bag mixed with old rotten food
The bunny I regifted to my sister
The bunny that my sister named Lulu
The bunny I couldn’t show anyone
The bunny that no one was worthy of meeting
The bunny that watched me cry over homework
The bunny I wrote a poem about
The bunny that left me speechless.
Winter’s Fickle Allure -- Cynthia Gwan

Once again, the birds migrate.
The trees have lost their leaves
And only consistent of the skeleton of their naked branches,
Only the resilient evergreens persevere.
We find ourselves shivering and our teeth chattering
And scarves, gloves, earmuffs, and coats become our armor.
As we scrape ice from windshields and shovel snow from driveways,
We might feel that “‘Tis the season to be jolly”
Is a too-often spoken statement of folly.
We yearn for warmer days,
When we can feel the sun’s touch on our skin.
But solace is found in front of the fireplace,
In a mug filled with hot chocolate and topped off with marshmallows,
In the warmth of a cozy blanket,
And in watching the snow fall.
In breathless snowball fights
And unrecognizable snow angels,
We find the joy that the harsh temperatures cannot steal.
Stockings are hung, and Christmas trees decorated with ornaments and tinsel.
We smile at the house’s adorned with beautiful displays of light
And become architects of gingerbread houses.
For many, the peak of the season
Arrives on the long-awaited day of December 25,
With the celebration of the savior’s birth.
Families gather and make memories that will not soon be forgotten.
Just a few nights after, a countdown will ensue
And fireworks will light up the night sky
As the New Year arrives with the semblance of a new beginning.
Winter bliss by Kristyana Harris

I wake up from my slumber to see snow covered lumber
I sit up and look out my frosted window to see a winter wonderland
Seeing the little flurries dot the sky
I get from the comfort of my bed and put my feet on the cold wooden floor
I went downstairs to see my mom in the kitchen
The smell of fresh biscuits and fried bacon and eggs filled the room
As I see my siblings run across the kitchen babbling nonsense
After we sat down and had our fill
I got all the warmest things I can find
To put on the brace the cold
I went outside
It was really a winter wonderland
The pond was frozen solid
The obscure small animals running across the snow
Hoping to find food
It feels like home.
I walk across the snow
Making iconic sound
Every breath of frost
I walk through the forest
The trees are no longer singing their song
Because of the scarcity of leaves
No harmony can be made
The air is cold and crisp
But there is one tree
One small tree in the middle of the forest
With one fruit
Only one
It was the only color that stood out
From the white to a bright red
Differing itself from the other trees this one made a song
It whispered
“are you ready?”
… ready for what?
Where I'm From by Ricky Bridges

I'm from a place of peace.
No son of God
No God the father
No Holy Ghost
No Prince of Peace
I'm from a place of perfect imperfections
Where my past lives guide me
And the color of my skin defines me
I'm from “Do you belong here?” “You speak well.”
And “Can I touch your hair?” with the hands already touching
I'm from depression, anxiety, and liberation
I'm from the sky is the limit and glass ceilings
I'm from long days painted with a smile
Where cries are loud and tears flow like a stream
Optimism drives me, while reality flattens my tires
I'm from paving me own way
Helping others and receiving betrayal as a thank you
Where the work is hard, but the payoff is sweet
I'm from unanswered questions answered by internal guidance
Where the ancestors say, “Come now child.”
I'm from love and understanding
Supported with the love of my mother
No longer distracted with the absence of my father
I'm from “I love you” and “I'm proud”
As empty seats remain in the crown
I'm from protests and saying my life matters
Fighting stereotypes and becoming the “anti-statistic”
Where the key is missing to the shackles placed on at birth
I'm from fighting the system from the inside
So, All can receive the liberty and justice they were promised
I'm from the Earth
When the time is right I shall return
I'm from setbacks and opportunities
Hatred and love
I'm from where a chance isn’t given, instead, it's hard fought for to be earned.
Two ghazals by Chloe Brandwin

No Home

Each night I will be waiting to go home.
No opulence or joy where I grow, home.

Of broken melodies and wilted voices
where the winds of emotion blow, home

Twisting bare branches and ice-covered leaves
where rivers of my opinions can no longer flow, home

I see a bird as it flies from its torn-up nest
Squawking as it joins its murder of crows, home

I long to be in the wintery air and nipping cold
Where the grass is blanketed by falling snow, home

Where the dead forests are filled with life
The rummaging squirrels and sleeping doe, home

“Chloe!” that frozen place calls with its warm, comforting breath
Beckoning me in, promising a life in its faux home.

The search

Undiscovered purpose, to find that within, wait
When seeking your culture or undisclosed kin, wait

For knowledge it saunters with a twinkling gleam
As to gain that clear treasure the truth must you spin, wait

No three wishes can you make to achieve all your dreams
You mustn’t for a lamp filled with magic, or Djinn, wait

The only source of purpose or knowledge or pride
Is found inside the novels for which you grin, wait

Don’t leave your hope of a mind that is better
On the doorsteps of some old broken-down inn, wait

To see the fleeting success of those that came before
The insight that hangs like stones from their skin, wait

Chloe my name is signed and yours will be too
For the path to knowledge is bloodied with sin, wait
My Brother’s Track by Kenneth Davis

He led the way
My parents used him as an example
praying I would learn

I watched
but mimicked
the prayers’ answers were delayed
until he was gone

He played basketball
I played basketball
He made music
I tried...

He ran track
I ran track
He liked shoes

I love shoes
He modeled how I act
as an older brother to my sister
as a role model to people under me
as a child to my parents

He’s gone now
He’s steel
He’s living his dream railroad working

Do I miss his back-watching?
Do I miss his checking in?
Do I miss the tabs being kept?

Our lives were intertwined
by family
by circumstance
by choice?
but he’s gone now

The handshake’s over.
My Father’s Ghost
By Rochelle Lambert

I look closely at the crows
All standing at attention
The echoing of voices
Coming from every direction
All of them pointing me
Toward one revelation
That your presence is absent from my family relations

The spirits guide me along
The path ahead is uneasy
So I decided to sing a song
One you could never teach me

The wind was still
The night was cold
And you weren’t there
As a hand to hold

But maybe it’s better that you’re away
When I don’t think of you
The whispers disappear
The ghost of you
Puts things in disarray,
The cemetery is at peace when you aren’t here

Yet I hoped
That a time would come
One where you could treat me as your own
And finally I would feel free
From the damage you have done

The stones stare across the hill
Graves sturdier than your own will
To be here when I needed you most
It’s much more difficult to love a ghost
Wake up early on Swanhill
Still, she’s not in a rush to fulfill
The little hand runs ‘round a third time
Before she hits the jag for her daily climb
Arrive safely, we laugh yet pray
Just a wonder, she’s not off today

She rushes inside, but not for work
It’s already noon, she’s got her quirks
Don’t answer the phone, turn on the soaps
As any Joan does, she mustn’t learn the ropes
She’s got jokes to crack and stories to tell
Don’t underestimate her, she’s not just a belle

When she finally gets to work, watch out
She’s hasty on her typewriter, have no doubt
Like an Olympic runner she grinds through,
Take a little time, before she enjoys the view
Usually positive, she has her gripes and groans,
Give her a break, we’re really all her clones

Perched high atop the never-ending tree
Down the grapevine, before she sets it free
We call to ask questions, and then it spirals
Not even Johnny can stop her, she’ll go viral
It’s always a trip, all the way to Oceanic
Please, she needs far more than a mechanic

This is her day, simple yet active
At her age, she’s just being proactive
No more time to waste, so little time
That’s why she’s sticking to her internal rhyme
Forever blunt and way too honest
It’s simply what she promised.
Untitled by Kylie Leeks

I am from primary colors mixed to make one
I am from black and white skin.
From questions about ethnicity on medical papers
And boxing “other”
I am from mixed culture
Yet no culture
For I am from shackled men and women, sold on top of soap boxes
Contrasted by white privilege using said soaps
From bloodied, calloused hands and feet
And silk gloves and gentleman’s pointe toe shoes
From the last name of a vegetable that was most likely their job to pick.
And the people who got to eat it
From heritage long gone
Lost forever
Undocumented.
And British bourgeoisie
Who if I were to meet, would turn their nose up at me.
I am from a broken home
From invisible glass shards embedded in carpet and marred feet
From a mandatory smile haphazardly carved into a wooden mask that if you were to look closer
would turn into a frown.
I am from a dollhouse that is painted yellow on the outside and blue on the inside.
I am from alcohol on the breath and sticky bottle caps
And the deafening the clink of beer bottles
I am from burning resentment and swallowing guilt.
From watching love deteriorate like the cheap takeout on the counter.
From loud fights
Hateful words
Empty apologies
I am from an absent father physically present
A wax statue glued to a recliner
And I am from a wounded womb
Who wanted nothing more than a happy ending.
I am from divorce negotiations, moving boxes, and child support
And hoping I’m worth enough to put food in the fridge.
I am from a wounded womb.
A deadly c-section that marks us to this day.
Right above my right ear.
Right on her belly.
I am from gentle loving hands that has wiped away numerous tears.
From soft encouraging words and homemade meals
Kisses on bloodied bandaged knees and foreheads
I am from a kind heart hurt one too many times
I am from a woman who smiles at our scars
Because she has me.
I am from orange prescription bottles
From psychiatry appointments and comorbidity
I am from short attention spans and neurodivergence, living in a world that wasn’t built
with me in mind
I am from a constant anxiety and exhaustion that ties me to my sheets and grips my
wheezing throat
I am from the breakdowns and wails of inner pain silenced by rushing shower water.
A brain handicapped. Yet given no parking sign.
I am from white hospital walls
From the psych ward
and the stiff bed that will forever be stained with my tears.
From tough, plastic hospital bands
And knowing the secret on how to rip them off from experience.
Yet I am from survival
Because I’m still here.
Wabi-sabi by Rosie Rich

Nearly fifty years
The tree lay sturdy in its roots.
Pulled back from the blanket of Earth’s soft ground,
It shivered at every bare branch.
The trunk was split into four-inch-thick logs.
The rings squiggling infinitely, rippling.
Each log was plucked by a carver and given a new purpose,
a life after death.
The growing pains and seasons of change Caused scars in the shape of dents and bruises.
These faults in the skin were the carver’s favorite to capture.
They poked and prodded,
Shaving away all that made it whole.
Four-inch-thick logs
Now soup bowls and serving spoons
Save the one bare branch,
Reaching out every which way,
Pleading for its safe return
To the blanket of the ground.
Midnight Symphony
By Rochelle Lambert

The sun was still in hiding as those wretched tears started to flow
Only faintly visible due to the city filled with lights
Her screams, a familiar aria amongst a sickening song
Her only savior from the prison of her mind, from the horror she called a dream
Her sadness continued to spill as she saw those all too familiar scars
A race to the bathroom proved futile, as after only a few steps she threw up

This wasn't the first time demons of the night have woken her up
Nor the second time she has felt water flow over her before the sun rose
It wasn't even the third time she was reminded of her torturous scars
She had grown used to not waking to a greeting of morning lights
And yet it never grew less painful when she was grasped by the talons of a dream
A tune of suffering filling her head as a constant song

To her astonishment on this full moon, she heard a different song
The notes were played elegantly as she continued to float up
She thought with wonder, ‘How could this ever be my dream?’
And yet there was never a crash, a scream, nothing that disrupted the melody’s flow
All she could see was the faint glow of fairy lights
Ones that didn’t highlight her gruesome scars

Under this trance, she no longer had thoughts about those scars
Did not think about how they had been magically washed away by song
Pleasant feelings enveloped her as she embraced the warmth of the lights
Marveling at the idea that she could touch those stars if she went just a bit farther up
She stretched her hand to reach out, feeling the gentle wind flow
And for once in her life, she wished she could be eternally in dream

But then, warmth faded, and with it’s absence signaled the end of her dream
She was thrown into panic, as she realized the return of her scars
Her vision blurred as those warm drops once again began to flow
But they weren't enough to bring back the comfort of the song
Ringing filled her ears and she willed herself to pick up
The person on the other side hearing nothing as she stared at the sun’s lights

Even though it didn’t return, her mind stayed fixated on the mysterious lights
After years of nightmares, she couldn't even imagine having a dream
And yet those days ago it was her alarm, and not her screams that caused her to wake up
She relished in the feeling of the warmth, craved how it took away her scars
“Just one more” She wished to whoever had decided to play her that song
She just wanted to experience once more, the lovely note’s flow

Another week went by that she waited up to be transported by that song
Taken to a place without her scars, where she was covered in the harmony of lights
Yet as leaves fell, she never had that dream again, and she had no more tears left to flow
Three Dream haiku by Alishba Naaem

Night movies and dreams,  
transport us to new realms of  
terror and ecstasy.

Dreams and night,  
movies lead us to new worlds of  
dread and delight.

Dreams with their eerie,  
Imagery are strange portals to  
a waiting God.
My Happy Place by Logan Dubel

Sometimes, the happiest places are those that are most simple. They’re unimpressive to anyone else who might imagine them. To you, it’s laughable, but for me, it’s freedom from the rest of the world. Liberty I need from the madness that surrounds me. Brightness like the raging, radiant sun. The comfort of my grandparents’ home is undeniable and a place I will always rely on for respite.

Hot chocolate as soothing as ever, antique furniture that makes you want to nap, and a warm fire that makes working furiously an impossible thought. I am the kind of person that stares at a screen and types profusely and I’ll only stop if you drag me away. When I am here, I see a new sense of light. The bright fire isn’t fury in my eyes, it’s time away from the real burning tragedy that is my over-obsession with working and productivity. It’s the freedom to relax, the ability to turn on do not disturb on both my phone and in my brain for hours, and the warmth of knowing that once I’m here, everything will be ok. Nothing else matters.

The pool, the piano, the pooch. Three things that are here that I miss on a normal day. It’s simple things. Let’s face it, the house is old and outdated, with dark wood paneling, bland shag carpet, and mismatched décor. No, it’s not a model home and HGTV would flip it in an instant. Walk in the front door and look around, you’ll see a dark rocking chair from the 60s and a model sofa fresh from the Ashley showroom. Look around and there’s a different floor in every room. However, it’s this easygoing spirit that lives vibrantly throughout the house that draws me to it so greatly. The walls are dark brown, but they’re colorful and mindless to me. Inside, they evoke a sense of glory and brightness in myself that seems to fade on a typical day.

The ambiance is the key to my happy place making me truly feel isolated. I’m so hyper focused and busy all the time, that having this forced separation is a blessing in disguise. The land is beautiful, on a full acre and surrounded by a gorgeous lake that takes in the sun’s rays every day. Standing above the water and watching my reflection, I have time to truly think deeply, and imagine what’s changed since the last time I stared myself in the eye through this shining blue water.

The strangest part about my happy place is that while I love my grandparents, I don’t have a sense of openness with them about my social life or deepest complexes necessarily. Sure, they’re kind and comforting, but they aren’t my best teenage friends. They simply exude brilliant simplicity. The simplicity of listening, being open, and looking at you like they know exactly what’s happening even if they don’t want to admit it. I know that I have friends in them, even if they’re just baby boomers from the vibrant Woodstock era in hindsight.

We all have a place, and my grandparents’ house is the place that reminds me of another perspective on life. One that is more about the things that matter, the people that we care about, and the desires we have but normally cannot pursue. No, the sun doesn’t literally shine there every day, but it does in my view, and the clouds that cast a spell over my head nearly every day find a way to break once I arrive. This is my home away from home – a place I know that I couldn’t and shouldn’t be every day, but a place I need every once in a while.
A Crimson Life by Amanda Stein

A freshly delivered infant,
Stained
At birth all over, plump cheeks
Burning hot at 98 degrees.

Days pass, months fly, years turn.
Infants grow into rosy faced pupils
learning the best and worst of the world.

The gash on your knee,
Oozing deep red liquid
After you fall.
The stinging of the opened wound,
the stained towels,
drips going down your fingers and arms.

The taste of a grapefruit, the bitterness stings.
The taste of kimchi, the acidity burns the forked tongue.
The bickering of angry men with angry women, faces fiery with rage.

Bloodshot eyes
maybe from crying all night,
or maybe from the smoke that turns sadness into numbness.
From birth to teens to full grown adult, crimson, the color of life.
Puerto Rico, San Juan.
Land of beaches.
Island of people.
The place my heart lies.
In the middle of an ocean.
In a little small place.
Just the other side of a fort.
Where yellow, blue and red are the house colors.
Where the smell of pork and chicken always is.
Where bread is just the corner away.
Where people are people.
And everyone is together.
The grass is green.
The ocean is blue.
A place where you can be there too.
Somewhere where street food is the best.
Your family provides the rest.
Let's go get pan.
Grab the pinchos.
En miviejo San Juan
Cuántos sueños forjé
En mis noches de infancia
Miprimera ilusión
Y mis cuantas de amor
Son recuerdos del alma
Unatare me fuí
Hacia a extraña nación
Pues loquiso el destino
Pero mi corazón
Se quedo frente al mar
En miviejo San Juan
come from a time where people thrive and people dive
where your surrounded by people but can still be alone
you take your seat and only move once every hour
I'm come from a time where your day doesn't end at the ring of the bell
the place I come from is filled with mountains way up high
to oceans deeper than the eye can see
I come from rainforest and deserts
with a fort on the coast reminding us of our history
with that fort reminds us of the history the small towns being built
the plazas where everyone made memories
the road of blue cobblestone
where your family is your personal history and where 5th cousins are as close to you as your first
I’m from a place where going to the beach is an adventure
on your way you get some pinchos and bread
when you arrive, you are in the water until you go get ice cream and pina coladas from the cart with a bell
when you finally leave such a beautiful place you stop and get 2 loaves of pan de agua
one for the car ride home to have and one for sandwiches when you get home
when you see a hot summer day you walk outside
seeing anyone in pants is a surprise
we come from a place where swimsuits bikinis are normal to wear
shorts and a tee shirt with flip flops ins what you see
I’m from a place where the sides of roads are filled with street food
where people speak to one another and don’t just walk around
where its normal to say los bemos(enjoy your meal) to someone randomly eating
I’m from a place where you know everyone’s life story at a party even if you knew no one before
a place where people talk fast so you better listen
I’m from a place where you make something for guests to eat no matter what time it is
some cheese and crackers or a whole meal
I’m from a place where everyone is free and where everyone loves themselves
a place that you fall in love with at first sight
mi corazon yace contigo.
Dear Lunarite by Taleya Younger

Goodnight Moonlight, Hello Starlight, Cry Dear Lunarite,
Why are you Alive under the Cover of Darkness,
Care Not for Dying light, Fear the Day with No Light,

It’ll be gone as soon as the Corruption decides the time is Right,
Knowing the last flash will leave many dead, The Sky ignites;
Goodnight Moonlight, Hello Starlight, Cry Dear Lunarite.

Never forget the luminosity’s heart, For he’ll rip the luster apart,
Protect Our Healthy Rays of Hued Complexion,
Care Not for Dying light, Fear the Day with No Light.

Clasp your hands in Ache, Your Fears have been Realized,
It approaches with tension and swiftly, the bandit in the night,
Goodnight Moonlight, Hello Starlight, Cry Dear Lunarite.

Water, Wind, Earth, Air, Swallowed harshly in the Dark they lay,
Humans, Plants, Animals, None will ever spin again,
Care Not for Dying light, Fear the Day with No Light.

Have you considered the Inky Tragedy, It’s running towards us now,
Bow down to the calamitous, The Stellar Denizens fatal fragile fate,
Goodnight Moonlight, Hello Starlight, Cry Dear Lunarite.
Care Not for Dying light, Fear the Day with No Light.
One sided poem by Olivia Turner

Did you grow up to understand?
I'm a woman full of mistakes
I want you to know you were never one
When I look into your warm eyes, you remind of your dad
He was a big man but soft on the inside, corny I know but he always did love the cheesy things
Don't let your eyes grow like mine
Sullen, cold eyes that have witnessed too much
No, who am I to talk.
I'm the one that caused you the most pain, I'm the one that put a lock in your heart and threw away the key
I'm a woman who got trapped in a different dimension
So focused on the false feelings of quick highs that I lost every sense of joy
I lost you
Can you forgive me?
No, please don't leave I wish I could go back and rewrite the past
I can't, please let me change
Let me mend the wounds I created
I never stopped loving you,
I don't want to see your eyes become black
Your insides hollow
The only emotions left being regret and anger
An apology won't take away the hurt, but it can stop the future pain
You owe me nothing but let me repay you
I never meant hurt you, I tried to protect you
I was too weak, fell victim to my own mind
My mind is better now, I'm better now
Can we please be better together?
…..
I understand, I respect your choice
Don't feel guilty
I did this to myself
If you need me don't be afraid to call-
Goodbye...
Sestina by Logan Dubel

The world through a window on the train
You can't wait to arise and let out a sigh
But you can't feel the air swirling like the wind
The wheels stop and it's not neon, it's grey
The streets vastly bustling but it's all ambiguous
It's been forever, are you lonely?

Just novelty or maybe Crosby is always lonely
People passing in the night swept by the morning train
Preparing to be called names but you're ambiguous
Trying to start anew but you struggle and sigh
You are who you are, blue, black, or grey
Never a day without the fog of wind

Never knowing where you are amidst the wind
Looking for a sign that the streets aren't lonely
Everyone is bright and bold and you feel grey
Yearning to fit in, yet you keep missing the train
Resigned and observant, nothing left to sigh
This is where you are, no more time to be ambiguous

Searching for clarity all your life, still ambiguous
Walking down 5th with your coat rising in the wind
Down the road to nowhere until Rockefeller lets out a sigh
Millions surrounding but you're one star left lonely
Only stops in the morning but you need the midnight train
It's all in perspective here, and all you see is grey

Down the greyhound its simply – well, grey
The river is glowing crystal clear, how still ambiguous
Growing to love something but not for you, seeking the train
A new dawn in life, stop fluttering and noticing the wind
Promise there will be a day to soar and erase the lonely
An endless avenue of intersection to explore, stop and sigh

After the crystal fades you run back home, fall and sigh
Blue no longer wins, nor does black nor grey
Not shining but surviving, still admittingly a little Lonely
And yes, of course the apple is always ambiguous
Coming to understand the skies are dense, follow the wind
Allowing people to pass by and ignoring the incoming train

Knowing this was the challenge you carried on the train
To love and succeed and not to fight with the wind
Accepting that clarity won't come soon, settle ambiguous