

Mitre 2001

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

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The Mitre

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Cover Art The Dreaming Tree

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Season Poetry I Can Sing a Rainbow

Melanie Rada

Jean Nairon

Amy Tan



Green is Open

A Strolling Field

A Towering Forest

Green can be Ancient

Green can be New

Lucky Green

Fresh, Crisp

Bringing Beginning

and End

I Return To Green

Roses and Webs

It was months before I went to her house to tie up the loose ends that lay within. Not because I feared memories and overpowering emotions, but to punish her the only way I could. I hated that house, her little sanctuary from the world and its problems. Though I had never been to it I knew it would be perfect having been made immaculate from years of her moving, rearranging, even if by an inch, until all seemed infinitely right. As if perfection was a defined quality that she could find if she looked hard enough. Yes, her house would be perfect, and her backyard would be filled with roses as only seen in Eden. Tended and pruned and coaxed into all they could be, her roses would be better than anything any florist could produce.

How I hated her collection of perfections. I had patiently suffered her shutting me and the world out, but my patience was spent once she dared to take herself, and any chance of reconciliation, out of this world. I wished to hurt her, to punish her, despite that she was now beyond pain. I hoped her sanctuary would be dealt such blasphemies as invasion, theft, destruction, and fire tearing it down ember by ember. I prayed her roses, which she gave more motherly devotion to than her true daughter, would starve for lack of water, burn in the summer sun, and be eaten, digested, and defecated by a plague of insects. In my mind, her home and blooming babies suffered infinite and merciless destructions empowered by my wrath, and hopefully made possible by my neglect.

When I arrived the house showed no scar of scorching, no sign of unwelcome entry, and not one article of worth was missing. Her backyard was filled with roses, as I knew it would be. Immaculate they were, and no worse for the gardener's absence. They had fallen into more natural positions from lack of pruning, which flattered them with the possibility of what was once wild is so once again, nature returning to the natural. However, my dark prayers did not go entirely unanswered. Something had taken root amongst them. Something that would madden my mother? perhaps even pushed her off the edge?

Amongst her beautiful blooms silver threads of gossamer. They stretched and wound throughout the bushes, creating a labyrinth of webs consuming her rose garden. They wound around each stem, thorn, and bloom. A delicate blanket of silver on my mother's pride. Here and there lurked the architects of the loom: arachnids. They contentedly balanced on their threads, waiting, so patiently waiting, for something to fall into their clever trap. Nearly as patient as I had been.

I began to understand why, after all these years, after finally isolating herself from one and all, my mother had given up and searched for solitude in oblivion. She had shut out all of humanity, but had watched helplessly as the weavers wove into the rose garden she put all of herself into. My mother was always weak, and always flew instead of fought. She had flown so far already in search for peace. I could imagine her now, each hour of each day watching in horror as mere insects, thread by thread, took over her roses, and thread by thread, cut the last thread holding her weak spirit to this earth.

Turmoil Between Us

She is back, my muse.
Turmoil.
Did you pack her in a suitcase?

I believe she lives with you.
A lover on the side.
Your mistress.

What does she wish on me?

Why does my heart soar,
only to plummet in an instant of fleeting eyes?

I wish to have you to myself,
But we both know
It is she who thrives on us,
And we who cry for more.

Amy Tan

An Observation

passion's fickle
flame scorches few
fortunate souls

Julie Mayrand

Silence Is Golden

Shush, Shush, Little Baby
Don't you cry.
(Silence Is Golden)

Be proper, Callow Lady
Make not a fuss.
(Silence Is Golden)

Remain calm, Young Man
Hold back your emotions.
(Silence Is Golden)

Say not a word, Good Student
Tattle not on others.
(Silence Is Golden)

Keep quiet, Dear Mother
About your fears.
(Silence Is Golden)

Be strong, Oh Father
Ask not for aid.
(Silence Is Golden)

Silence is Golden, Wide World
Put on a pleasant mask.
(Silence is Golden)

A.G. Klei



Smudge

Everything in her was broken, wildly dancing, dashing about the way the moon does on choppy water. She was out of herself, utterly out of herself, and walking through the forest, hardly knowing where she was going or what she was doing. The woods were so silent and still, it seemed. So assertive. Dark, potent, cool. Silent. They seemed to take her will from her.

She was walking on a boardwalk, not too wide, with a railing on either side. The trees were not so close to the boardwalk, which only increased her loneliness and shame. In these living woods, this warm, moist place, she felt so barren. Cold. Unloved and unfulfilled, rotting from the inside out, what was she doing in this place of births? She came to a marsh, a place of songs. She felt her consciousness expand; she began to perceive the faint marsh music. The hum of tiny wings, beating against the soft warm air, the rhythmic strain of a duck talking off skyward, the bugling of an elk in the distance. She felt her own breath, hot and thick on her parted lips, heard her heart drumming in her chest and was disgusted. Why was her body making its unworthiness known? She wanted to run, to leave this sacred church, but she was held by a force beyond herself, and trapped within herself as well.

There was an odour, not that of the marsh, but richer, a sweeter, smokier odour. The smell of sanctity was in her nostrils, making her quiver like a leaf in the breeze, penetrating her sense of fecundity, turning it, letting her give something up. It was not the warm scent of the marsh that was in her veins now, coursing through her blood. No, this odour was something else entirely. Just through the cattails she could see a little light, bigger than the lit end of a cigarette, but of the same bright calmness. She went to it.

There was a man. So calm and still, he was sweeping the smoke from the light on to his body, which was so perfectly fluid, so still in its motion that she was arrested. She could do nothing but watch him, and feel unworthy of this most holy person's regard. Her sense of her own barren, unfulfilled nature came back to her, sweeping over her and through her like waves breaking and lapping on a beached corpse. How dare she approach this man, this god? He was of a race so old, so sensual and pure, so sensuous. He seemed almost unconscious in this gentle massaging of the smoke, the way that he swept it toward his still and quiet body. She wanted to leave him in his meditation, but her wonder at his perfect repose compelled her into submission. Into a rapt repose of her own.

He suddenly looked up, trance-like; his eyes were fixed on her. Two dark abysses of mystery, that was what she was looking at, and she felt herself falling over the precipices of his eyes with a deep and dreadful swoon.

He looked at the rock that he was sitting on, just beside the boardwalk, looked up at her. She pulled herself over the railing of the boardwalk, and let herself drop onto the smooth old rock, silently. He held up the light. It was a braid of grasses, and the smoke that floated off of it was the source of the sweet odour that she had smelled before. As he had done unto himself, so he now did unto her, slowly and powerfully pushing the smoke over her quivering body, silently thrusting it through the still marsh air and onto her, cleaning her, reconciling her, making her new.

She was completely out of her own grasp, as opened and vulnerable as a new apple flower. But he was gentle, so gentle, pushing the smoke into her hair, over the smooth flesh of her shoulders, around her hips, letting its sensuousness and sanctity envelop her completely. She felt herself reborn, and the dancing particles inside became still, and one by one began to lie down and acquiesce to the soft and dark power that had overtaken her and given her rest.

А солнце уходит и садится,
 И птицы пролетают за окном.
 И слезы капают с ресниц –
 Я вспоминаю о былом.
 Закат таит очарованье,
 И грусть, а может быть тоску,
 Что не вернется ожиданье,
 И я бесследно пропаду.
 Я растворюсь во взрослой жизни,
 Где нет и места для души,
 И облака, как поколенья,
 Исчезнут за морем в дали.
 За ними вслед воспоминанья,
 Как пела в детстве про любовь,
 Как сердце жаждало признанья –
 Трех самых главных в мире слов.
 Но нет, они не прозвучали,
 И солнце село. . . Подожди!
 Я убегу от всех печалей,
 Останется лишь след в пыли.
 Мой быстроногий конь буланный,
 Как прежде в сказку унесет.
 Там, где Ромео и Джульетта,
 Там, где любовь еще живет.

Margarita Bizina

Red Reflection in the Lake

Escaping to another world
 Leaving the bottled days
 The ones who are scared
 Of their inner reflection

Spending the time
 On running wheels
 Letting my mind wander
 With the swirling wind

Being able to walk
 For moments
 Having my outlook
 Evolve with the sun

Laying on green planks
 Hoping for that inner heat
 Smelling the sweet familiar
 To die in those fumes

Awakening to thunderstorms
 Piercing wind slapping my face
 And loving the noise
 Water falling off the roof
 To the leaves, onto my eyes
 Sleeping in my open world
 Protected by walls
 Of uncertain bliss

Happy Depression

Tonight I observed
 Your loss
 And it didn't hurt
 To watch myself
 Losing

You have become
 One of the predictable masses
 I am found
 And then realized
 Glorified
 And forgotten

It is the circle
 My own process
 I chase myself
 To search for hope
 Why do I escape them?
 Why do they look around?
 When I am right in front
 Of myself

I am learning to turn around
 And run the other direction
 I am learning about me
 I am learning that love
 Is more important
 Than anything preceding

So it didn't hurt
 To watch myself
 Gain

artist

paint the town red
 she said
 and handed me a paintbrush

I'll paint the town red
 but don't ask me to draw you
 a perfect circle
 I said

geometry was never my thing

how disappointed was I
 when I discovered
 the whole city
 is nothing but

geometry

and red paint is
 out of
 fashion

maybe it's a seasonal thing?

Amy Vallis



High Country Meditation

Hiking

up to the high country

can become walking

meditation

the rhythm of footfalls

the cadence of lungs

filling with and expelling

air

the mind begins to filter out

all extraneous thoughts

let go on the wind

the walker

becomes one

with the mountain.

Up there

all you have to worry about

are the grizzlies.

Ian Tall

The Passing of...

When you notice the sun

Shifting in the sky

You know you've been still

Way too long..

Indicative of time well wasted

For the unsatisfactory feeling

Of goodness

Sitting and Setting.

Jennifer Smith



Waiting For Spain

Days of you and I departed
collide with damned circumstance

Leave me dreaming
of a Spanish suntan
Ibiza,
the running of the bulls, Federico Garcia
Lorca

I
cobblestone thoughts and dreams
of Vespas,
falling in love without language,
olive oil
Spain, Ibiza...

You legend, Spain
with all your horses
and noble lovers.
And what's all this I hear
about a war...?

Do you exist
voluptuously as in my mind?
Does your rain fall sweetly and
taste warm like the win of your valleys?
Do your vines of olive
sway with smell
the souls of men and NAZIs?

I shall find you dead or alive
or in thick Canadian slumber Spain,
you dark matador

dressed in festivals,
waiting in the hills and shadows of
Europe
to enter the ring
and to gallantly slaughter my bull,
the bull I have for Spain, Ibiza...

Spain, Ibiza... open your breast
open your breast

Vermont

Driving south, winding
through the champagne countryside
of Vermont

I think of Hemingway and "Hills Like White Elephants"
and feel bad

because I should be thinking of Frost;

I think we passed him earlier
forking hay into the yawning mouth of a rickety shed,
with a healthy layer of February sweat on his brow,
while the adjacent barn
struggled to smile under the weight of the snow.

In Burlington there are streets
that smell like cinnamon,
or a woman's hair past midnight,
and the whole city sounds like a pan flute,

but it is in the hills
and in the crystal windows of smoking little shacks,
and in the way the meaty
legs of Clydesdales
collect together at the hoof
like ladders for apple-picking,
that winter is divine.

In my mind he is standing there with his breath on the air,
leaning on his pitchfork,
understanding in squints
why children always paint the sun yellow;
and watching his cows
congregate towards the decrepit stone wall
at the edge of the property.

The cows low,
watch each other with watery-sad eyes,
shift their weight nervously,
maybe make a joke or two about pissing ice cream,
huddle together and wait
for the summer just below their hooves.

Anti-Venom

Now, I heard that Tommy Douglas said

"Man can now fly through the sky like a bird, swim under the sea like a fish and burrow through the ground. If he could just walk on this earth like a man, this would be paradise."

Sounds about right, [but who is Tommy Douglas?

This is all before my time.

Tommy Hunter?...

now we're talking icons.

] This is a poem about poems and a song about living then.

But there's no one around here marrying into anything or keeping their word like Vikings anymore.

There are just moods and other door-hangers I've thrown to the lions and I know lately it's been more Rain Dogs than Closing Time and I'm sorry for that, but doesn't this all seem a little too Southern to you?

-and then there's the anti-venom that makes me want to tomcat around and walk down the halls I've been too scared to walk down, with a nicotine crutch and the disillusionment that only the young possess.

it's music

it's voices in a cedar cathedral making love to each other beside some cold lake in Victoria County; with that favourite song bouncing to the top of hallowed walls, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in that minty air... it's music

All the notes file into the straightest line, when your feet sing to be running through life and the feeling in your arms makes you raise them and invite the world singing La na na na na na La na na na etc.

When you know you'll never find that love that scares you, or your holy grail, or shoes that fit *and* look good and it doesn't matter at all.

Untitled

The most beautiful girls in the country walk by me in Montreal, a bevy of hair, skin and obtuse white shopping bags -every one of them carrying lingerie I bet.

Giggling and dropping in and out of conversations of love and other things in magazines, in both English and French;

neither of which, apparently, I can speak convincingly because the most beautiful girls in the country walk by me in Montreal.

Journey

Friday, all.
 tucking away,
 narrowly escaping the
 must-murky frown
 of dull arced light
 that hangs over Toronto
 and places like it;
 like a parachute grasping it
 at each end root
 to softly float it into another week.

Safely nestled,
 front seat of Dad's pick-up truck,
 wombed and entombed-
 rough blankets and his jacket.
 seats smelling like
 wet canine and woodsmoke
 -there is the drive

leaning over his headlight
 onwards in our journey
 towards our mother
 in the night dark,
 towards the lake, fried fish
 fried potatoes.

Our headlights spilling
 into the roads
 eating away at blackness
 like Smith & Wesson bullets
 making a Wild West cowpoke
 dance in a dirt street
 while the prostitutes scream and laugh.

Our headlights, his and mine
 and us leaning on them
 stumble our journey,
 forge the way.

A u t u m n



Hot
 A sun Blazing
 Or Two
 High above my Head
 Cool
 Sweet Juice Drips
 Taste Orange
 Drink Orange
 Your Eyes, Your Lips
 Let them be SunKissed
 I am SunKissed
 In Orange

I began to lose...

I began to lose what I thought was my slam

until simplicity urged I put paper to pen.

Out again the paper rose

crinkled with the lines of fine art,

without doubt,
that one was right to say
I'd have nothing to say.

Today is my open forum

to talk of desperate measures

the pressures of being torn,
in the directions
of living others' form.

I cannot join that infusion of fall weather fancy

dreamlike dancing

if I know nothing of where I'd land

if we're to stall.

So best to plan one's own. Take out no loans. Leave my home. Create my own singular form.
Establish personal norm;

and find one more path, one more line,
some more room,

to roam.

S. Baker

The Kitchen Clock

I shall speak plain against the clock
that chimes upon our kitchen wall,
that endless gauge of corrupting flesh,
symbol of the ephemeral.
It is here I can see the ebbing day
in lattered photos and the yellowed page,
and the greatest sadness within my heart
is the thought of children as they age.

The clock speaks to me a sadness
that with each tick brings close to mind
the songless fields and the darkest nights
where fear is never hard to find.
You see, it is not for me that close of day
holds the greatest terrors here,
it is the thought of ones so loved
will not always be so near.

Frank Willdig



Posthumous Parade

Sam McNee died yesterday.
He was snarly and gruff.
Short sighted and tempered.

While he was living
He had nary a visitor.
Guests were not entertained.

He did not belong to Men's League
Ski-Pitch, Lions Club
or Schooners.

He was a church going man,
But always sat in the back
Isolated and alone in 'McNee's Pew.'

None ever saw a smile,
Most never spoke with him.
But we all counted him as a friend.

He was there to help rebuild
The Donaldson's barn
After the fire.

He donated generously
To the Youth Group
and Health Centre.

And it's widely known
That he pulled young Jimmy
Out of that burning wreck.

Which is why the whole
Town has come out
To celebrate him,

In a Posthumous Parade.

A. G. Kiel

Billy

He slipped on the ice
and fell under the bus,
after five operations,
here is young Billy.

"Hurry up, Gimpyl!"
"Faster there, Cripps!"

(We almost forgot his real name.)

Crippled and leased
by indestructible youths...

Tagging along...

with his gnarled and scarred legs
(looking like two ancient roots)

twik hedly flailing,
huffing and gasping,
painfully,
and with all human strength
he kept up
until he caught up with us
until he was one of us... again...

It's funny, the things
that keep me up at night.

Frank Willdig

Patriarch

Strangely addicted
the one that was
in odd momentum
and all because
He wasn't there
to quench the
Thirst
Hunger fuming;
that's not the worst.
She wanted it
to stay away
And all the same,
that very Day,
She ran towards
the knowledge tree.
Instead of plucking
turned to flee...

He held her fast
Locked control.
Acidic apple
Rotten whole.

Sophie Griffiths

Distractions

Her cheek was pressed down into the soft, warm mud. In this position she was almost comfortable, except that her breast was positioned over a sharp pebble, and there was slight pressure at the back of her head. Lyrics from a Tori Amos song kept running through her head as she silently mouthed the words: *Do you know Carolina, where the biscuits are soft and sweet...*

The grass here only grew about eye level, from her point of view. It was healthy and well-tended, and she watched a spider crawl up a tremorous shoot. Unfortunately, she tried to get some hair out of her mouth by blowing forcefully, and succeeded in disengaging the spider from its resting place. It hurtled into the lawn, lost from her sight. Great. She'd have to find something else to watch.

Her movements were rather limited however. She lay with her hands thrust back between her slightly opened knees. An enormous pressure prevented her from moving these particular limbs, her palms cupped and bloodless. With her knees planted firmly on the ground, her ass stuck up in the air "probably gleaming like a wet rock in this moonlight," she thought wryly. A light breeze soon cooled her a bit, the sweat on her skin glistening like dew before it evaporated on the wind. An ant came busily up to investigate her, but when it tried to venture into a nostril she snorted and sent the insect tumbling back towards whence it came. She decided to practice her vocab, spelling and sounding out words in her head. Garrulous. Vestigial. Impolitic. Ascendancy...

The door to a building on her left suddenly sprang open, spilling orange light onto the dark mud. She heard students' voices as they passed close by her, made invisible by the donated shrubs that littered the garden. The pressure behind her head increased, and she stayed quiet. She understood.

Perhaps she fell asleep. Perhaps her hands had become so numb she didn't know that the weight was gone. If anything, she had distracted herself so well she never noticed she was alone. Be what it may, she stayed there for a good long while, not even shifting to lay prone. Instead she rolled her eyes upward, and began counting stars. Not even she could tell you how long it took.

Meghan Wylie

The Last Light Year

Finish your orange juice
It is time to go and watch.
I would carry you on my shoulders if I could.
But you'll walk beside me

through cities that used to be
(must have been) green
silver-gleaming in noontime traffic
as we wait for the sun to snuff out.
We have been expecting this
I am not afraid
I can feel your breath on the flesh of my shoulder
as the earth grows colder
and we are, at last, still:
in the dark I am smiling.

Amanda McCoy



Poem From a Younger Poet To An Older Poet

For Irving Layton and Noni Howard

Your words are exquisite
fine-tuned near perfection

beauty fills my thoughts
as you speak

in a voice
like no other —
with a harsh
melodic rhythm ^{soft}

You have wordly knowledge
and experience
beyond my understanding

the master
of your domain.

Your spirit untied
to society's complacency

shining like the sun ^{setting}
against the edge
of the ocean

vibrating

reflecting moment
to moment

unafraid in your self-
determination

standing outside
and ahead of time
place, and knowledge

creating new worlds
with your vitality
and imagination.

As Einstein says
"imagination
is more important
than knowledge"

So what can I offer you ?

but my ultimate respect
and admiration
for a living legend

a national treasure

and to take in
the creative force
of your breath
along with those before you
and with you

and to pass it on
to those that will
follow me.

Marlena Rose Skye
for my mentor Noni Howard,
an inspiration to me

Poem From An Older Poet To A Younger Poet
For Marlena Rose Skye

What can I give you
that is not already
In your heart ?

Your words are all
your own

I would have you
own them.

I would have you take
the fragile world of change
into your strong
capable hands
and mold it

to fruition.
The garden is in your hands
and when you speak
the poetry of music
shines like the sun in them.

I would be your One;
more, I would be your Thou
that lives
beyond memory.

Such is what love is ...
It is beyond us both.

And that poetry and love
are the two things in this world
that will never die.

Such is what I entrust to you
with the certain knowledge
that you will not fail me

Although the butterfly
lives only moments
in this shining world
it's beauty
breaks the heart
of the Great Spirit
who made it.

So
let your heart be broken
by a single beauty.

the immortal wounds
of God.

W i n t e r



A cloud floating

A daisy Blowing

White is Pure

White is Uncorrupted

White is Hot, Or Cold

The Empty Moon

A Glistening Snowflake

White is Good

Can I be White?

Wrapped in black wool, sheathed in black night, we sat. Cool air kisses on peaceful faces. Tasting the evening, sweet on wine-stained lips. Silence. Night and quiet and comforting chills. Smiling widely with my eyes, I drank deep. Drank in this place, the smell of darkness. Drank full from my glass. Drunk on atmosphere; eyes open and hungry. As the last of the warmth shrank from the cobblestones, everything became unreal. Gentle words propelled forward on frosty paths, unearthing common secrets on foreign ground. Wine-scented laughter shattering the stillness, scheming golden heads bent together, we opened our minute circle to two more. Blue eyes gleaming through smoke, deep voices touched by something utterly distant, they brought knowing to our young ears. Devouring each other over poisoned glasses, thoughts flying, speaking in unknown terms. Silence. Laughter. Smoke rising, wine falling, we offered words of morality, dreams, hallucinogens. Sharing likenesses, exchanging experiences until glasses were emptied and darkness filled us with its ice. Parting strangers with remembering glances, we gathered our coats close and floated home.

Marisa Edghill

Unwilling Survival

The end is near.
Warmth will soon fade into
A memory, into
A thing of the past as we
Struggle to survive yet another
Grey, bitter winter.

We are thrown into disillusion
For four months.
We enjoy the sun,
We bask in its glory.
We relax and feel as if the world
Revolves around our small moment in time.

Then, reality.
Wind, rain, sleet and snow
Uninterrupted chaotic
Gripping us in its jaws
Chewing us and spitting us back out
So it can chew us some more
Reminding us that it cannot be stopped.

Jason Lister

Snowfall

I know a lot of people
Who do not like the snow,
They tell me it's the cold and damp
That they don't wish to know
They tell me it's the digging out,
The trudging and the slush,
But all I see in falling snow
Is a gentle calming hush.

And the chance to remake the earth
With this cleansing of the land,
Here's the chance to cover up
The blemishes of man.
So bright and pure, so innocent,
I watch these white drifts grow,
Perhaps this is why the sun's reborn
And why children like the snow.

Frank Willdig

Prose Poetry inspired by Brigette Poulin's performance of a John Cage composition Bandeen Hall, January 26th 2001

It is the perennial state of popcorn munching. And even stories about messed-up people are set to a beautiful score. This is not the natural music of life.

It is not the theme, but rather the distractions that catch pop redeem the room who coughs whispers.

Papers rustle and wet winter boots meet the polished floor.
The eternal night-shift inside the body is never-ending stop and chugging.
It's always there, like the lonely street light, humming for a traffic of...well, two, tonight.
There's a car alarm in her head; it calls her when the phone rings and the stereo is loud.

Just a bit of randomness to naturalize our "music." Don't panic.

Listen to your nerves hissing and the keys juggling in a stranger's pocket. Someone whispers; it's not for you, or about you. Wet skins peel silently apart. And you can hear your scratching a lot better when you plug your ears.

Michelle MacAlesse

Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot

A whole new year was only hours away.
 Once again, nothing could live up to the marvel of continuing life
 and getting drunk seemed a poor tribute to human history.
 I traipsed through unplowed streets
 almost obscured by brown sugar snowbanks,
 slipped my way to the metro station, wine clutched in a plastic bag.

Foolishly, I aimed to end my own year with closure
 and under my coat I was too well-dressed for the party:
 skin exposed, curves apparent, already shy
 beneath the looks of merely imagined strangers.
 I wanted to punish you
 for letting me stop loving you,
 finally get the reaction that never came when I ended things
 in the stale heat of our shared apartment.

Perhaps I should have stayed out in the deep winter,
 gone to Mount Royal with a toboggan and a thermos of coffee.
 Instead I encountered the sweet thick air
 unpleasant with the smell of sick and smoke and a mix of alcohols.
 You sat in a corner with two girls in your lap, hands exploring,
 too apathetic to feign civility or tact.

I had felt so pretty so together so complete without you
 getting ready that night, and now face to face
 I forgot why I used to defend your decisions.
 We aren't going to be friends.
 I finally let go of the persistent feeling that you were rare,
 forgave myself, and turned towards dawning newness.

Amanda McCoy



Hiding

When it seems everything is burning
 When everything is bleeding
 And nothing will slow the rush
 I close myself in

Darkness gives me comfort
 Like arms around me could not
 Darkness, in its emptiness
 Fills me up
 Darkness, with cold waves
 Warmly soothes me

When nobody can help me
 Darkness is my friend
 Finding resolution
 Is finding a small, black space
 The silence listens
 The simplicity understands
 Darkness gives me hope
 Through despair

I can think clearly
 In darkness
 Light brings everything back
 Painful memories to look at
 Darkness lets me forget

The Beginning

Seeing the cigarette butt on the floor
 Which will soon be swept
 Away brings about a great
 Feeling of sorrow as I come
 To recognise the filth
 That I could become.

We are two entities,
 Brought together
 Through the cruel humour of Moirai.
 She laughs at the crudeness of her creations.
 Though I resist the harshness
 Of what will be, I continue
 My fruitless attempts at staying clean,
 Staying separate.

Looking at my stale surroundings
 I realise she and I have become one.
 Entrapped
 Like prisoners,
 Entranced
 Like lovers,
 Moving through we wait
 For the end.

Jason Lister

Sleep With Me

I can't sleep tonight
 I couldn't last night, either
 or the night before that
 When my eyes close
 I hear the conversations
 that never existed
 except in my head
 words I never said
 and I blink my eyes
 to rid the memory unmade
 but even when I'm awake
 I am dreaming

I wish there were some voice
 to drown out my dreams
 to keep me from remembering
 whatever wants me
 to remember it

 The floor is cold on my feet
 and I can't sleep
 I pull fast the dark blanket, warm
 and close my eyes again
 only to stir with the pressing
 knowledge of a nightmare so vivid I might
 touch it
 and I hear the emptiness of a message lost
 in the darkness
 wondering what I was trying to tell
 myself

I can't sleep
 I remember tender touches
 lonely mornings
 empty afternoons
 dusty kisses
 hot tears slipping
 down a turned
 untouched cheek
 arguments that never existed
 questions unanswered because
 they were never asked
 dialogue that was never meant to be
 time forever always full
 but emptier still in longer hours

 I dream now when I am awake
 finding tangibility in phantoms
 knowing that this insomnia
 is some manifestation that
 mimics my regret, unfathomable
 transparent
 so what good is dreaming
 of a reality unspoken

 I can't sleep tonight



For O.P.

A wild and late english party,
and exams with the sun,
two previous acquaintances, stumbling,
head down the hill,
new friendship won.

For music drink, stories,
and confessions told,
Bring young men together,
and bonds are formed,
bonds that hold.

And though we avoid the pain,
it comforts to know,
another shares and feels your grief,
and I watch in amazement
as our friendship grows.

For My Grandfather

"Dive! Dive! Dive!"

Then not a sound to be heard
except the depth charges, hunting,
hunting their little metal tub and her crew.
The sub rattles and creaks with the strain
of withholding Poseidon's pressure.
Heavy breathing, stale, sweaty tears
and urine soaked eighteen year old boys,
fill the other senses. Nineteen year old
veterans, too old to cry,
My grandfather, first officer, keeping
silent, thinking of his wife
back home in Swansea, with the beginnings of my family.

The pounding recedes
and men pass silent looks of joy
to each other. The youngsters do
not bother changing their pants.
This day, among others, leads
to worse nights, and my grandfather
awakening his wife with sweaty sheets
and his dreams of shattering metal.

In Despair of Winter

As I watch from my chair,
leaves alter, and shifting aurs
turn lively greens to bloody reds.
We are all misled.

For winter is not the death
that renews nature's breath.
He strangles all for its own beliefs,
cruelly smiling, loving our grief.

Cold and ice strengthen his hold,
windows slam and doors are closed.
Men and women find only winter inside,
he's already struck, having raped his bride.

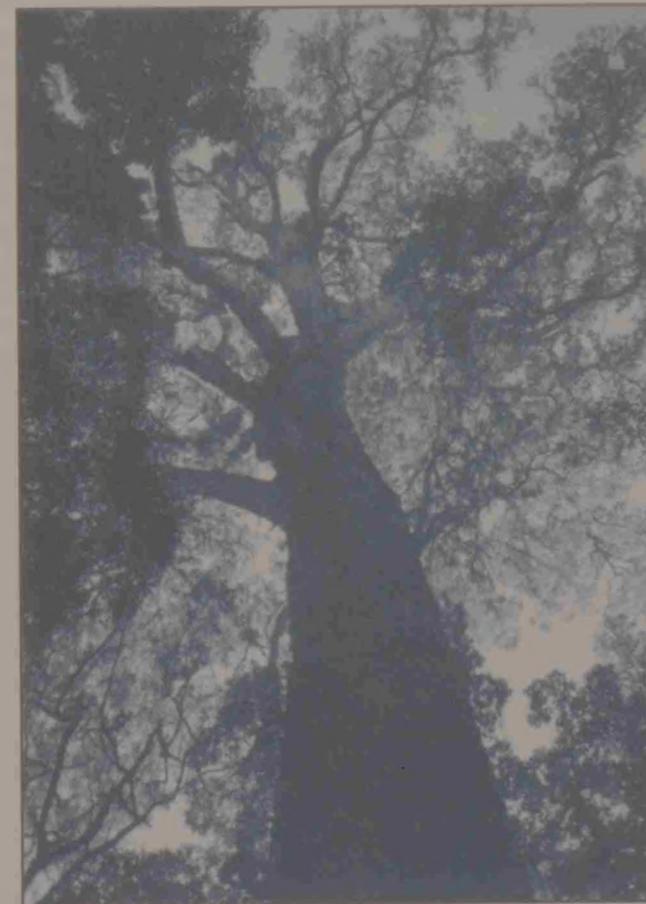
My Grandparents and Their Cottage

I lay on the carpet,
 my eyes need rest,
 [swimming in the lake is always tiring]
 but I desire to remember
 the scene before me.
 A large room with wooden floors
 dark with the stains of
 many children.
 Towels hang nearby,
 drying by the fire,
 that crackles and snaps,
 enjoying the peace of the cottage.
 At an oak table,
 my grandfather, wise and wrinkled,
 completes a puzzle which I could not.
 Close by, rocks my grandmother
 in her favorite chair,
 reading a book
 [that I would enjoy].
 The fading summer light
 shines through her
 thinning hair.
 As my eyes begin to close
 I take a close look from
 one grandparent to the other,
 and see shadows looming,
 approaching my family
 and my anger grows.

Creating Future Idiots

A droning voice,
 heads bent in,
 pathetic,
 concentration.
 Minutes slipping away,
 the monotonous voice continues on, and on and on;
 "the theme of imitation..."
 leading to pens twitching, controlled
 by confused hands and
 clouded minds.
 The paper repeats
 the voice, minds
 repeat the lines, solid
 in their memories.
 They will preach the
 repeated thoughts,
 creating unoriginal minds.
 You're taking that child and teaching him senseless!
 You damage the mind,
 you damage the dream, and
 we feel nothing at all.
 We think, nothing at all.

Spring



A Buttercup
 A Butterfly
 Yellow floats, flutters
 sways and sings
 Yellow Happiness
 let it touch you
 listen to Yellow's song
 Yellow sings to You
 Sing to Me

Every second Friday when my Dad picked us up we'd go for Fish and Chips. He's very English. The only way to be, according to him. He doesn't really say anything positive about anyone if they're not English, though he does admit that Italians make the best Fish and Chips.

We'd bring them home and my Dad would serve them onto three enormous brown plates. The largest piece of fish was his, not that anyone was jealous, each of us had enough on our plate to feed a small African country, and we had to eat it all. I would try to help by turning the television around to face the table while he served. As always he came and swatted me out of the way. 'Get away idiot. You want to break the bloody thing?' He really valued everything he'd worked hard for.

We ate watching Rumpole of the Bailey, which I despised, or Cheers if we were lucky. He always had dessert for us. More wonderful than the actual dessert though was that now we could have a drink. We would 'spoil our dinner' if we drank with it, so we'd be thoroughly parched by the time dessert came around. We always had grocery-store brand pop; it was cheaper than milk.

After eating, we'd turn the television back around to face the couch and continue watching until my Dad fell asleep, at which point I'd go upstairs to read or do homework. My brother would stay there until my Dad woke up briefly to shout at him to get to bed. More often than not, that's where my Dad would stay until 4:30 the next morning when he'd light his first cigarette and stir his first cup of coffee.

On Saturday mornings that we were with him we had to accompany him on his grocery shopping excursions. We'd run out to the car, trying to be the first one to the front seat. If we got there at the same time, as we often did, we'd fight until Dad came to swat us and say 'It's your brother's turn, you had it yesterday,' or vice versa. We'd climb in after he'd opened the door from inside where it still smelled like Fish and Chips from their ride home the night before.

We'd arrive at the local Italian grocery store – fruit first, frozen products last – and line up in front of the same middle-aged, pink-haired cashier who would tell my Dad what beautiful children he has.

On Sunday's we'd relax. My brother and I would do homework, and if we asked, maybe, we could turn on the television or the radio or use the telephone. I also used to like to snoop around in the guestroom and look at old photos of my Dad and my Mom together, or see what old stuff I could find in the basement. My Dad kept everything – every item of clothing my brother and I had ever worn, some of my mother's old clothes that she'd left behind, every toy, models that he'd never gotten around to finishing, sewing projects that Mom had never completed – everything. But if I heard him get up from his chair I'd leave whatever I was looking at and go pretend I was reading.

We would wake up early on Monday morning. Dad would get us the perfect piece of toast and as soon as we'd finished he'd say, 'Hurry up and get your things together and get your shoes on. She will be here soon.' Then we'd sit silently and wait until my mother's car pulled up to the curb at the end of my father's driveway.

One night at my Dad's house, when I was eleven or so, I pushed back my covers and slid out of bed. Standing still for a minute to let the dizziness pass from getting up too quickly, I straightened my nightgown. At around one in the morning, the television broadcasting stopped, but the television was still on, filling the house with harsh static-sound. I waited for a few minutes in bed hoping that Dad would turn it off. Figuring he must have fallen asleep, I decided to go

down and do it myself. I was used to this.

I made my way down the brown carpeted stairs, avoiding the creaks, and looked around the wooden newel post into the living room. I breathed in the familiar Craven A smoke smell that always filled his house, regardless of whether my Dad actually had one lit or not. Edging closer to his chair, I heard his deep, steady breaths and checked to make sure his eyes were closed. Stepping lightly, I went and pushed in the ON/OFF knob on the television and the deafening blare stopped, and once again, I could hear the comforting hum of the refrigerator.

Turning back around I glanced again to my Dad in the beige and brown checkered chair, and noticed a thin stream of smoke rising from his left hand. I picked his ashtray up from the floor and gently plucked the smoking stub from between his fingers, desperately trying not to disturb his sleep. I pressed it down hard to the porcelain bottom, attempting to make a place for the butt amongst all of the others. I leaned over to brush the ashes from the arm of the chair and inhaled a rich whiff of Dad, a smell no one else in the world could own.

I stepped back and stopped, not worried anymore if he caught me awake or not. I watched his chest rise and fall under his navy blue polo shirt and noticed a few flakes of dandruff on his shoulder. His mouth was slightly open; I could see the gap in the middle of his front set of teeth, which my brother and I were both born with (our gaps, though, have since been fixed). I looked past the large bags under his eyes that never go away and into his deep-set, lidded eyes. Then I took in a view of his whole face, fringed with dark hair and graying sideburns. I wondered what he was thinking – or dreaming. I suppose my Dad must dream like anyone else. But I couldn't come up with much.

Staring at him my throat began to get very tight. A terrible thought had entered my head. Someday he wouldn't be there. It became difficult to breathe, like someone was standing on my chest. Water began to gather in the corner of my eye. What would I do?

Then my Dad flinched suddenly in his sleep. The worry came back, I wiped the tear away and hurried off on tiptoe, realizing again that it was the middle of the night and I was not in bed.

Now I wake up in my mother's house every morning to hardwood and pink carpets and the smell of Lemon Pledge. We don't eat any breakfast, we can try to find something for lunch if we want it, and there are no Fish and Chips – only stir-fried chicken and peppers. We don't have dinner together really, and when we do it's awkward because there is no television to fill the silence.

My Dad writes once a week, we talk to him on the phone occasionally. I am happy for him that he left. He never liked Canada much anyway – except for the free local phone calls and the grocery store. He hated the cold, he hated the heat, he hated sharing the continent with my mother. Most of all he hated our spring. I remember him telling me about when he moved here, arriving in late April, and his first view of Canada. 'All the fields, all the grass – everywhere – it was so brown!'

Now back in the garden of England, in my grandmother's wallpapered house, he waits for the job that he couldn't find here. When he had to leave the bank, my Dad said that the most sensible thing to do was move back to England where he had a place to stay, as well as more acquaintances, which meant more connections. I think he just wanted to go home.

I miss him. I don't know where to be every Monday night, Thursday night, every second Friday night and every second weekend. I know he misses me too, though he never says so in so many words. I know because of when my brother and I saw him off at the airport. Just before he

went through the gate he put his bags down to adjust the silly tweed hat that he couldn't pack. He looked back at us and I noticed water forming deep in the corner of his eye.

Even in England, where in springtime there are brilliant white and yellow daffodils everywhere, and three Fish and Chips shops in every town, I think he must be sad.

I've decided I'm going to move to Italy when I grow up. They make the best Fish and Chips after all.

Jennifer Blanche



"Wrinkles of Tellus" - Jean Nairon

Moment

At the foot
 of Crawford notch
 where the Sacco
 tumbles over cobbles
 and slows
 into the valley
 A morning hike
 takes me
 downriver
 hop skip
 from stone to stone
 left right
 over two
 backtrack
 then longjump
 to a flatrock
 in the middle
 where crosslegged
 I can quiet sit
 in the sun
 and take in the snow
 up on Washington

Down here
 buds burst
 but only where the sunlight
 touches directly
 in the shade
 it's still winter chilly.
 The sun on my face
 wool shirt off
 the quietude of the moment
 disturbed by movement
 to my side
 turning I see
 a lad sixteen maybe
 Bee-lining it along the bank
 trotting
 flyrod at his side
 As he sees me
 without breaking a stride
 holds up
 a brown
 as long as his arm
 and grinning
 yells something
 but I can't
 quite hear over the roar
 of white water.
 Before I can react
 he's gone on
 the perfect communication
 of that moment
 swept down river
 sometime to resurface
 in a poem.

A szivem amely azt hittem hogy szabad
 Rabságba van, var a szabadulasat
 Szalj le madar, repulj, porejg,
 A mcanyekhez
 Vidd el a levemet
 Hogy varok, szerelem,
 Varok a eulcs ert.

In the wash of cold waves
 I wait,
 For the key.
 Let me become vulnerable

Once again
 And feel the innocence
 Let me feel the pain.
 The tears that have yet to come
 The salt rain waiting to cool down
 my fevered cheek
 Let me feel the thrust
 of the knife tearing at my insides
 As the liquid warmth slowly bleeds
 over the new wound
 Baring my soul to the bone
 without any shield
 Let me feel the excruciating torment
 of Love
 A weakness waiting to be turned
 into a strength
 A strength that waits
 For the one key
 to open my existence of life.

Repulj madar, ha lehet
 Lehet,
 Repulj torot szarmyan
 Szalj le a szivemhez
 Hogy varjan, csak varjan
 and I can only begin
 With broken wings
 Csak varjan.

Ildi

hello love,
 i thought you had forgotten me.
 hopes and dreams are
 waiting at my kitchen table,
 and peace of mind
 is knocking at my back door.
 happiness is out back,
 making sure the tears
 dont sneak back in...

hello love,
 i guess you couldn't live
 without me.
 did you miss
 how much i smiled,
 or was it the
 taste of my pain
 that brought you
 back for more...

hello love,
 i'm waiting for you
 with a shotgun
 full of indifference
 to keep you away...

goodbye love,
 i guess i should have
 warned you,
 i've changed,
 and you can't touch me
 now that i'm
 on my own.
 i know who i am,
 and i know how
 to walk away from you..

Blair Cowan

Christine

An angel from the subterranean sky
 Emerges from a lemon
 She paints
 A black door divine

--Oh, sweet vulture
 prey on me
 let me be your victim
 enlighten fools who've lost
 their undergarments
 and soak them in your venom –

She's mystically intriguing
 And her sharp, pale wings
 Are forbidden to touch

She designs
 A floating, sacred asylum
 Which only she can enter
 Fools
 Watch
 Observe

Remaining awestruck
 They tremble
 Some she'll sacrifice with her tongue
 Of jagged fire
 Juicy lust

And some she shelters with her wings
 The ones who hang
 From her lemon tree

L'amour sans titre à deux actes

I

Celle qui aimait
 Reste muette dans le coin du miroir
 Assise sur les ruines de ses rêves
 Dans le brume des mémoires

Celle qui aimait
 Enterre derrière le regard
 Derrière les fenêtres de la poésie
 Attendra

Que la monument de la solitude
 Dans la tristesse de ses yeux
 Glisse dans l'église de l'oubli

Qu'accroupi dans l'âme d'un homme qui attend
 La démon contemple devient le silence des anges
 La seule passion et le seul regret
 De celle qui soit

Elle qui est la
 Celle qui n'aime plus
 Passe sans mots
 Sans peurs
 Sans pleurs

Elle comprend

II

Celui qui m'aimait pas
 Reste torture
 Dans le coin du miroir de l'âme
 Aneanti par l'innocence

Celui qui n'aimait pas
 Enterre les cendres dans le Coeur souffrant
 L'épreuve de l'amour qui n'existe pas
 Derrière ses yeux de la peur, de la misère
 Il attend

Que son visage déchire
 Jouant l'héros entre des destinées
 Devient le reflet de la sagesse, de la vérité

Que son néant réveille l'existence des ténèbres
 Pleurant sur des vierges et des putaines
 La mélancolie profonde à perpétuité

Lui qui est la
 Pour une première fois
 Commence le jeu vulgaire
 Avec ses peurs
 Avec ses pleurs
 Il verse le sang de l'amour

Il comprend



A knowing glance in the darkness
 and the distant whistle of a train as I watched you
 fade into the background. You disappeared like a ghost, but
 then you'd never been anything more than an apparition that
 haunted my dreams. Daylight dreams that I mistook for realities. Although
 I saw you leave, I never felt as though you were really gone. I carried you with
 me in a suitcase of memories. You always hid just beyond my grasp in the
 congregation of shadows that haunted my thoughts. How many times had I reached
 out in the dark for you, only to touch the air? If only I had spoken out. If only I had yelled
 after you. If only... I can still feel myself choking on the words I was trying to say, as you
 backed away slowly, holding me down with your eyes. The weight of your gaze was too much
 to bear. Ice blue. The storm in your eyes felt like lightening and burned through the mask
 of every role I had ever played. Your stare ate through me like a disease until forgot what
 it was that I had wanted to say. All around us, wildflowers swayed, soaked in moonlight,
 their cries echoing on the wind; their petals bleeding into one another. Colourblind, we
 stood oblivious to what was dying around us. Tears stung my eyes and then
 evaporated into the wild sadness that hung around us like a mist. Rain fell
 delicately, like thread of pearls, running through my hair. For a moment it
 felt like your touch, but by then, you were too far away. I stood in
 absolute silence while you vanished, leaving behind a shadow
 of a memory, like an unfinished sentence...

Brooke Charlebois

Shadow

I am the darkness which will always remain
 who follows your footsteps
 and whispers your name
 I linger behind you, a reminder, a refrain
 who sings you sweet nothings,
 plays all your games
 I move with your gestures
 and mirror your soul
 I am your grey side, the blackness, the coal
 I live without substance, burn without fire
 I am your truth, mimic and liar
 I chase without running, I follow your lead
 I'm always behind you,
 I'm the dark side you bleed
 I'm not going to leave
 you're mine 'till you die
 I'm your nothing, your everything, a flicker, a sigh
 so run if you will but I'll always be near
 your each, darkness, the shadow, your fear

Amy Vallis





t h e d r e a m i n g t r e e