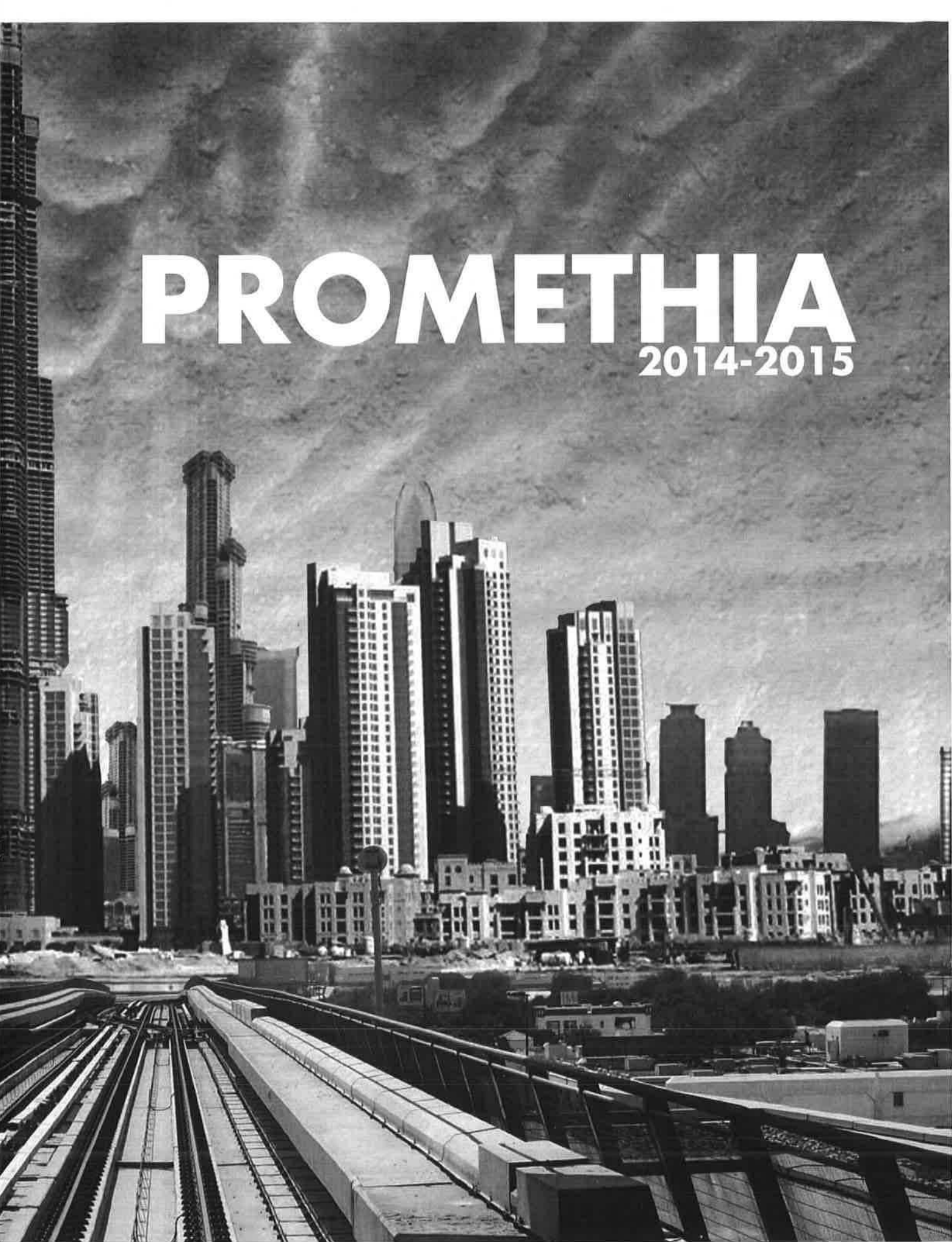


PROMETHIA

2014-2015



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Letter from the Editor

Dearest People of *Promethia*,

So, here we are.

You hold in your hands the mighty *Promethia*, the grand compilation of genius born by the cramped hands, late nights, and innovative drives of our community, and I somehow got to play a part in all of it. Serving this year has been nothing short of a thrill. It's an honor to be so closely involved with the various artists and writers at Oral Roberts University. I am grateful that I've been able to lay witness to every poem and portrait, and I am excited for the creative future here.

I would sincerely like to thank Dr. Meyers for serving as the faculty advisor of *Promethia* this year. It's been great working with her and bringing the journal from concept to print. I also want to thank the other members of faculty and staff that have supported the journal, come to events, or read through content to make this year's *Promethia* a reality. It's humbling to see the support of such great people.

I would like to thank Lisa Kleefeld for her hard work designing this journal and working with all things visual. It would not have come together without her contribution. Also, thank you to every other member of the *Promethia* staff for showing up and making things happen. You kept me sane.

Last, I would like to thank anyone that came to any of this year's events or submitted content to help make this edition of *Promethia* the star-studded journal that it is. This is yours.

Gregory Brown
Editor-in-Chief

Table of Contents

Poetry

- 6** *Music of the Soul • Photograph by Nathan Lundeen*
- 9** *Untitled • Vanessa Sweet*
- Without a Home • Kathryne Hall*
 Forgotten • Acrylic Painting by Arielle Monks
- 11** *Granny White's Pictures • Dr. William Epperson*
 Untitled • Photograph by Bethany Anderson
- 12** *Granny White's Radio • Dr. William Epperson*
- 13** *Painting with Memories • Timothy Whaley*
 Time Lord • Photograph by Nathan Lundeen
- 14** *The Mourning - To Myrtle and Danielle • Blake Parker*
 Orange Flowers • Photograph by Kathryne Hall
- 16** *Rising • McKensie Garber*
- Colorblind • Faith L. Sweet*
 Metropolis • Photoshop Collage by Ethan Norvell
- 19** *The Skater • Shaynee Sherwood*
 Untitled • Drawing by Abigail Dew
- 20** *Vessels (In Memory of Tove Kasischke) • Professor Keith Gogan*
 Morning Reflection • Photograph by Nathan Lundeen
- 23** *Wallpaper Daydream • McKensie Garber*
 Look • Photograph by Yubi Lee

25

Black Friday • *Greg Brown*

Absolution • *Hazel Peralta*

Lights in the Arizona Sky • *Photograph by Gloria Davis*

Prose

26

Waiting for Inspiration • *Photograph by Nathan Lundeen*

28

Of Thimbles and Brownies • *Bethany Anderson*

Egret • *Watercolor by Abigail Dew*

30

The Present Castle • *Kathryne Hall*

Kiefer Castle • *Photograph by Kathryne Hall*

32

Collar Blind • *Makenzie Skinner*

With Everything • *Photograph by Yubi Lee*



A black and white photograph of a hand playing a piano. The hand is positioned over the keys, with fingers slightly curved. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights on the hand and the keys, and deep shadows elsewhere. The word "Poetry" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font, centered horizontally and slightly above the middle vertically.

Poetry

Music of the Soul
Nathan Lundeen
Photography



Forgotten
Arielle Monks
Acrylic Painting



UNTITLED

By Vanessa Sweet

March starts with
coffee-rimmed eyes and
clenched coats, but
despite dead morning air,
the tulips keep stretching
up.

WITHOUT A HOME

By Kathryne Hall

The wind chills my bones
As it whips through my paper coat,
My tattered scarf falls limp
Against its adversary.

Like a prodigal prince
I wander back home,
Underneath a bridge,
My castle for the night.

I violently shiver as the
Dark wind gusts again,
Threatening to take away
My lone covering.

A growl like a hungry animal
Erupts from my stomach,
And I am ashamed of the
Desolation around me.

Fingers numb against the cold,
Not knowing if I will awaken
To the sight of a new day
Or to eternity.



GRANNY WHITE'S PICTURES

By Dr. William Epperson

Granny's walls
Were covered by
Her paintings in
Enamel.

A St. Louis Post Dispatch
Reporter visited her
Shack and called her
"Ozark's Grandma Moses."
"Who's that?" she
Shouted to us later.
"Grandma who?
Moses I know,
But not his Grandma.
Anyway, I never sold a picture—
They're up there with Roosevelt
And Jesus just
To help keep out
The wind."

Her voice was cracking
With its own last
Bitter wind.
"I sold my recipes
And verse—and
Gave away spells to
Any burned or cut.
I've blown out fire,
Stopped blood's flow,
And got by just
By getting old in
Time to get the
New Deal a Democrat
And a Christian can
Expect.
Heaven's likely to be better."

Her pictures mainly
Were of castles,
And of little girls,
And trees,
And blue
Enameled skies.

Untitled
Bethany Anderson
Photography

GRANNY WHITE'S RADIO

By Dr. William Epperson

Her wood was stacked
Against the back
Wall of her two-room
Shack—two steps from
Her stove.

Tar-paper bricks—
The walls—covered
Inside by pictures
Of Roosevelt and Jesus
In paper-plate frames.

Before she died
She bought a radio
Turned loud to hear
The news at noon
Beside her couch bed.

"Hush up!" she'd
Shout if I came
In to see her
At that hour—
"Hush."

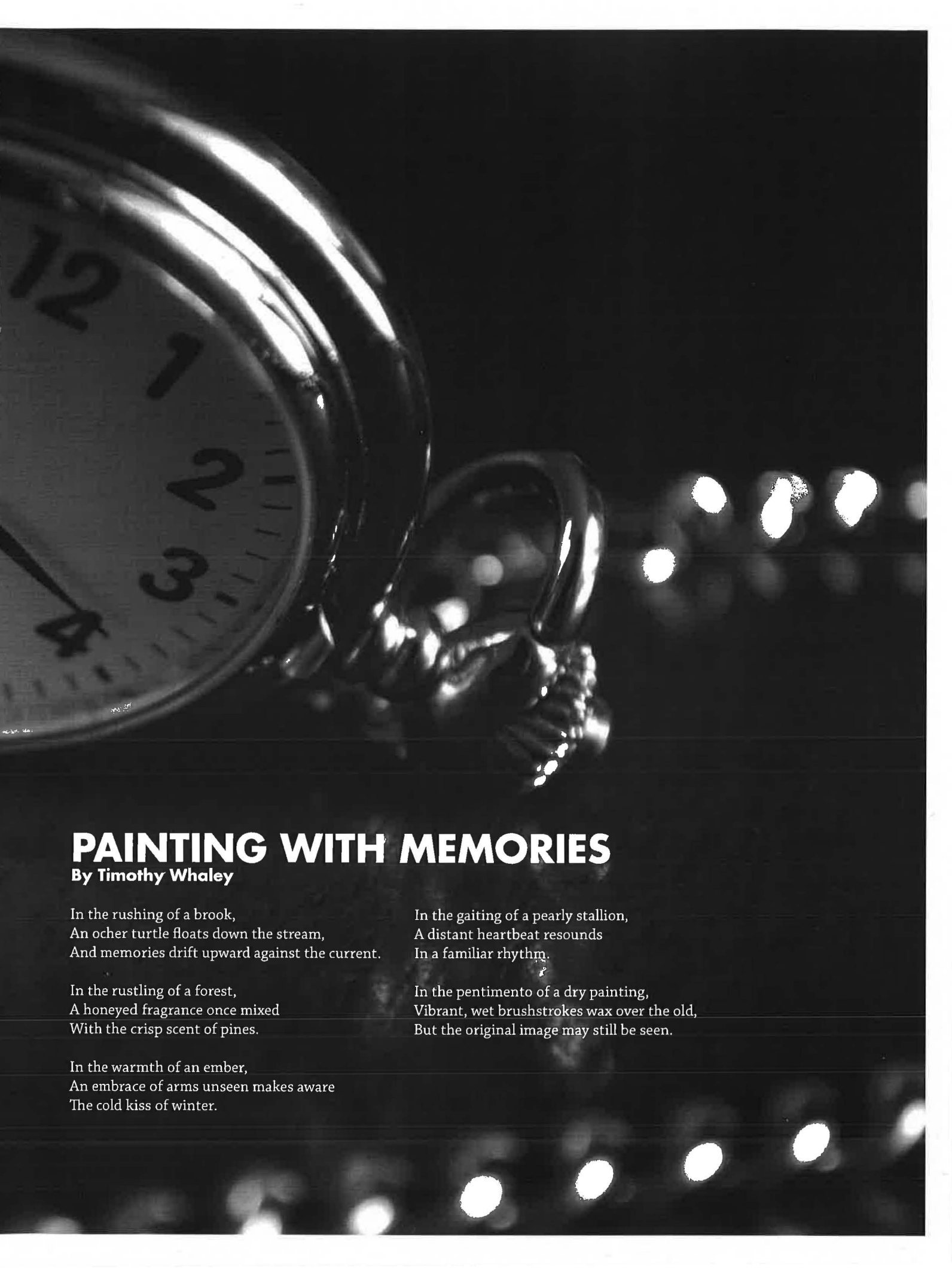
The day she died
She hushed us
At mid-day. She
Heard Eisenhower
Go to Korea.

His picture never joined
The icons on her wall—
Perhaps she didn't know
Her saviors were
Now dead.

A voice was maybe
Better—loud enough
At least to spill
Out the shack—
That now
Is gone.



Time Lord
Nathan Lundeen
Photography



PAINTING WITH MEMORIES

By Timothy Whaley

In the rushing of a brook,
An ocher turtle floats down the stream,
And memories drift upward against the current.

In the rustling of a forest,
A honeyed fragrance once mixed
With the crisp scent of pines.

In the warmth of an ember,
An embrace of arms unseen makes aware
The cold kiss of winter.

In the gaiting of a pearly stallion,
A distant heartbeat resounds
In a familiar rhythm.

In the pentimento of a dry painting,
Vibrant, wet brushstrokes wax over the old,
But the original image may still be seen.

THE MOURNING – TO MYRTLE AND DANIELLE

By Blake Parker

All around me, I see
pictures
flowers
ties

Sense smells overcome by
bleach
perfume
formaldehyde

But I can't see the dearly
departed
Can't smell the
roses
Can't dry the
ties

That can't be her in the box
cold
still
dry

The story the preacher tells
lies-
The swindlers watching are
spies-
From what tomb will the real woman
arise?

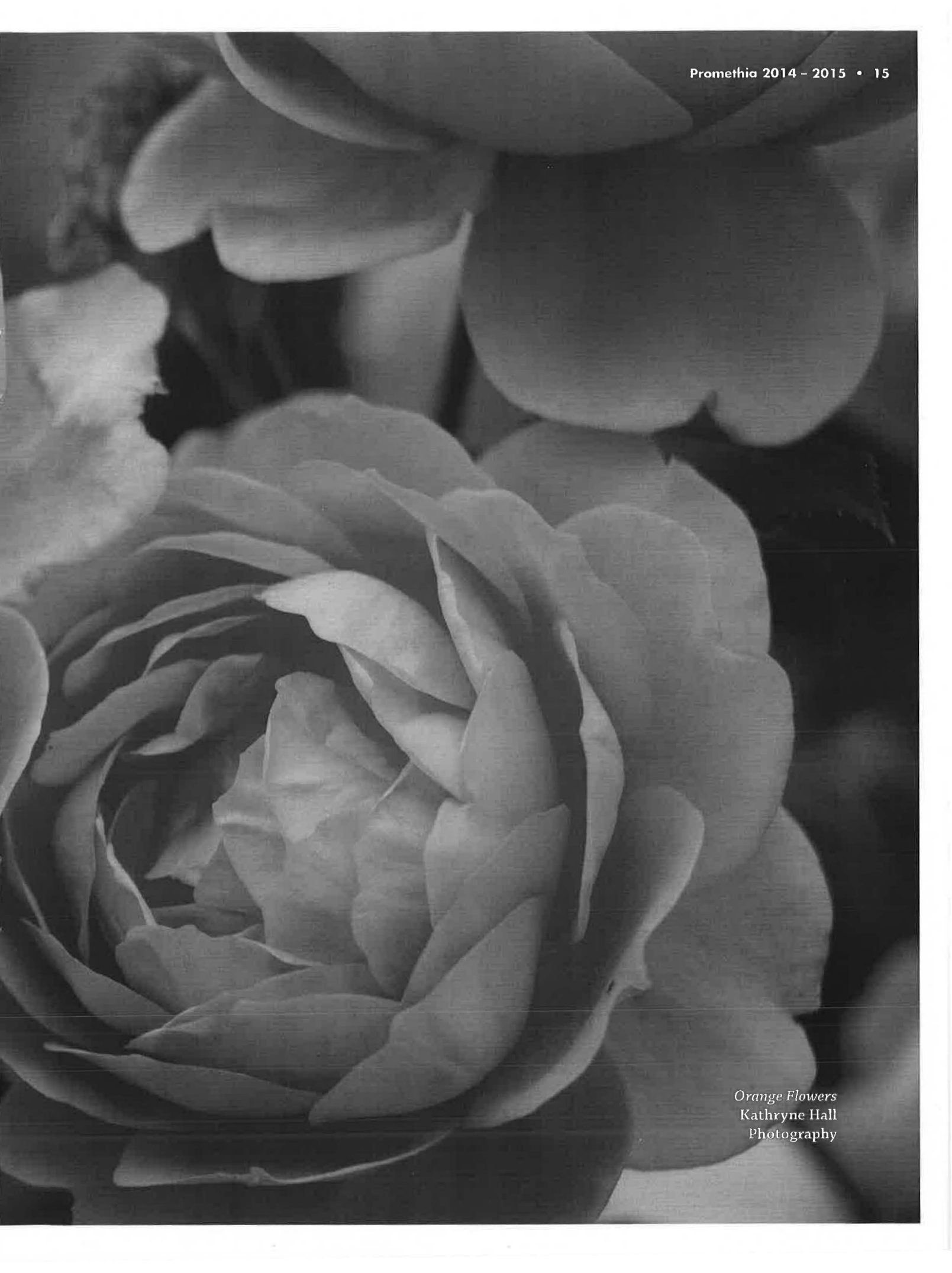
Then, from the arms of a mother comes an
infant's
Holy
cries

And I freeze and behold, as the departed's
face
comes
alive!

Through the
burning
silent
unseen
Eyes of her granddaughter

Who, with her camera, gently
catches
their
tears.





Orange Flowers
Kathryne Hall
Photography

RISING

By McKensie Garber

Follow me my children
Down the streets of Broadway
We will smear blood on our cheeks

Before they do

We will cry out the names of the lost
And the ones of the unborn
We will sing Sunday hymns
And beat the savage drums

Until they burst beneath the beat

We will scrape paper money off the ground and eat it
We will suck the pain from the world with our fingertips
We will rise above the monuments

And float away on the ecstasy of sleep

COLORBLIND

By Faith L. Sweet

“I bet that shirt would look good on you.”

A pause ensues

Because her skin's hue

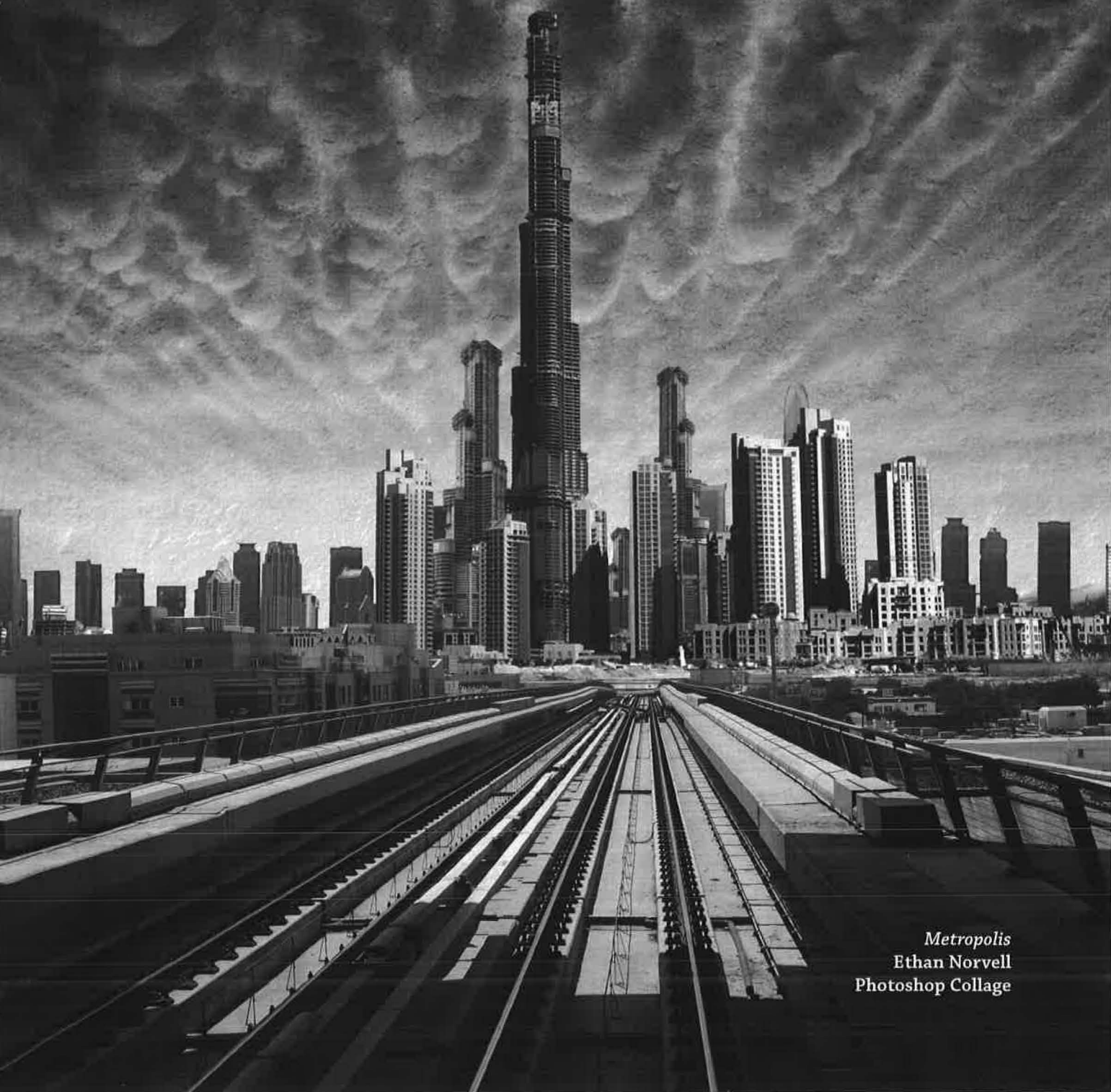
Is just a shade too dark, mine a shade too light.

Fields of cream, black, brown, bronze between us lie,

Words take flight, falter, flutter, die,

And I am left alone to wonder

What is this fear that blinds kind men to color?



Metropolis
Ethan Norvell
Photoshop Collage



THE SKATER

By Shaynee Sherwood

There is a chain-link fence
That separated
My grandmother's house
From theirs
And when I would visit
I would stand by it
And wait for her
To see me
Her mother's name was Wednesday
But she would one day
Not even see her children weekly
After one of the boys
Accidentally caught their house on fire
The father stayed to rebuild
But the mother didn't
Instead she took the daughter
And left the sons
And I no longer stood by the fence
But I wished I knew the brothers
Especially the one whose face
Was hidden behind dark bangs
The skater who wore tie-dye shirts
One day the father's heart had an attack
While he was riding his motorcycle
And he lost the battle

And never drove home
And the house became a dirty clubhouse
And the grass grew like a jungle
And they were the lost boys
Missing their Wendy sister and their Wednesday mother
And one day the teen who missed his father
Walked through the neighborhood
Up to the 4 lane street
And as the cars raced by
Someone spotted
The lost boy wanting to join
His father
And sirens came and got him
Before he took that step
And now I wish we had been childhood friends
So that I could go to my grandmother's house again
And stand by the chained-link fence
And call him
And we could be young again
And he would be a found boy
Instead of a lost boy
And I would tell him to stay out of the street
Stay safe behind the fence
That once stood between him and me

Untitled
Abigail Dew
Drawing

VESSELS

(In Memory of Tove Kasischke)

By Professor Keith Gogan

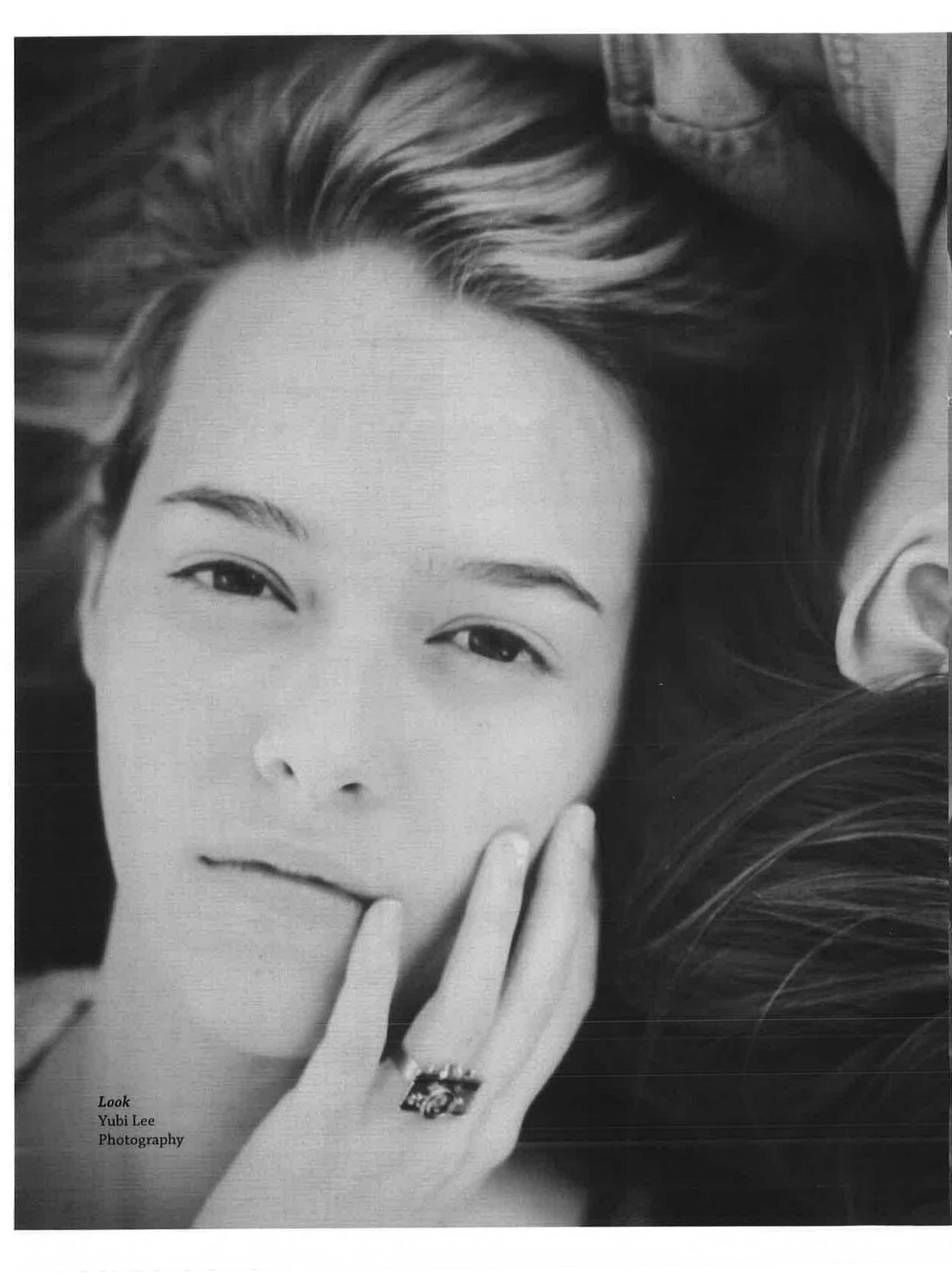
Not long after her funeral I
Take my mother's urn of ashes
Out onto the lake near her house my
Yellow kayak carries her and me
One of us breathing
One not
In this unlikely hearse that
Makes a V in the still water

Out in the middle of the lake
I push my right arm forward
Plowing the water with the paddle's blade
Braking the boat
To a gentle, arcing stop
The V vanishing
Holding the urn, I shake
Mother's flesh and bone
Onto the water's surface
Thinking that
She came in water, and to
Water she returns

By water I return
To dry land where
I take her empty urn
Out of my boat
And start
The long uphill walk
From the water to
Her empty house

Morning Reflection
Nathan Lundeen
Photography



A black and white close-up portrait of a woman with dark hair, looking directly at the camera. Her right hand is raised, with her fingers resting near her chin and cheek. She is wearing a ring with a large, dark, rectangular stone on her ring finger. The background is dark and out of focus, showing some texture that might be clothing or another person's hair.

Look
Yubi Lee
Photography

WALLPAPER DAYDREAM

By McKensie Garber

She lies dazed across the bed,
Skirt spreading
Like a half-blossomed flower

Clutching her chest,
She stares
Into her wallpaper kingdom

Hypnotic baroque paisleys,
Forbidden gardens of fruit,
The fauna and flora nirvana,
Winding and curling around her,
A bare man

Detached from her

By twelve feet of air
And the millions of dust particles
Floating on righteous light

My feet glued to the carpet,
Clutching velvet rope,
A sign says

“DO NOT TOUCH”

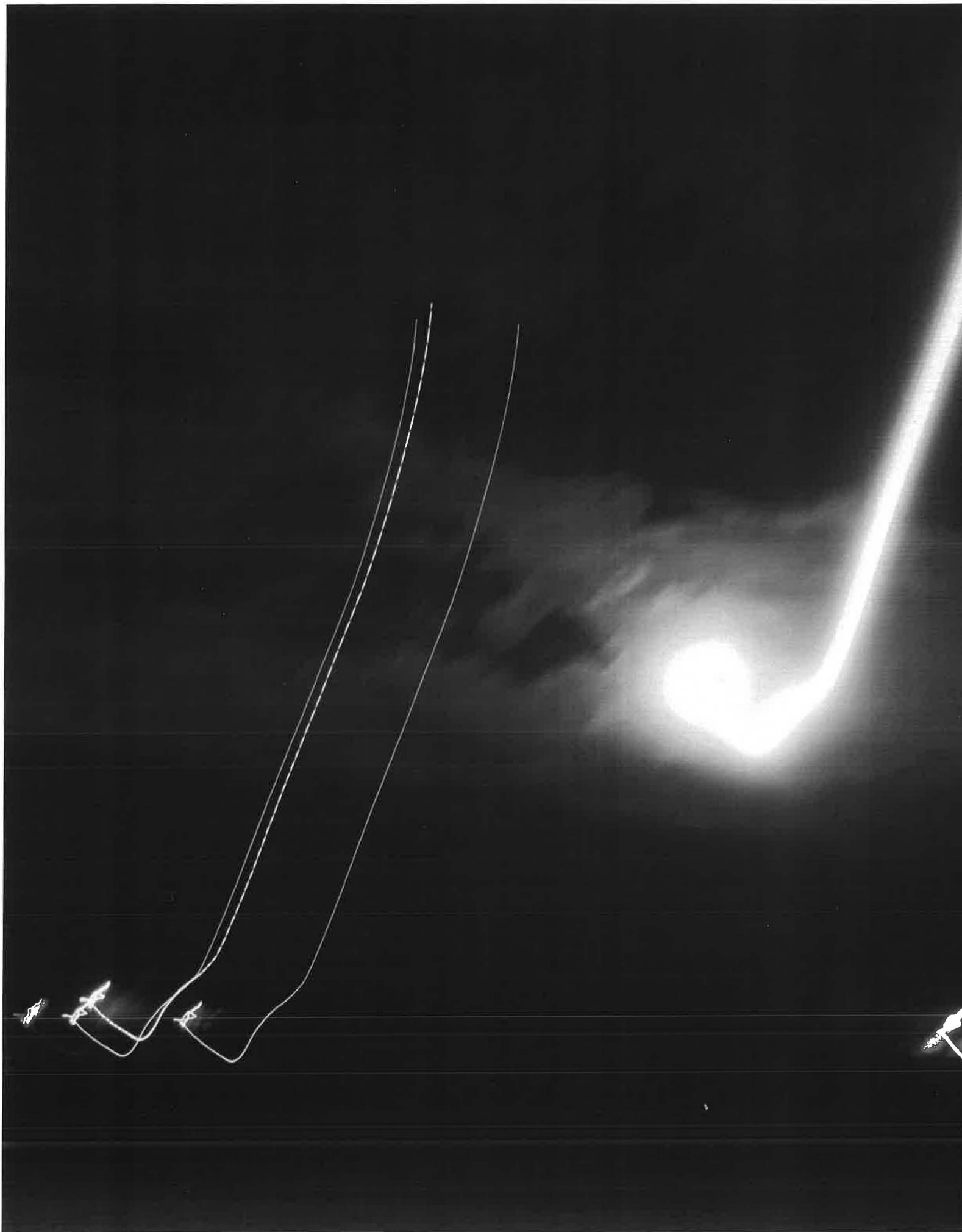
But I cannot do as the others

I reach out
To my paradisaal porthole,
My safe haven
Of another land,
A time I belonged to
But until now forgotten

I would cry for help
If not transfixed by the image
Of heaven meeting earth
On the ceiling and walls,
In tapestries beyond royal decree

Why did they leave me there?

In the Metropolitan Museum



BLACK FRIDAY

by Greg Brown

The mall is another vegetable,
barely breathing, eyes unresponsive,
life supported by a ventilator feeding
dollar bills and free energy drinks
into now-iron lungs unwilling to pull in
oxygen
or anything close
to a good night's sleep.
William managed, had
something like a heart attack,
stepped out to the hospital,
chest shaking, his head set
next to a shoebox on the shelf,
pulled back in the store
twelve hours later
to pacify the machine,
to give the people
the footwear they need.

ABSOLUTION

By Hazel Peralta

When from inferno we became alive,
I thought that you, my sword, could learn to feel
The hammer-beat into our core inscribed
When heart of fire turned unfeeling steel.
If we had learned to dance in summer's light,
Our spirit would recall the touch of flame
Away from winter and its cursed blight
Upon our soul, that would our passion tame.
Time brings to me what we and I once dealt
To men, and though their fate I envy not,
No more shall winter's scourge be on me felt
For all the trouble on this world we wrought;
And time at last shall lay me on my pyre;
Then shall we rest in warmth, embraced by fire.

Lights in the Arizona Sky
Gloria Davis
Photography

Prose





Waiting for Inspiration
Nathan Lundeen
Photography

OF THIMBLES AND BROWNIES

By Bethany Anderson

Fog forms from my breath on the glass window pane, blurring the images inside the dorm room. As I press my fingertips to the cool glass, I feel a shiver of excitement and danger. I wipe a single line across the white film and peer inside. From my perch on the windowsill, I can steal glances at him—this morning he rises out of his ginormous bed with a groan. After a moment or two of blinking blearily at a screaming box, he swings back the covers and stumbles drunkenly into the bathroom.

I love these private moments we have together; it makes me feel like our relationship is at the next stage, knowing what he looks like half asleep. Unfortunately, he doesn't even know that I exist. Actually, let me rephrase that; he doesn't know that I could exist. I do little things for him—stack books, locate lost socks, fix faulty chairs. I do these things because I love him, and I want to always be here for him. Unfortunately, my love doesn't understand the superstitions, and while it makes me happy that he leaves little gifts out for me—bits of food and trinkets—it is because of this that I might have to leave him.

Invisible to the eye of humans—except for those with the second sight, a genetic anomaly allowing mortal sight to pierce the gossamer veil between my world, the world of the brownies, and theirs, the world of man. According to my people's laws, once a gift has been given, we must vacate our current household and find a new home; if we do not leave, we could be punished. Brownies are a part of the world of the fairies, and we use our time to help others, even to the point of falling in love. I want to believe that my human would fall for me—but I'm only three inches tall, and my lifespan is much longer than a normal human's. It just wouldn't work.

After my darling leaves his dorm room with his brightly colored pack-on-back slung over one arm, I crawl in through a small crack in the window. From my vantage point, I can see the dozing com-poo-ter, the unmade bed, and there upon the cluttered desk, a gift: a beautiful jumble of jewel-like candies shaped like beans. Jumping from the edge of the windowsill onto the back of a chair, I make my way nimbly over to the desk. "How sweet de laddie is to mehl!" Leaning down, I gather one of the red jewels into a small silver thimble that I keep slung across my hip with a piece of bright red yarn. His little gifts both excite me and fill me with dread; one time it was a bit of what the humans call peetza, a triangle piece of bread with cheese on top of it. I know that he is thankful because of these little things. But he has to know that if the other fairies ever knew I wasn't following the rules...we could both be punished. Letting out a sigh, I look at the stacks of paper and books littering the desk, creating small mountains and valleys.

Stumbling over the odd eraser and pencil, I make my way over to the only open book on the surface. Its pages are gilded in gold, while the binding is dark brown leather. Grabbing the edge of the book, I scale up the pages to find myself on the cool cream surface. Covering the page are pictures of little people—people like me with flame-red hair curling and twisting down their backs. Some are naked, while others gambol around the page in bits of leaves, string, and other odd gifts. I let out a squeak of delight; he knows about me! This must mean that he has noticed what I do for him, and that must be why he is researching my people. This could be my chance; if he is actually researching me, then that means that he won't be scared! I could reveal myself, and he would accept me in all my redheaded diminutiveness. Taking a deep breath, I decide to confess my love to my human. Maybe if my people know that I love him, we won't be punished too harshly. Maybe, they could even help me grow so that I could be his size. Closing my eyes, I released the charm that was keeping me invisible with a snap of my fingers, dissolving the glamour that keeps me invisible to the mortal eye. Then I sat down and waited for my true love to return.

I imagine that his brown eyes will soften and glow warmly as they stare into my own green ones. I imagine that he will laugh when he sees how I am exactly like the pictures in the book. I imagine that he will reach out his finger to shake my hand and—

"Have you read the assignment yet?" A human who is not my human bursts into the room laughing, followed closely behind by my one true love. I stand frozen as I watch him sling his pack down to the ground with a relieved sigh. I try to cast my glamour once more but something is wrong—I can't access my gifts. Slowly, I kneel down on the pages of the book to be as inconspicuous as possible.

"Not yet, I've had other important things to do." My human's voice is so melodious I can barely stand it. But wait, what is that sound? Giggling? Glancing down I see the pictures of my people moving—blinking, shifting, grinning evilly up at me. I have to run and clamber off the book before the other human notices me.

"Is that a rat?" the other human exclaims in a loud voice, pointing directly at my own small form on the desk. Without hesitation, my love grabs the book of fairies from the desk and slams it on top of me.

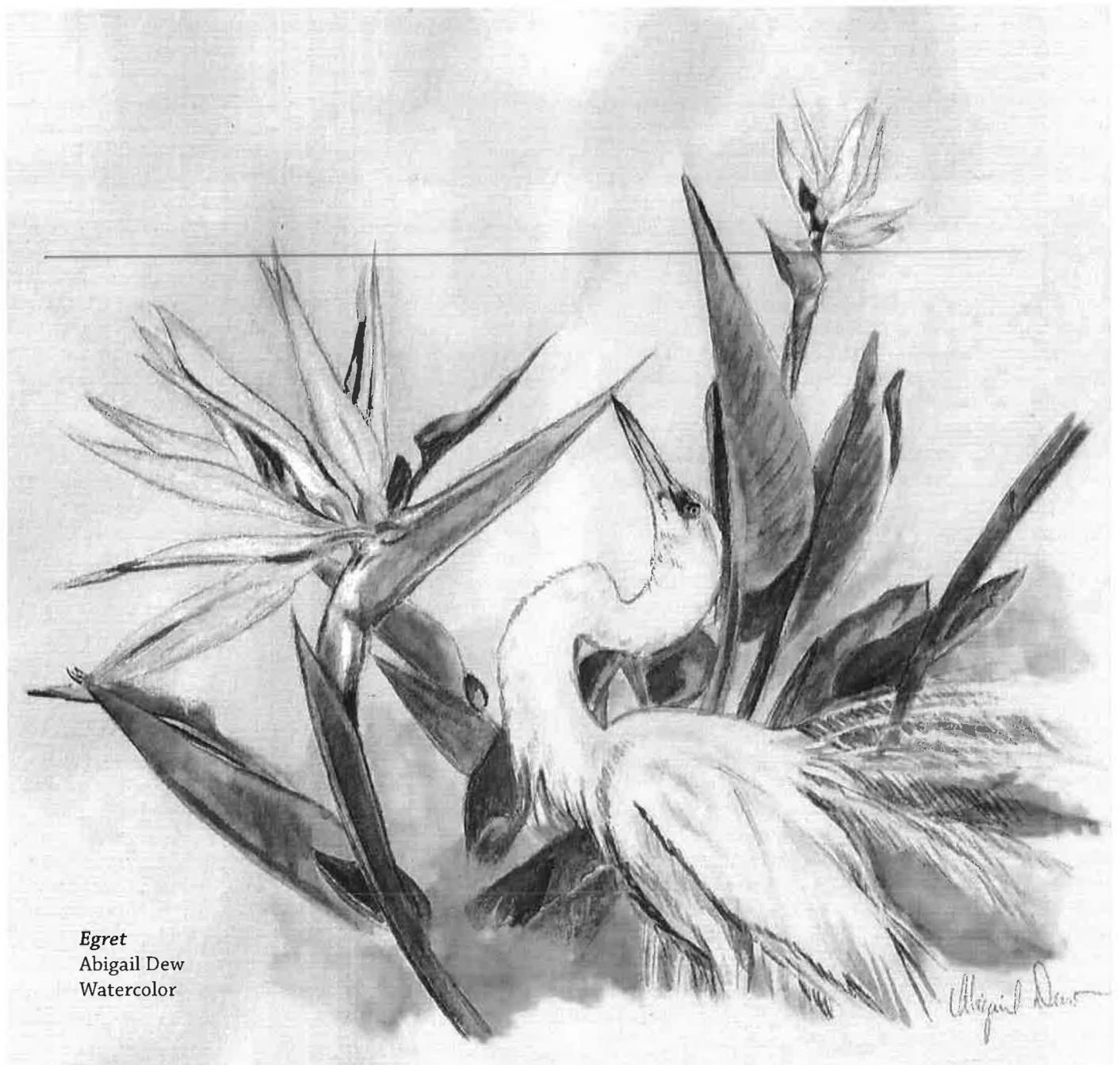
"What was that, Kail?"

"I don't know. I'm not sure it was a rat though; I think I heard it scream—" Kail turns the book over, looking for the carcass of the insect he had just killed. "I could have sworn I saw a tiny human hand or something." Kail flips the book to look at the front cover. "Huh, I don't remember this book having an embossed illustration of a fairy. She's pretty hot—"

"Wow, maybe we need to get you a girl or something?"

"Yeah, you're right; besides, at least this dusty old tome has come to some use. I only have it because I wanted to impress a girl in the library; I found out later that she's already dating

someone." Placing the book back on the desk, Kail doesn't notice a small silver thimble with a jellybean inside, rolling aimlessly off the desk and into the garbage can.



Egret
Abigail Dew
Watercolor

THE PRESENT CASTLE

By Kathryn Hall

“All things have an end—even houses that people take infinite pains to see...”

— Charles Dickens, *Bleak House*

For anyone, turning a decade older is something of importance. For some, the event threatens to send a long-lost teenager into the depths of despair. For others, it is the exciting climax to an already full and happy life. For me, it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience I will never forget.

As I stepped into the backseat of the car, I knew a birthday surprise awaited me. I tried to make sense of the twists and turns the car was taking, followed by my siblings' claims that I would not know where we were going. The blindfold started falling, and I quickly scrunched my eyes to make sure I would not ruin the surprise. When we finally arrived at the chosen destination, I scrambled out of the car with the excitement of a five year old. My heart raced when I was told the blindfold could be taken off, and as I frantically tore the piece of fabric away, I almost fell in amazement at the sight before me. A castle! The Kiefer Castle! Only steps away from reach. For years I have admired this castle in Kiefer, Oklahoma—yearning to be let inside—rumors of the owner being an insane Russian convict only adding to the mystery of the structure. I had even gone as far as saying that my future husband would have to try everything he could to get me inside it. The rumors were too much for me—the outside too beautiful. Who would be bold enough to paint every panel a different hue of bright, magnificent colors? Who would take the time to handcraft the wooden accents adorning the multiple facets of the house? Why would anyone build a castle as his or her home? What did the interior look like? No one was let inside—not even the news reporters who wandered up the mile-long driveway that coincidentally covered the man-made moat. How could we be standing here? I gazed around the property in astonishment as my brother and sister led me to the door. Knock, knock, knock. No answer. Memories of the Russian convict story circled our thoughts. Knock, knock, knock again. No answer. “Maybe we should try another door,” I suggested. After many unsuccessful attempts at entry, we suddenly heard a dog barking. Scared that the owner would be angry with us for trespassing, I tentatively asked if we should leave. “No,” my brother firmly answered, “He said he would give us a tour at this time today.” Slowly, a door near us opened, and a middle-aged man with a gray

beard peered around the corner. Explanations were given and greetings made. We were inside the house. “I normally don’t let anyone in here,” the castle owner stated in a you-better-watch-out tone, “because it is mostly unfinished. You’ll have to be very, very careful during the tour.”

The first area he showed us was his and his wife’s living quarters. Where there was plain, plaid furniture sitting around the room, I saw the thrones of kings and queens. And the unusual number of cacti decorating the space was an intriguing subject to stir the imagination into thinking of an infinite number of tortuous possibilities. We treacherously made our way up stairs of unfinished wood and missing banisters—destroyed in epic battles, no doubt—only to discover a myriad of winding rooms. Most areas were adorned with windows of various shapes and sizes—perfect for the visit from a knight in shining armor. “This is the back balcony,” the king of the house said as he held open a door. Out we stepped onto rotted boards that transported us into another realm. To my left was the roof of the rest of the house—the shape being almost the same as a Hershey’s kiss. Windows were rounded towards the sky in one part—revealing the promise of some kind of atrium within its walls. Pointed turrets capped the various tips of the roof, accompanied by small white balconies encircling little passageways that led onto it. The inlay of the underneath side of one of the balconies was intricate, complete with purple and yellow slivers of wood that created a starburst sun. At that moment—looking out onto the rolling hills of pastureland framed against a blue-black sky—we were infinite.

Back inside the magnificent manor, we continued our course through the maze of marvel. Paddlefoot, the majestic Labrador and respected confidant in the kingdom, led the way through the levels of stairs—much like a general does when leading his platoon. Up and down we marched, entering every space with refreshed surprise and amazement. Where wooden frames and drywall stood, I saw battles being fought and won. And fought and lost. Horses galloped across the wall—jumping over the petty obstacles of windows and doors. On the opposite wall, great victory feasts were held in a gold-inlayed banquet hall where the kitchen staff created such delicacies as roasted pheasant and pistachio ice cream. All of these

visions I saw while staring at the blank walls of potential. I dared not let disappointment of unfinished rooms cloud my thoughts. The castle extraordinaire shared his plans for each space with us. Here a library would be built, there a stargazing room. And in the very back corner room, well, that was still to be decided. Being the first people outside of his family to tour the castle house, we had an important obligation to uphold. We encouraged his process, applauded his expertise, and delighted in his excitement for his home. An insane Russian convict was not the man standing before

us, although his eccentricity must not be overlooked. Any man who has built a castle to live in cannot be disrespected so much as to be called "normal."

Indeed, I suppose anyone who dreams of touring someone's house for years on end cannot actually be called "normal." In fact, anyone who dared enter the said house after hearing ghastly rumors about the structure and its inhabitants should not be called "normal." However, for a young lass turning twenty, it was the perfect adventure.





COLLAR BLIND


by Makenzie Skinner

The sound of the alarm goes off. It is one o'clock in the morning. A man drags himself out of bed and to his closet where he puts on his emblem-embossed polo for the day and heads off to work. Even in the Arizona climate, the morning temperature is no higher than forty-five degrees. It may be cold, but the task must be accomplished before the world awakes in a mere six hours. It is not a rousing job. It is not the job that corporate America covets, but it is an important job. It is necessary to the everyday life of people.

One drive turns into another as the man arrives at his workplace and trades in his Dodge Ram 4x4 for a box truck showcasing the word Holsom on its side. Unlikely as it is that people will see the moving advertisement at this early hour, there is a need for the size of the truck, which has the ability to carry enough bread to stock the shelves of anywhere from twenty to fifty stores. This man has to face the cold at each store, and when he is in the store, he takes care to place each loaf right side up to where customers will see the emblem.

Unlike the other men on their bread routes, he meticulously folds the excess plastic so it sits under the loaf, taking pride in his work. This job is his world for that moment. His real world is at home sleeping soundlessly in their beds. When a person asks him what he "does for a living," and he replies, "I drive a bread route," he usually receives a look that reveals a hint of sorrow and discomfiture at his not holding a prestigious job. Even with these responses, he is fine. He can take any look or remark when he thinks of his family. This job is the way he provides for the ones he loves. He harbors no shame for his job knowing the purpose it serves in the scheme of his life.

No one notices, is even aware, that this man is awake and driving a truck on the empty morning streets. Pedestrians arrive in waves to the supermarket to obtain the supplies they will need in their everyday lives. They have no idea of the process that goes into the plastic wrapped package of baked wheat they hold in their hands, nor do they care. They have more important things to do. They have an office to make their way to. They



With Everything
Yubi Lee
Photography

He can take any look or remark when he thinks of his family. This job is the way he provides for the ones he loves.

have stacks of bookwork that need to be completed in order for America to thrive. They have to be dressed in their Sunday best, regularly, to sit in a tiny cubicle amidst the countless other cubicles all organized in one towering building.

The last thing that passes through one of these businessmen's minds is the process that goes into the bread with which they make their children's sandwich. To them, it is merely a convenience they can obtain with the money they have spent all day at the office earning. These people sitting in their offices are the men and women who people aspire to be. The astute scholar struggles his way through educational obstacles to become one of these people.

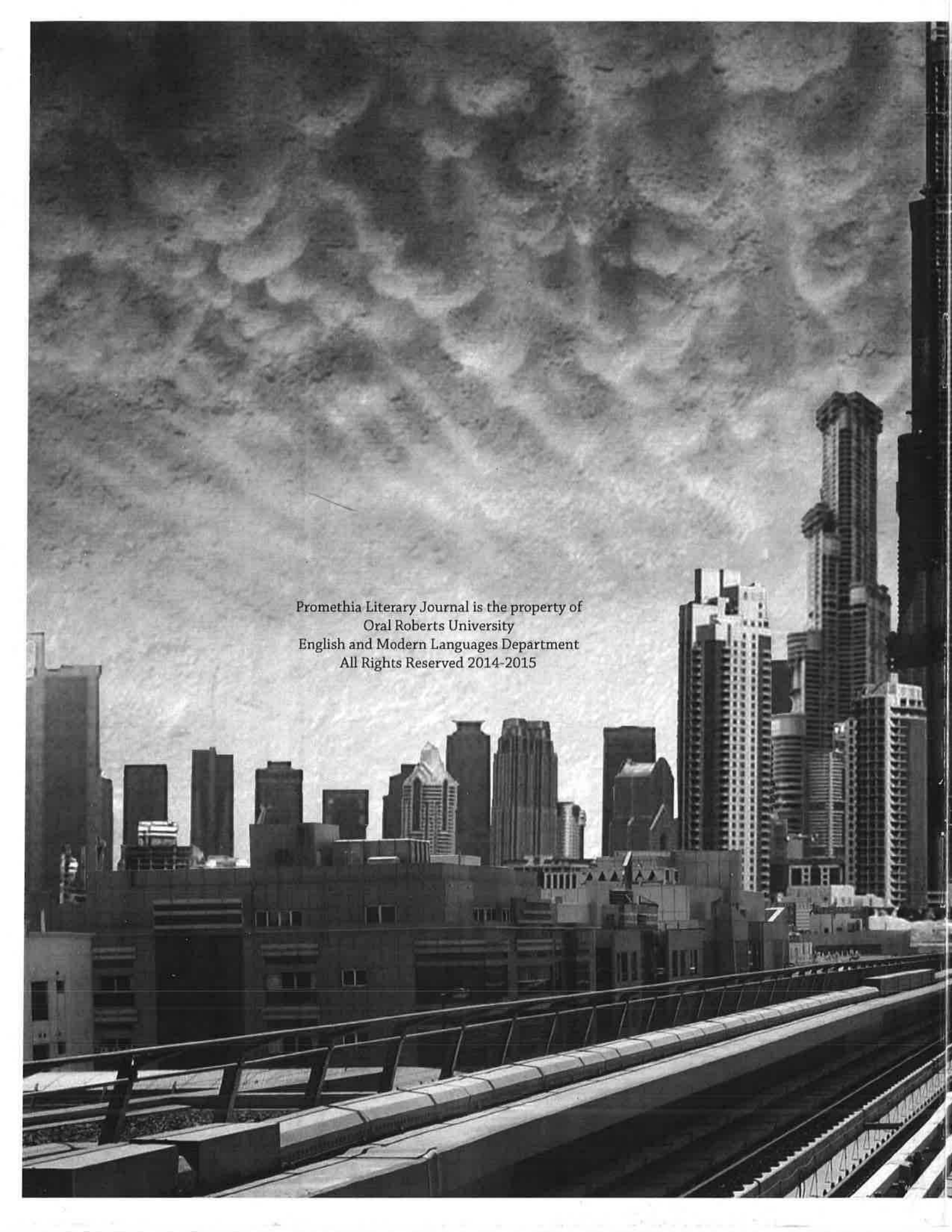
The very idea of making it through the university to not make it in the corporate world is a rejecting sting of the commercial wasp. To obtain the treasure of an education and not be greeted by the promises due them is failure. Their minds do not see beyond one moment's rejection. The fulfillment of the American dream is so close at hand they can almost taste it. They do not realize the man laboring over his bread route embodies that dream as much as they do. The American dream thrives on a person's ability to make something out of nothing. Entering the corporate world or working the

McDonald's drive-through window is irrelevant to the attainment of the American dream. All jobs must be done for the well-oiled machine of society to function properly.

Chances are that these businessmen will never meet the farmer who plows wheat all day to provide them with bread. The white-collared man may never physically meet the blue, but that does not mean the two do not interact. Almost every interaction in the industrial, business world is an interaction of the white meeting the blue.

As the loaf of bread leaves the hands of the man stocking the shelves, it prepares to enter the hands of someone new. It is only irony that befalls a loaf of bread becoming a figurative bridge. It links the man from whose hands it leaves to the hands of the corporate man wanting a mere sandwich.

The man returns home from his bread route, ready to take his children to school. He has not finished his work for the day. He has only just started it. He must live his life as a father, taking naps while his children are gone, so that he can spend precious hours with them when they return home from school. He smiles as he pulls into his driveway knowing that the work he did, his accomplishments today, though not esteemed, are important.



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