



Tangerine Literary **Intersections**

Issue 01: June 2026

Letter From

Hello everyone, and thank you so much for being here and supporting this magazine. This has been a dream of mine for years, and I finally have the support to make it happen, which is incredible! Putting this issue together has been so incredibly fun and rewarding, but also so difficult. I have learned so many things from it, some being things I wasn't prepared to learn--but every difficult step of this journey just meant that something wonderful was coming out of it. I absolutely could not have done this without my wonderful, wonderful team, and I am forever grateful to every single one of you. I hope you all enjoy reading this issue, and recognize all the work put into it.

The Founder

As a queer person myself, with uncountable other identities, this issue means a great deal to me.

This issue will explore the places where identity, experience, and community meet, with a special lens on queerness--meaning that all work in this issue is by a queer author, about queer themes, or both! We chose this theme because identity is never just one thing. It intersects with culture, friendship, love, joy, and so, so much more. All intersections are beautiful. Some are complicated. Some are still being discovered. We want this issue to reflect that-- to feel open and honest. Pride is not only a celebration, it is visibility, resistance, self-expression, and the freedom to fully exist. This issue is about honoring those layered experiences, and creating space for them to be seen.

Much love,

Ion Brown, Founder & EIC



CREDITS



Editor-In-Chief

Ion Brown (they/them)

Ion Brown is a 17-year-old poet, author, artist, and all-around creative from Oregon who firmly believes in trying everything at least once. They are the founder and Editor-In-Chief of Tangerine Literary, and also work with The Reverie Issue, Excalibur Literary, and The Wanderlust Archives. They overuse parentheses (everything comes with a bonus thought, you know?) and can usually be found in an oversized sweater with a tangerine in one pocket, and too many ideas in the other.

Submissions Reviewers

Nami Castillo (she/her)

Nami Castillo is a 17-year-old aspiring writer and filmmaker from South Africa. She loves stories in all their forms, from literature and poetry to film and visual art, and is especially drawn to work that is emotionally honest and deeply human. When she isn't reading or writing, she's usually watching films, making collages, or thinking far too deeply about the stories that have shaped her. As a submissions reviewer for Tangerine Literary, she is excited to read the work of talented young writers and help create a space where their voices can be heard.

Vivian Marin (she/her)

Vivian (NOT Vivienne) is a Dr. Pepper-loving Ernest Hemingway fanatic, and her hobbies include painting, performing, and, of course, writing. She has been writing since she was about seven years old and loves creating poetry and short stories inspired by slices of life and existentialism.

Nasir Harrison (he/him)

Nasir Harrison is a 3rd year college student pursuing a degree in writing. He's an avid poetry writer and can often be found nose-deep in his pocket journal, or at his desk furiously typing away in his 50-page document of poems.

Literary Editors

Sheena (she/her)

Sheena is a mixed 17-year-old from Manchester, UK. She is a chronically late and forgetful procrastinator who loves to learn about human perspectives through TV, film, music and books. As well as a literary editor for Tangerine Literary, she takes on the role of external communications for The Literature Garden and is the founder and EIC of Suburban Underground.

Graphic Designers

Rüya (she/her)

Rüya (aka Rue) is a 16-year-old from Turkey who loves any and every form of art, but unfortunately only possesses the ability to create visual art. She listens to alternative jazz and musicals quite obsessively. She wishes to spread awareness, happiness, and cuteness with her designs.

Staff Writers

Kenna H (they/them)

Kenna is a queer photographer with a passion for reading, writing, and the arts. When they aren't drinking Thai tea, they can usually be found talking with friends... or asleep in bed.

Lacey (she/her)

Lacey is a rather whimsical writer (as it can be seen from the way she uses too many exclamation marks and heart emojis when excited) who has an obsession with clovers, cats, and coffee. Her favorite thing to do when she's not occupied with sleeping next to her cute cat is reading books surrounding the theme of hope and new beginnings. She also sings and plays many instruments in her free time.

Nasir Harrison (he/him)

See *Submissions Reviewers*.

Vivian Marin (she/her)

See *Submissions Reviewers*.

Social Media Team

Jake Denson (he/him)

Jake Denson is a playwright, poet, and performer. When not hard at work for the social media team, he often spends his time hanging out with friends, rock climbing, and bedrotting. Jake is known for making friends very easily, being an absolute sap, and having no shame.

We are always looking to grow our team! If you are interested in being a part of our magazine, please check out our staff applications, which can be found on our website and in our Instagram bio (@tangerineliterary) <3



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To The One Vivian Ne



And you, to the one who is lost



Untangle your fingers from your hair

And lift your palms from your crown

Let me give you some ibuprofen

Because you don't deserve that headache



Put some food on your plate

And add some vegetables or rice

I'll get you your favorite dessert

Because you deserve that good meal



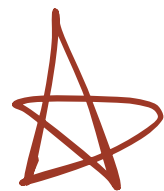
Let yourself believe in love



I know it's been a long time

And finally add that color to your heart

So we can see who you really are



Who Is Lost at Vivienne



*Please come sit at our table
We've saved a seat just for you
We have music to sing
And so much art to make*

*You were lost, and now you're found
Like the rest of us, still your god's creatures
Still fighting and living and wondering
And, most importantly*



Still loving

More than we could ever hate



*Because you and I love
in amazingly perfect ways*



WuhZuhWuh

Soleil





If loving you truly is
a sin

Then I'd rather burn
in a thousand hells
than to forfeit the hand
that is willing to hold mine
for all
eternity



Dream

Candy Says



The two sides of my love have yet to meet
truth and fiction coexist
but never share ink and prose.

I want to cross that bridge
love honestly,
beautifully,
you.

But doubt, like tar, coats my dream,
still there but quieter now.
amidst my arteries is a cry—

a cry for truth—

a cry unheard—

My fear that one day we will be wed
lying in separate beds;

blanketed by regret
I'll think of you.

Platypus In A Pond

Katie Rust



In a pond, there's life:

There are lots of ducks, with long flippers and feathers.
And beavers, with teeth strong enough that trees know no better.

There are lots of fish, with sparkling scales that gleam.

And playful otters, with a love that can beam.

Then, there's the platypus.

Not quite a bird, not quite a beaver.

Not quite an otter, not quite a fish.

A duck's bill, though it can't seem to quack.

Four otter paws, yet not made to clap.

A stubby brown beaver tail, though it makes no dam.

The senses of a fish, yet not on the lam.

A melting pot of strange ideas, yet not fit for any one thing.

A conflict of traits with no definition that makes its heart sing.

Too many names to choose from, and too few that feel right.

No label that shines brightly for this special kind.

Yet there is one thing that makes it alive,

Only one name that gives it pride.

A name of platypus—one of a kind.

Strange by nature, yet made to thrive.

Not any one thing, at least not from outside.

But many traits that all hold true.

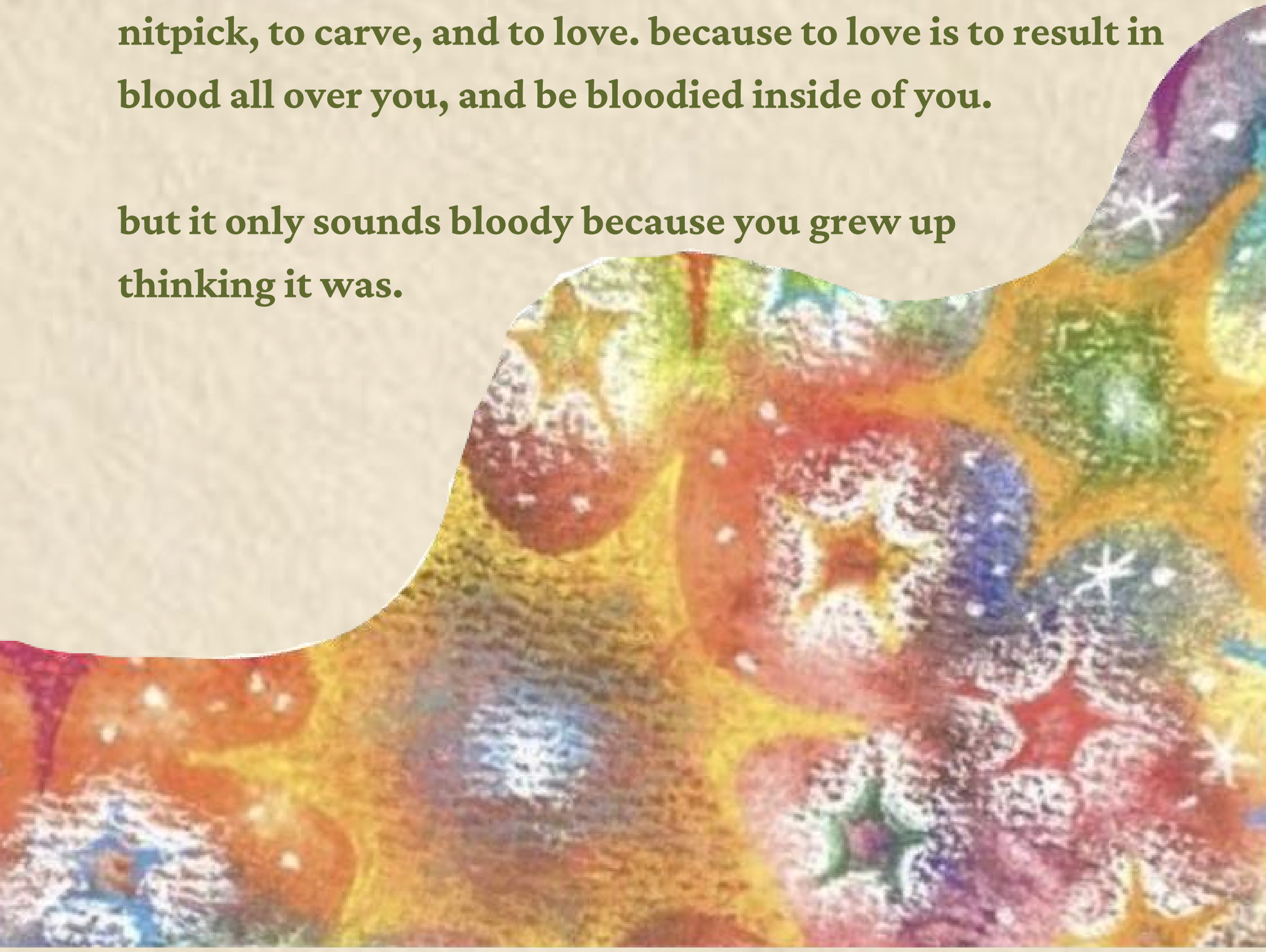
For the platypus, that's in both me and you.

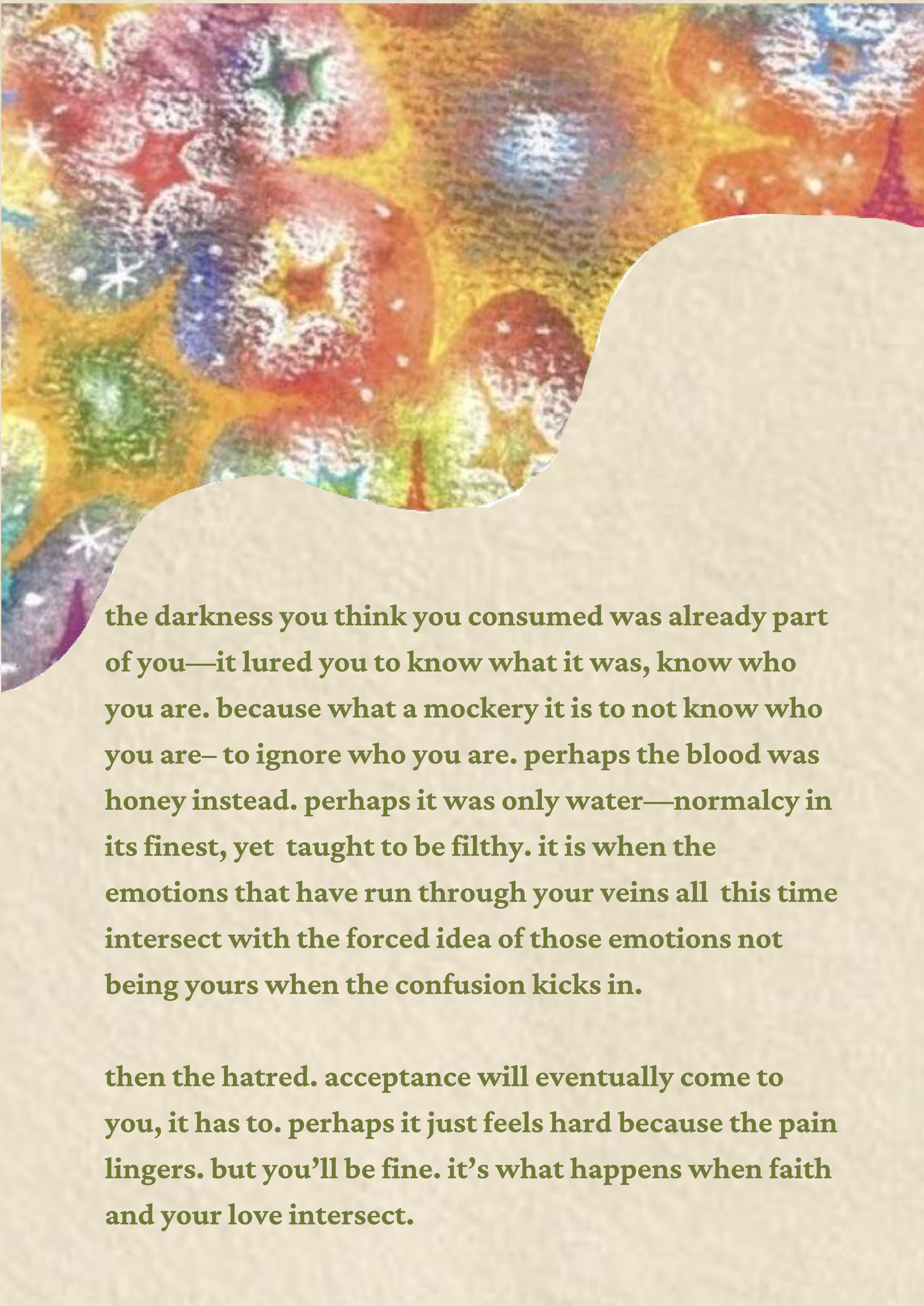
*blood is a part of you,
so is water
hannah*

they say you are what you consume. all the cakes and flesh that you eat, and all the pieces of poetry stuck in your throat—it is a part of you somehow. it takes long time to know but you eventually will.

no kind of sugarcoating, and no amount of metaphors will cover the war that is raging within you. for what you think is the flesh and bloodied meats you consume is still humanity. it is human to partake, to eat, to consume, to nitpick, to carve, and to love. because to love is to result in blood all over you, and be bloodied inside of you.

but it only sounds bloody because you grew up thinking it was.





the darkness you think you consumed was already part of you—it lured you to know what it was, know who you are. because what a mockery it is to not know who you are— to ignore who you are. perhaps the blood was honey instead. perhaps it was only water—normalcy in its finest, yet taught to be filthy. it is when the emotions that have run through your veins all this time intersect with the forced idea of those emotions not being yours when the confusion kicks in.

then the hatred. acceptance will eventually come to you, it has to. perhaps it just feels hard because the pain lingers. but you'll be fine. it's what happens when faith and your love intersect.

The Ignorance We Share.

Nasir Harrison

You were never just a friend
To me. I swore it in every page
Of this journal—the one
I hide underneath my bed so only
The monsters and I can read
The vulgarity of my feelings.

You gave it to me in the middle of class—
Beneath the desks, like a love letter
Being passed in secrecy. I grazed
Your fingers as I grabbed it. Purposefully, I'll admit.
The electricity of our skin's connection
Washed over me, but my hand lingered

Just a moment too long for me to feign ignorance.
Our eyes met as your hand dropped away. For once,
You saw that sliver of my soul I so desperately
Tried to hide so I wouldn't risk losing
You.

Gay. That's all I was to you now: gay first
And me second. And all it took
Was a vulnerable faux pas for this gayness
To consume me in my entirety.

You were never just a friend to me. No, you were
A visage conjured by my carnal desires; an apple
Steeped in the venom of my heart
That I longed to devour.

And as your eyes tore me apart
In the fleeting moments of us, I realized

I was always just a friend to you.
I was the boy you liked, but never loved.
I was the boy you hugged, but only in private.
I was the boy you called gay after
I got lost in your eyes the night
We shared a kiss.

Maybe there's a world where we can meet
At the intersection of our boyhood
And love—one where we share
Much more than this misery.

I imagine you love yourself
In that fantasy. And maybe you'd love Me too.
But that's no more than a wish I have to
Leave between the covers of this journal.



MANNEQUINS IN A DEPARTMENT STORE DISPLAY CASE

SATURN

i'm just the shattered blueprint of a mosaic that the world was in the middle of building, i think. no gender, no beating heart – just cold, jagged glass reflecting the harshness of truth. i can't see, but i do echo history's whispers; everything i've heard before is deposited back at your feet, all expenses paid via your exposure to sin. i'm inhuman, an alien lifeform that can cry and scream and tremble all i want, except i can pause at will to take a picture of a dragonfly and resume shortly after. i have priorities, clearly. i suppose i could say i have interests: i don't really enjoy them, but they aren't entirely horrible. writing, coloring, sleeping.. sleeping! that's maybe my "favorite." i don't have to reflect the world back upon itself and be received with words that cut deeper than the glass that makes up my body.

i used to love a beautiful boy, you know. at least, i think it was love. he was kind, he made me laugh, and he gave me this sense of safety that i never fully recovered from when i lost him. he was the highlight of my day. he gave me his full attention and always tried his very best for me. i never really thought about the fact that he was isolating me from my friends until i started feeling lonely. he'd changed, over the course of a single silent summer. he wasn't as cheerful, always complaining about one thing or another; at first i didn't think anything of it, but it never stopped. he clung to me tight, a self-loathing poet hellbent on dragging some company down with him. he didn't want to change, he enjoyed the tight chests and closed throats that lurked in the depressive shadows. i tried to take him with me, i really did, but his scent left a bitter taste in my mouth, and i lost him while we escaped. i like to think he's somewhere far softer now, or at least less sharp than i was. sometimes, i'll see his smile in the creases of my unironed clothes, or hear his laughter rise up with the afternoon wind.

i've found love again, wonderfully enough,
alongside my personal truth. i love a girl now, a
gorgeous and incredibly sweet woman i won't ever
share, not even with the stars. she and i speak in
the shadows of trees and behind worn throw
pillows, a quiet joy among the rampaging hatred
striking the sunlight. we'll laugh together forever
under the guise of friendship, my bracelets lining
her wrists and the scent of her perfume stuck in my
clothes, our hands and lips intertwined when we're
sure no one's watching.

i confess, i'm afraid of losing her too, when we're
running around the global battlefield without a care
in the world. i'm afraid i'm still not soft enough to
be as loving as she deserves. my fear is dwarfed in
the face of time, i suppose, so we'll find out
together if i've learned my lesson.

The acesperience

Amia Taylen & Evans

*if you wish to be asexual
then you wish for everything:
you wish to be told
you haven't found the right person yet,
or told to become a nun
or that something is wrong with you.
you wish for the empty space in your heart.
that will never be filled.
you wish for the knowledge
that your blood is unique,
and you are not like the others*



BETWEEN DEPARTURES

LACEY

I met her in a train station, where the sun was about to set behind the concrete building that shielded us from the occasional gusts of the wind. Her face was a blur amongst the strangers crowding us around, leaving almost no place to move around freely. I'd kept my head lowered to avoid eye contact and keep my balance in the crowd. Looking up felt like inviting myself to be swept away by the passengers around me. My shoelaces had been untangled since I got on the cramped and hot bus to get here—their vibrant red color from this morning had long worn out to a damp pink one. The smell of rain was slowly creeping into my lungs, reminding me that there would be nothing like the humid weather that would get you off-guard and drench your soul with its purity in where I was headed to.

I really didn't want to get on that train. The thought of bearing the sight of the people I'd be forced to recognize once again made me nauseous even now. Even though I felt freed by the expectations of the family I "left behind" to go to university here, they made snarky comments every time I opened the phone to greet them or send them a picture of nature in Belgium. I was about to spiral more but before my thoughts could get darker while envisioning the events I'd have no choice but to overcome once again, a pale and unusually cold hand gently held my arm and directed my attention to the present.

"So sorry to bother you- do you have any idea about where the train to the Netherlands might be?" An angel, I had thought struck in awe, an angel with her hair so silky- and her eyes so full of life- and her demeanor that just makes sense for her to be an angel coming down so graciously from heaven. Shrugging the bits of the sweet shock this girl made me feel, I shook my head in confusion.

"It's kind of the first time I'm coming to this station so I'm not even sure if I know the place of my train." She giggled at that and a wave of pride with bemusement filled my stomach as I looked away.

"Would you like to stick with me and help each other find our trains?" Her smile was warm as she extended her pale hand to mine, offering what I felt like was only a product of the luck some generous god offered me just then. Nodding and kindly accepting her hand in mine, I walked through the doors that led us into the train station's main building.

The line we walked in was obscure in terms of where it was leading us—the fluorescent lights didn't really help even though their flickering showed bits of directions to keep us from getting entirely lost. Finding spare time to observe the girl holding my hand in a gentle grip, I noticed her frilly skirt, her wool sweatshirt, and the keychains and plushies of colorful characters that looked straight out of a video game hanging on her backpack. She looked like the definition of what cute described in my mind and the thought that I would never be allowed to express myself the way she was doing now when I'd get on that train and get back in the house of somberness.

"You seem like you're in deep thought. Would you want to share what's bothering you?" It felt like she knew me and that we'd met before—maybe in a life where we weren't so different and had the circumstances to understand each other perfectly. In reality, we were two girls who had met around ten minutes ago and decided they'll be a part of each other's life, even if it affected everything and nothing depending on who you asked.

"I'm jealous of you but like the fact that I'm not alone here. These thoughts are confusing me and I have no time left to figure out who I'll even be when I get back where I was left with no choice to be nothing." She hummed at that thoughtfully and for a second I thought my mind was tricking me into seeing her disappointed.

"Your feelings are reciprocated and you know they deserve to be, even when it's carved into your mind that they shouldn't be. Still, I think you're making a mistake." I stopped in my tracks and looked at her once again. She was no longer smiling but the trail of something that resembled felicity was apparent in her features.

"Angels do know everything- after all, that's what they made you believe." A cold, bitter shiver ran down my spine. Her words were nothing but bleak as they made their way into my heart, settled into a feeling of despair, and crawled its way into my entire body. She went on, but I couldn't make out her words as the buzzing of my ears mixed with the grim rumble of the crowd.

The whistle of the train reverberated inside my skull. She was yelling and her voice was high yet guttural.

"Save your love, save your soul- save whatever's left that they didn't destroy!" The sky was rumbling and the gods, oh the gods were furious, and the station was whirling in all directions and I couldn't see the angel anymore as she collapsed under the weight of my sins.

I woke up trembling. It was five in the morning and I was a sixteen-year-old girl who needed to get to school for yet another exam to get good grades and go away, far away.

The morning prayer was loud. My mind was blank.

Contributors

Amia Taylen Evans
the acesperience

Amia Taylen Evans (any pronouns) is the pen name of an amateur writer, musician, and actor floating between Southern and Northern California. They're either engaging in fanfiction about their latest obsession, pouring their heart out on the notes app, making another outline for a book that will never get written, or avoiding anything related to writing at all costs. More of their works can be found in Teen Ink, Reflections Magazine, Evanescent Magazine, Marketed Magazine, and the American High School Poets anthologies. Stalk them on Instagram @atethewriter.

Candy Says
(Dream)

Candy Says (she/her) is a poetry and prose writer based in the UK. Her work typically centres on culture or rural mundanity, the small moments in life. She can be found on Instagram and Substack @0candysays0 where she uploads her writing frequently.

hannah
(blood is a part of you so is water)

hannah is a 17-year-old based in the Philippines.

Jane Brandeberry
(Pride Shines Bright)

cover artist

Jane Brandeberry (she/her) is a fifteen-year-old creative with a passion for colors. Jane currently lives in San Jose with her family. She serves as secretary of her high school's National Art Honors Society. Jane's favorite mediums include collage, watercolor, colored pencil and gauche.

Katie Rust
Platypus In A Pond

Katie Rust (she/they) is a 17-year-old gender-fluid bisexual with passions in drawing, writing, and the performing arts. She has also served on the board of her high school's writing club "Writer's Corner" as treasurer and soon to be secretary. Katie primarily fuels her writing passion through poetry, short stories, essays, and songs.

Lacey
Between Departures

Lacey (she/her) is a rather whimsical writer (as it can be seen from the way she uses too many exclamation marks and heart emojis when excited) who has an obsession with clovers, cats, and coffee. Her favorite thing to do when she's not occupied with sleeping next to her cute cat is reading books surrounding the theme of hope and new beginnings. She also sings and plays many instruments in her free time.

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Saturn

mannequins in a department store display case

Saturn is a queer photographer with a passion for reading, writing, and the arts. When they aren't drinking Thai tea, they can usually be found talking with friends.. or asleep in bed.

Soleil

WuhLuhWuh

Soleil Faria is a 18-year-old artist and writing enthusiast, and a dedicated member to theatre.

Vivian not Vivienne

To The One Who Is Lost

Vivian (NOT Vivienne) is a Dr. Pepper loving Ernest Hemingway fanatic, and her hobbies include painting, performing, and of course, writing. She has been writing since she was about seven years old and loves creating poetry and short stories inspired by slices of life and existentialism.



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