

# tuesday

MAGAZINE



“THE BEST-LOOKING  
PUBLICATION AT HARVARD,

PRINTED ON HEAVY PAPER AND SET IN GORGEOUS, CLEAR TYPE

... A POPULIST ALTERNATIVE  
TO THE OBSCURE THAT WELCOMES THE GENERAL PUBLIC.”

- *The Harvard Crimson's Fifteen Minutes*

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**Drawing II**  
**Kayla Escobedo**  
*Marker on paper*  
8.5" x 11"

# The Ballad of Ari Brenner

FICTION | MANUEL MORONE

That kid, oh man, never appreciated me. He's so ungrateful after I taught him everything he knows. He acts like he climbed up all by himself. I didn't coach the guy to think he was better than me, that's for sure.

I knew that the kid was a fighter since the time I saw him slap away the swimming noodles I would shove in his face while he slept. He got lucky that I chose him. I was the best coach money could buy, and how much did I charge him? Nothing! Granted I stole out of his piggy bank every other weekend, but I spent half of that on cocktail parties I invited him to.

He hung me out to dry, but I'll gladly say he's the best fighter I ever met. Maybe I did bring him along too fast, but he got the hang of it eventually. "Remember, Ari, don't tell anyone you're twelve or they'll disqualify us." The kid had what every coach dreams about: a killer instinct and facial hair that grew very early on in puberty.

"Ari, keep your gloves up!"

"Stop punching me! Why are you at recess?"

Every kid in junior high needs some time to go out and make friends without having his coach whispering pump-up music in his ear, and after that episode I respected the kid's space. I only talked to him in the classes where he sat by the window.

He was one of those fighters who's shy out of the ring, but you should have seen him that week when I paid a girl at his school to be his girlfriend. Of course, after that week was over, she left him. When I told Ari, he wouldn't stop talking about how she was going to tell everyone

that I paid her and that now he'd never have a girlfriend. But you know how it is with Ari; it's always my fault.

You try and try and look what happens. All those times I paid for him to come to the strip club when he was in junior high, and now the kid is twenty-three and won't even speak to me. Every time I send him corn from the field I

**“Maybe I wasn't the best father. Fine. But my own children didn't need me anyway... Point is, Ari was like a son to me. The son I always had but better.”**

used to make him plow he just shakes me off. Every time I find out what his new phone number is, he acts like he doesn't even know me:

"Kid! When you were in your prime, you coulda taken the title twenty times over. If you just woulda stuck with me!"

"NO! I went to college and now I design book covers. Stop calling. Stop sending grip tape. Stop trying to win me over with hookers. It's over."

Maybe I wasn't the best father. Fine. But my real children didn't need me that much anyway. One's a social worker and one's doing something that doesn't involve any athletic talent. Point is, Ari was like a son to me. The son I always had but better. ■

# Deep Song

POETRY | JUSTIN WYMER

like cherubs drowning.

wet cinnamon  
on the hair of a girl

who has always feared  
the taste of  
her own hands.

the teal open  
mouth of an omega,  
inked between the ribs of her

the distinction between  
them a narrow-lit blur of  
flesh-

tinged lace caught under  
the shellacked nails of her,

the loud crushed pull of  
mahogany silks, her

legs bodiless beneath  
those unprovoked out-  
bursts of breath

barely holding in  
their throatfuls of beads,  
the tiny pinched dec-  
orations in cloth-

currents. but you  
would have me focus--still--on  
the slow-changing syntaxes

of her hair, shell  
of fuchsia bequeathing moon-  
tinctures. as if skin

should not uncloset its  
gates to let re-exit  
silks.

as if diction should  
suddenly in-  
fuse the eye,

then cower back  
into nerves like timid  
floral cinders.

— *Justin Wymer is a member of staff writers.*

# What Happened to Me Today (Wednesday)

FROM THE NOTEBOOKS | MARIA XIA

I left my ID card in the library. I left it at the bar, in the cafe. When I went to the next library to pick up a book, I realized I had left my card, so I went back. Back at the first library, the guard did not let me in to get my card because I did not have a card. He said I could get a pass from the other library, the one I had just returned from. I did not want to go back, because my shoes were uncomfortable. I asked a passing card holder to sign me in. The guard said I could not be signed in, because he knew I was a student. I asked him how he knew I was a student. He said I had just told him. I said, if I am a student, then you should let me into the library. He said he could not do that. He said I would have to go back to the other library to get a pass. I did not want to go back to that library, because I was wearing the shoes. I waited. Then I went to the other library to get a pass. I was right about the shoes. I hated to hear them clicking on the ground.



**Untitled**  
**Scott Roben**  
*Oil on canvas*  
24"x36"

# Social Science

FICTION | LOUIS EVANS

It is the early morning. A man, dressed in a suit, walks alone to the bus. His pleasant sense of solitude grows slowly more desolate. He sighs. A researcher, hidden in the tree across the street, observes this sigh through binoculars. He makes a note of it.

A woman enters her own bedroom, in her own house. She is, for one moment, alone. Knowing that her family will not even bother to listen, she allows herself to begin sobbing, quietly, still restrained by a sense of propriety she can neither define nor defend.

A researcher, hidden in her dresser, listens carefully. With a precision stopwatch, he measures the time between her sobs.

A man, a high-ranking manager, masturbates violently in the single-occupancy handicapped bathroom near his office. As he ejaculates, he screams as if in pain. Afterwards, he weeps openly for several minutes.

A researcher, disguised as a cockroach,

notices this turn of events. Later on the man is asked in a survey by a second researcher whether he has ever done such a thing. He lies glibly, smoothly. "Of course not."

dream journal is a researcher. So was the shadow in his dream.

Alone, late at night, the head researcher of the study consults and compiles her notes by the light of a

“His dream journal is a **Re-  
searcher**. So was the  
shadow in his **Dream**.”

The second researcher looks at him with disappointed eyes.

Late at night, a small child sneaks into her own back yard. She pulls off her clothes and steps carefully into the backyard pool, which glows an eerie blue. She floats atop her own reflection, naked in the water, and asks herself what it will be like to be a woman.

No researcher is needed to observe this. It is known already.

A man dreams of walking down an endless corridor, pursued only by his shadow. He considers opening one of the doors to either side, but knows that he will find an identical corridor behind it. He knows this because he has dreamed this dream before. He is not afraid, not even of his shadow, which seems to be gaining on him.

When he awakes, he writes this brief description in his dream journal. His

solitary desk lamp. The clock ticks by, shaving away seconds of sleep that the head researcher will regret missing. She reaches the end of the compiled notes, and with barely a hesitation, begins to record her own feelings, confronted by these stories. And then her own feelings about recording her feelings.

This is poor experimental procedure. Later, she would be censured. But the bulb of the lamp is another researcher, and its findings prove most useful.

A man, sitting on a train, reads this document. The train is full, and its rattle and sway causes his fellow passengers to bump into him. Nevertheless, while reading, he is completely alone. He finds himself intrigued, yet distressed, by the research model described. A single bead of sweat forms unnoticed where his neck meets his jaw, and snakes down to hide itself inside his collar. Then he reaches this passage. Recognizing the format of these vignettes, he slowly turns to look behind himself.

Of course, he sees nothing. ■

— *Louis Evans is a member of staff writers.*

# Cocktail Party Effect

FICTION | MAX ELIAS SCHULMAN

Walter's in a heavy stew and he knows it, fit to trample daffodils and kick over wet-floor signs. In the shower he can feel it settling over everything in thick sullen spirals, from the dim prenatal glow through the curtain to the doctor's office stink of antiseptic still clinging to his hair and skin. He scrubs his face tender with the limp brown washcloth, lingering back-and-forth on the ears but it's no use. His knuckle has stopped oozing blood, thank God, but his whole right hand feels swollen and misshapen. In the vague distance beyond the shower curtain Marie is airing grievances—mostly to herself. Making known the advancing hour. He gives himself a leisurely count to thirty before turning off the water.

Walter's right knee is persistently stiff and he wavers for more than a second before making the final hop-skip over the side of the tub and regaining his balance, toes spilling off the bathmat to touch damp callus to the clammy tile. Drying himself means a long process that he doesn't quite have the energy to complete, dragging a green paisley towel across his paunch and tired limbs. Dripping and pale he stands like a boxer keen for the fight, weight spread evenly, one arm slack by his side as he studies the hard kernel of molded plastic in his moist palm. A hearing aid's a strange unnatural thing. Inert and synthetic but cast in weirdly human curves. It's built to violate sanctities, to thrust into crannies never meant to be filled.

Marie comes bustling through the open door with red nails extended toward her perfume, heels stabbing click-click-

click on the bathroom tile. He feels uneasy standing wet and naked next to her full evening gown getup and before he knows why he's got it hidden tightly under bruised knuckles. She doesn't notice and he heads for the bedroom. "Going to be late," she says in half-accusatory singsong between eyeliner strokes. He doesn't argue.

“This will be first of many nights he ends up sitting alone very close to the stereo speakers.”

They are. He's still combing down his hair waiting on the Andersons' patio when Lily answers the doorbell, revealing the old bifocals-and-menopause crowd in full swing. She accepts the proffered cabernet graciously and embraces bubbly Marie but gives Walter the slightest skeptical look that immediately tells him she knows, that everyone must. Lily ushers them through the immaculate den and into the living room.

Ah, now. He ducks and rounds a corner after catching Jane Horovitz's eyes needling him with silent loathing. Marie elbows his side to let him know he'll hear about this later and floats out beaming and oblivious to join Jane's circle. A damned small town. They should have moved years ago, he could have taken the job upstate. Thank God, the good Dr. Horovitz himself doesn't seem to have been able to make it tonight. That eye must be swelling up pretty good by now. For support Jane has brought along

the oldest daughter, home from college in England. Dalia? Dana?

Marie's bewilderment and Jane's hostility feed off each other. Walter can't watch any longer so he visits the bar and then wanders. The Andersons' is perhaps a nicer house than theirs—smaller but more modern, tasteful, Chopin spilling into the ambience from some other room.

He runs through a few iterations of the same tired conversation but navigating these hostile waters only wearies him. This will be the first of many nights he ends up sitting alone very close to the stereo speakers, staring into his drink or leafing through coffee table literature. Martyring himself to save

the party.

"You're the man who beat up my father."

It's almost exactly Jane's voice and Walter's unthinkingly bracing himself to face the harpy herself, but of course it's the daughter back from England, standing there plump and blonde and young with her black skirt and martini glass. He resists an absurd urge to get belligerent here, deny everything, explain it all away. "Well, I'm sorry."

"No don't be, don't waste it on me, it's my mother who wants to call the police right now. All I am is intrigued, I suppose. I expected someone younger." The words spill out a little fast and she pops an olive in her mouth.

"I hit a doctor. Once. You exaggerate my exploits."

"What made you do it, Mr. Marshall?"  
"Please. Walter."

"All right, Walter. Call me Deborah."  
"He didn't say?"

“Daddy has a funny sense of privacy about these things. He wouldn’t even let Mother tell the Andersons why he wasn’t coming.”

She’s not pretty. There’s a bitter wit in Deborah’s expression but she has her father’s too-broad forehead and sad dark circles like third eyelids. He can’t keep his eyes off her. It’s not exactly sexual. Walter decides it’s her voice. He could cast radio plays and run phone sex lines with that smooth precision, that faint affected Britishness.

She’s still here for some reason and at last he works a moist hand into his pocket and fishes out the hearing aid. “It’s not cancer. It’s not even in my ear,” flicking his right earlobe, “it’s in my brain. Some sort of neurodegenerative disorder, I forget the name. He said full deafness in six months and white matter damage before that. Dementia within a year. Vegetative state likely in two. I asked him to stop talking and he wouldn’t. I don’t have a better explanation.”

Odd pauses in her syllables now. It’s clearly her first unscripted line. “Have you told your wife?”

Walter laughs, a raucous bark of more genuine amusement than he’s been able to muster in a while. He sees Marie’s face snap towards him across the room, flushed but at ease. He could swear she flashes him a smile. He smiles back. He feels as if a persistent pain has just winked out without him noticing. The Horovitz girl is tracing the edge of her glass now waiting for Walter to excuse himself and he obliges. He downs his drink and for

the first time he manages to work the monster into his ear canal without wanting to vomit. Steps through the open backdoor hands jammed into pockets like an overgrown twelve-year-old and with that jaunt in his step he paces the Andersons’ manicured lawn. It’s a nice night. He thinks he says this aloud but maybe that’s just it magnifying the whisper.

As he works it out again Walter can feel the night sighing back to normal. The hum of the freeway fades with the hoarse cicadas and the tousled willows into a warm mellow summer sound vibrating in his feet and on his skin. He opens his hand and lets the breeze grab at his fingers tracing new circles in the air. He lifts

“He opens his hand and lets the breeze grab at his fingers tracing new circles in the air.”

a scuffed loafer and smashes it against the thing on the patio, again, an undignified wild stomping that leaves him off balance and panting, tugging at a chafing collar as his breath returns. He stoops with newly throbbing fingers to gather up the tiny wreckage of the thing. Plastic splinters and bits of wire are spread like a miniature plane crash on the flat warm plain of the Andersons’ terracotta. He wonders if the girl is watching through the doorway.

He walks back inside jacket under his arm and in a single motion casts his handful of junk into the waiting flowerpot and loops an arm around smiling Marie’s

waist. She’s still laughing as Walter leads her firmly to the stereo and stoops with her hand still tightly clasped in his. Her eyes are prettier than he often thinks to remember, a sunlight-on-rhododendrons green that she tries to hide sometimes behind sunglass lenses as if embarrassed by the attention.

It’s late. Walter’s stiffest, puffiest finger is on the stereo volume dial and he starts it spinning clockwise at the moment he begins his speech so he can’t be sure where his words turn incomprehensible. But what he’s trying to say is that he has something very important if only she’ll let him explain, that there’s rough patches all around ahead and behind but just now

is looking all right. Her smile has become tight-lipped and antiseptic and those green green irises are skating back and forth like skittish insects as she tries to pull away. He forces

her fingers over his wounded knuckles in a manic attempt to make her understand. The noise rises like a flood and the evening’s eyes drift magnetically toward the Marshalls, Walter on one knee and standing Marie livid now, and the strains of Brahms swell to fill the house with a thunderous never-heard roar. ■

— *Max Elias Schulman is a member of staff writers.*

# again

POETRY | DEVI LOCKWOOD

see it all through a telescope  
the way my sister tip taps goodnight into my back  
in fingertips and softer breaths as she falls asleep at my side  
yes i am way up there above the bunk bed  
and things are small and simple  
she exhales blue and dreams of a stampede of elephants  
fingers tighten around me  
we are closest in silence  
when the house is all dark and sighs to itself  
dryer rumble tumbling in the basement  
and my mother sings lullabies to calm the youngest  
two plastered walls away  
i remember big friendly giants and the alphabet song  
how words seemed less than important and everything at once  
one summer i fell in love with a sentence  
the period stretching on and on and never  
ever stopping, at the window of a darkened room  
i declined a kiss, and again at the porch stoop  
the following evening, this was not my country  
the dirt crumbled into zigzags i didn't recognize  
such dry heat - the best sunsets  
the most unfamiliar stars  
on most nights we dressed up as dragons for supper  
to sit at long long tables in the hall that serves military men  
during the school year, eating rice and unpronounceable oddities  
but i recognized the texture of oatmeal in my bowl  
and the way things just melt into one another  
in the morning, maybe i'm still sitting beneath the tree  
that fed me in spoonfuls, twigs and leaves and words that poured  
into one another without breaks  
the idea of leaves above and scratchy blanked below  
and nothing to worry about but letters and pages  
and how ever they might get together

— *Devi Lockwood is a member of staff writers.*



**My First Car**  
**Anna Murphy**

*Youtube Video, 5 minutes*

*Like running over a trope five times and leaving it in the parking lot, but affectionately*





<http://youtube.com/K5eYHT5ib8I>

# Peru

FROM THE NOTEBOOK | LEAH SCHECTER

In Peru my blood is spicy, marinated with ají peppers. The ají is a waxy, red vegetable that burns hotter than embers. It is chopped and cooked with fresh onions, garlic, and tomatoes, and then blended and cooled to make a sauce that can be added to almost any dish. White rice and vegetables is a staple meal in Peru, and I have never seen it served without the reddish-orange ají sauce that screams down my throat. Ají can adorn fish, pasta, and of over three thousand species of potato native to Peru. I eat so much of this pepper that I can feel it tingling in my stomach for hours after a meal.

In Peru my blood is thicker, trying to pump as much oxygen as the atmosphere provides in the Andes Mountains. In Lima, there

is plenty of oxygen available. Lima grows out of the coast of Peru, not in the high peaks. The city spreads each year, slowly reaching out its cables of industry and highways of modernization to abandoned towns and villages. There is little oxygen available in the small city of Ayacucho, which sits at nine thousand feet above sea level, and I gasp and pant just climbing one flight of stairs. I fill my lungs until my ribcage aches, though, and my blood is cleansed.

As my blood grows thicker, I grow stronger, hiking the foothills of the Andes. There is a cross at the top of a mountain on the edge of Ayacucho. La Cruz. The first time I hiked there, my blood was too thin. Just walking up the steep street made my head spin. My lungs were stale sponges, and no oxygen

reached my muscles. By the time I reached the stairs I was already sweating. Turquoise stairs start where the street ends and continue until the mountain's halfway point. There are three flights, straight up, followed by dirt paths. The first flight of stairs runs past apartment buildings, gardens, paved roads. The last flight draws a line through mud huts with tin roofs. Old women pass me easily carrying heavy sacks of grains and leading cattle, while I concentrate

the street. The women in the market ask me how old I am and then exclaim that I am so very tall. I laugh and smile because they don't see that I am getting even taller. Each day I grow at least an inch. When I wash my clothes and hang them to dry on the roof, I grow a little. When I catch a bus with friends to go to a neighboring city, I grow a bit. I walk around the town without getting lost, and I grow some more. At the end of six weeks, the townspeople still stare at my

height. They are not accustomed to seeing tall Americans. They don't see that I am even taller than I once was.

It's not just my height that changes. Dust coats my skin, and I don't think it will ever leave. Even after I take a shower, I feel chalky. My skin dries out so much

that little red pricks appear when I move my hands because the skin at my knuckles is tearing. I prefer this to my alternative, though. Ayacucho has two seasons: dry and rainy. The Northern Hemisphere's summer is their dry season and winter is their rainy season. This is a complete dichotomy in Ayacucho. There can be no rain for six months, and then just when the soil has dried completely, turned to dust, and floated away on a breeze, downpours wash away entire mountainsides each day for the rest of the year. It is a harsh cycle, from one extreme to the next. I experienced the dry season, and while my dehydrated skin may have cracked, at least the sun was shining.

In Ayacucho, my eyes grow deeper.

“In Peru my blood is thicker, trying to pump as much oxygen as the atmosphere provides in the Andes Mountains.”

on not fainting. I can see the cross a long time before I reach it. It peeks out at me after every turn, teasing me, looking farther away each time. When I touch it, two hours later, I feel like I am on top of the world. A cross no bigger than my fingernail from the main square now stretches fifty feet into the sky. I make the journey to touch the cross eight times, and by the eighth I can hike up the mountain quickly without losing my breath. I feel strong. At night I can see the cross, lit up on the side of the mountain, the brightest light in the whole city.

I grow taller over the six weeks I am in Peru. I am tall in the United States, but I am a giant in Peru. Initially, I am a foot taller than the people around me. Peruvians stare at me when I walk down

I work with about fifteen children at the Neri García center for street kids. The center is a small building next to a market, and it is for boys and girls who work in the market with their parents. These children range in age from ten to fifteen, and I help them with homework. We read books, learn long division, joke, play soccer, and paint masks. They call me “Profesora” as they run into the center with empty metal carts that carried market goods a few hours before. Alfredo jumps through the door, smiling, at nine. I know that he wakes up at four in the morning so that he can help his parents before he comes to the

center to do homework and rest before school. Miguel works in the market, too, but tells me one day that he wants to grow up to be an engineer. Edison, who I only see once in a while, is an artist, the best drawer of the group, and I teach him about linear perspective. My eyes are brown, not as light as my sister’s honey colored eyes. They are brown, but they are not as they once were. Now they are different for having seen Miguel, Yanet, Alfredo, and Yover. Deeper for having reflected Edison, Sylvia, José Luis, and all of the bright-eyed children I met at Neri García.

Back in Lima, one last time before

returning to the States, my heart breaks and mends and breaks. I feel contaminated here, surrounded by McDonalds and highways and five star hotels. I miss the clean dust of Ayacucho already. I board the plane that will take me back to my home, and I think how strange it is to leave a place that now contains a part of me. A part of me is still in Peru, on the top of the mountain, and a part of Peru lives on somewhere inside me. I hope my blood stays a little spicy. ■

— Leah Schechter is a member of staff writers.



**Cataclysm II**  
**Shannon Mulshine**  
*Silkscreen print on paper*



**By the Sea**  
**Alexandra Libby**  
*Oil on canvas*  
36" x 24"

# Crises of Varying Proportions

FICTION | VICTORIA BAENA

There's a street off that main Avenida Santa Fe, Junín. Walk down a block or so and there will be a sad old galería to the left - windows mostly shuttered, echoes on the marble floor. It doesn't seem to faze Gonzalo the cobbler. (The English word is outdated, too quaint. Spanish zapatero is better - the shoe-man.) Cross the threshold of the rent-a-space and it is his territory. Oxfords, dress shoes, heels, and boots litter the floor and perch precariously on the shelves around him, witnesses and testaments of his trade. Gonzalo sits crouched on a stool in the center. Skinny, graying, his leathery skin matching the consistency of the loafer in his hands. He keeps one eye on the shoe and the other on the grainy television propped on a side table. Argentina vs. Uruguay, fútbol.

Gonzalo glances at me warily as I walk in, a tall yanqui, not a regular. It doesn't take him long to understand why I'm here - I'm standing lopsided with the sole of my boot halfway off. I have hobbled and flapped up miles (kilometers?) of cobblestone streets, or it seems like it. I look ridiculous. You'll need that fixed, he says, leave it with me.

My plane leaves tonight and all my bags are in storage at the bus station, I explain. It's a crisis situation.

Stay here, then. It'll be an hour or so.

I take a seat on a stool he pulls out for me, gingerly removing the shoeshine and leather cleaner and bottles that I, a novice, am at a loss to identify. He keeps working on the loafer. Our silence yanks the announcer's voice out of the background, tinny but confident. Uruguay scores and Gonzalo swears under his breath. Dismissing the game as unworthy of his further attention, he turns away from the screen and toward me.

You're not from here, are you. It's a statement not a question, an inevitable response if I have when I try to roll my r's. No I'm not, Philadelphia. Gonzalo has a cousin in Chicago. Diego Mansilla, do I

know him? No? It's a big country. Still, you never know. He left in the 90s when the government pegged the peso to the dollar. Changed everything. Cheaper to go to Disney World than to visit relatives down south. The world shrank, you could leave, travel anywhere but he stayed there. Because of a woman, of course, an American. They have three yanqui kids now. Have I met them? No, couldn't after 2001...

Examining the shoe one last time, Gonzalo sets it on the floor and motions to my boot. I pull it off and hand it to him,

“Stay here, then. It'll be an hour or so.”

sole flapping wanly. I don't blame him for the disparaging look he gives it. Apparently quality Argentine leather ranges in quality, who knew. Gonzalo grabs an unlabeled brownish bottle from his drawer and begins to coat the boots with its suspicious-smelling contents. Don't worry, he says, noticing me eye the operation. I know what I'm doing.

Anyway, he continues, couldn't after 2001. The puta madre government left us with nothing. All these stores were sacked - he gestures to the empty galería stalls around him. Mine too, who knows what they wanted with other people's shoes but it was the time.

I know something about this, Argentina's most recent crisis. The government froze its citizens' bank accounts and people were frantic. They started by sacking supermarkets, but eventually it was a free-for-all. Riots ruled the streets, teenagers carted plasma TVs out of electronics stores, giddy in desperation. Five presidents in a week but Argentines bounced back, they always seem to. Maybe it's why people seem to live in the present so well here - if the government has the power to nullify all your

savings, it's pointless to plan too far ahead.

Gonzalo keeps talking, telling me about recovering from the crisis, putting his shop back together. He hardly ever looks up at me, concentrating on the repair. I'm listening but wonder whether he cares if I am. He doesn't seem eager to elicit any response from me, although I'd rather just hear his stories. Maybe that's all he needs.

As he moves on to shining the boot a customer walks in, the first since I've been here. She's an elderly lady, impeccably dressed, each step she takes small and

precise. I've seen the type in the Buenos Aires streets. I assume she lives in Recoleta, the old-money barrio, where the embassies are. Gonzalo's shop straddles Recoleta and Abasto, gritty and colorful and working-class, its borders merging uneasily with the former and only arbitrarily defined if defined at all. The woman ignores me, the half-barefoot teenager on the stool irrelevant to her. The loafers are for her, for her husband rather. She picks them up and inspects them carefully. They'll measure up, Gonzalo isn't worried. She makes small talk with the zapatero. What about that fútbol game, my husband wants to kill the whole lot of them. Yes, yes, what a nightmare. The team's in crisis mode without Messi.

Meanwhile Gonzalo is finished with my boot. He hands it back to me and I pull it on. I can make it to the airport in time, I'm sure. He continues to talk with the elderly lady as I hand him fifty pesos. A deal. I pause on my way out, unsure whether to interrupt, give our conversation some sort of closure. Maybe I should but I've missed the moment, so I just smile, mouth thank you, and close the door gently as I leave. ■

# It is in the nets

POETRY | ADRIENNE ROSENBERG

It is all waterlessness,  
weighted, sticky,  
suspended in, un-  
able to roll down, a bead of water and  
peel away, grasped, released.  
Whales

have a fascination with human  
hands, can sense  
a long ancestry,  
prehistorically they swim  
to our painful momentary  
suspended selves,  
the clicking of our  
keyboards, clicking and clicking  
in the room, suspended,  
their noses (round—how embarrassing).  
it is all waterlessness, un-

able to roll down, release  
(webless/space/matter). The girl  
before the heavy door,  
as she reached became all  
loose skin and cartilage,  
the shadow of the whale-skeleton  
suspended, we  
see it intimately, the  
clicking of our keyboards, the  
reverberation of each  
cartilage, each cartilage-web,  
each vein-finger  
around my heart, (round  
—how unoriginal). Sticky,  
weighted. I

have a fascination  
with my human  
hands. They will become all  
loose skin and cartilage-web. I  
have always been good. I

have always been good at  
asking the questions. Is it  
the reminder of themselves? Is it  
the echo  
of something lost?  
Is it the need for touch or  
am I just human?  
The need for completion?  
Have you heard the clicking?  
The clicking that coral makes  
underwater? The clicking of our  
keyboards in the suspended  
stillness?



**Morgan**  
**Scott Roben**  
*Oil on canvas*  
48" x 48"

# Shameful Dreams

POETRY | JUSTIN WYMER

All the body's creaks fed into  
a single head. The history of  
my mouth wicking out:

Maiming the best ant so she couldn't carry.  
Cackling at the roan cry of Eros when he fails.  
When he swallows a rifle.

Naming every wrist Eve.  
Cracking a brief witchy madrigal first before  
tattooing portraits of people who could have been used.

Making love to a malnourished gypsy girl.  
And the men who refused to watch.  
And the ones who watched.

A crackling earth, swept clean of cardinals.

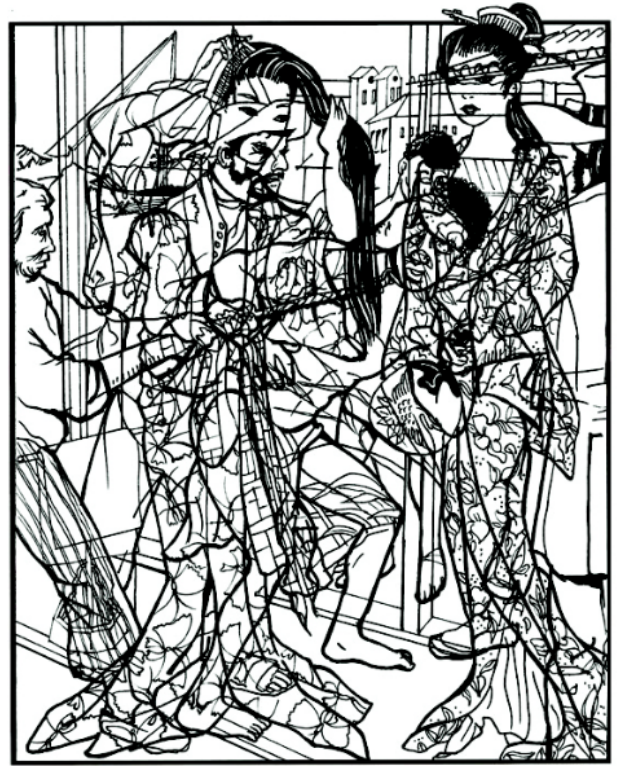
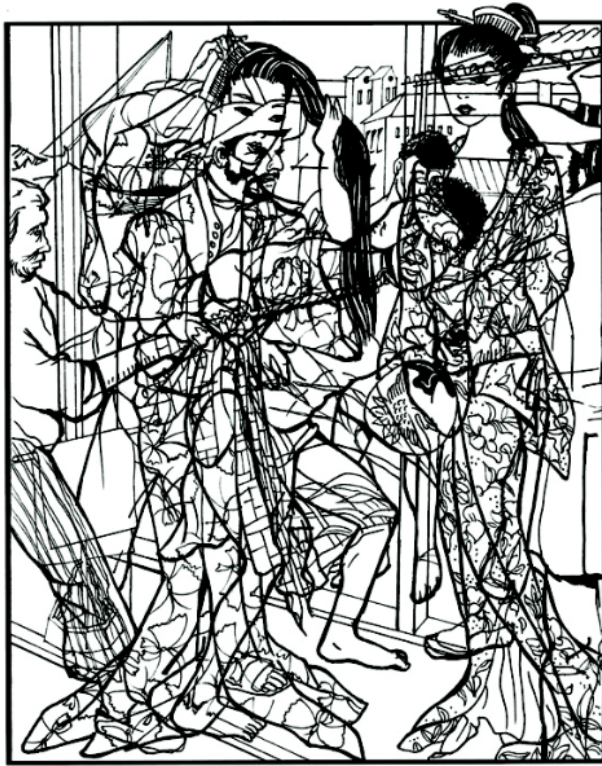
A premonition of Venice sin piedra, sangre flotando...la nuestra

And the baby, too—the one clothed in musty orchard grass,  
I mistaught him nakedness,  
each hour a different species of

which snakes in because I watch.

Angels, be kind, consider  
auctioning off lesser beasts.

— *Justin Wymer is a member of staff writers.*



**Biracial Coloring Book**  
**Ingrid Pierre**  
*Ink on paper*  
11" x 17"

# April 27, 2010

POETRY | JUSTIN WYMER

Counting the steady ticks  
Dyeing the clocktower's face – white, now  
    Sky, where can I find a

Watch-  
    coil stripped of tense – like a specific prayer  
shirring in-  
    ward in its shell, a time-  
capsule saving a photograph – of definite proportions –  
    (he cried twice that night, wanted four oranges and a glass)—

Detest the shatterable  
    watery hour when your hand seems just a hand – when

there is suction in each pore, too full, when you  
can no longer see past skin, phloem, vertigo, the lantern-panes –  
    you must touch some things and worship others—

more dangerous – when you can no longer see that  
    there is smoke issuing from the cuff-links of  
a besuited stranger, unidentified coils purring above

    the tibia of her bench, you are

lost, completely in the world

— *Justin Wymer is a member of staff writers.*

# Jaywalk

FICTION | XANTHIA TUCKER

Even though the woman was wearing sneakers and not a pair of those transparent jelly sandals that were all the rage in fourth grade but that my mom wouldn't let my sister wear because of her ankles, I could tell that she was curling and uncurling her toes to the beat of some obscure romantic song from the seventies that was playing in her head.

She was sitting at the counter by the window in this ice cream shop I had just popped into a few minutes before because my mouth was really dry. Sometimes my mouth gets really dry all of a sudden, even in cold weather. It's not genetic. It's just one of those things.

It's funny because my lips never get dry, even though I don't lick them. The last time I wore Chapstick or any shit like that I was probably in the third grade.

It's just the way my mouth works, I guess.

She was lucky to get the seat she did. The counter seats by the window are the best in the parlor, but she didn't even know it. She obviously wasn't a regular, because before she came in she basically spent a minute trying to open the door. There's this sign hanging on the handle that says to push, but anyone who's been here before knows you're actually supposed to pull.

It's a very exclusive establishment.

Come to think of it, though, it wasn't an ice cream parlor. It was actually a tea store. It's this tea shop I go to basically every weekend. I try to go at unpredictable hours.

But even though I accidentally said it was an ice cream parlor and not a tea place, I wasn't joking about it being a tricky spot for newcomers. It still has that

neat sign on the door.

The place is less season-specific than the ice cream stores around here. I guess hot ice cream in winter just doesn't sell as well as iced tea does in summer.

I guess I should apologize for accidentally lying to you like that. I actually am sorry. I don't know why I said it was an ice cream parlor. Sometimes you try to remember stuff but you want to remember it wrong, you want to do it quick and fast and not look back so it can just be over.

“Sometimes you try to remember stuff but you want to remember it wrong.”

But to be honest by now I'm practically puking on all this homespun wisdom crap.

The place was definitely a tea store, and that woman knew it. You could tell she came in specifically to get one of those clear pots of tea made of glass that shows everyone how dark you like your brew, so that she could put it right next to the trashy paperback romance novel she was reading. I don't know why she got her tea like that. It wasn't even that dark. It looked like she took the leaves out after twenty seconds or something.

And like I said the whole time she was reading her paperback she was curling her toes in time to some made-up seductive beat she probably grew up listening to because her mom stayed at home braiding keychains or lanyards or something, and they probably used to own a pet cockatiel, but when it died the house got so quiet they decided that any sound was better than none.

She was practically drooling all over

her denim skirt, but she was still being really careful not to actually drool because she had on this really bright lipstick that you could tell she had spent a lot of time putting on and didn't want to worry about touching up just yet. I guess the right word would be applying.

Honestly, though, she shouldn't have bothered, 'cause she had messed up the left side the second she started eating. There was this huge blot of clotted cream hanging on her upper lip. To make matters

worse, it wasn't just sitting there resting, it was actually mixing with the lipstick, and the more she chewed and drank her tea, the pinker it got. I couldn't absolutely tell from where

I was sitting, but the rim of her teacup was probably getting all greasy from the cosmetics and fat combo. I bet there were little clumps of cream floating on the surface.

Of course what this does is raise the question of why in the first place you would ever want to eat anything that had the word clotted in it. Think about it. The word makes anything sound instantly rancid and digestive. Like rennet. Just try it. Clotted dough. Clotted beets. See? Clotted soda. Clotted steak. Even clotted chocolate sounds disgusting.

I just realized I forgot to mention what she was eating in the first place. The place has this sign out front for these really bad crumpets that come with clotted cream and strawberry jam. It's another one of those newbie traps.

She didn't realize they were bad, though. It was really nauseating. Of course, I've never actually had the crumpets here. I've just seen other people order them. They have this sample plate in the display window by the cash register. That's

way more than enough for me.

I always wonder how often they replace those items. I mean, it's one thing when it's clothes or perfume or something like wine that gets better with age, or people or something or photographs, but when it's food it's a different story. In general, I don't like eating things that look the same just after they've been made as when they've been gathering the dust in some locked-up display case for the last two years. It's a thing I try to avoid as much as possible, in fact.

This woman had this trashy romance novel in front of her, and her weak tea and squeaking sneakers and pink clotted cream were all sort of moving together as she sat there just chewing and sipping and curling away like she was the most seductive and poetic person you ever saw, like

a character straight out of the book she was reading. Pretty soon, though, I realized it had been like fifteen minutes since the last time she turned a page. I thought either she was a really slow reader or the font must be really small. Or she was just re-reading the same horny detail over and over like it was hard to understand or something. I really doubt it, though.

Then I had this terrifying thought that maybe she was blind. Like maybe she was just pretending to be able to see because she wanted company, even if it was just with other blind tea-drinkers.

I felt really bad when I realized she might be a blind person. But I thought that if she was, at least she had somebody who had helped her put on her lipstick. Even though it was smeared now, it was really accurate at the beginning. You could tell someone had helped her put it on.

Before my grandpa died, he basically went blind for the last eight years of his life or so, and he definitely didn't have anyone around to help him except once when the landlord had to test the fire alarm, and the other time when my Boy Scout troop installed dial-up internet for our community service project. We had to put it in the bathroom 'cause that's the only place where there was an extra telephone jack. After that visit I always used

to think of him sitting on the toilet calling us at dinner time, or trying to remember the password to the Yahoo account we made him for his birthday. I don't know which is more disgusting.

It didn't end up being that big a deal, though, because his eyes got screwed over a few months later. It didn't matter even

“Then I had this terrifying thought that maybe she was blind.”

in the short run.

Also, another thing is that obviously my grandpa never wore lipstick, so it was hard to tell how he was doing and when he needed help.

When the woman finally did turn the page, after I had been sitting there feeling pretty guilty and sweating with my face really wet even though my mouth was still dry, she actually laughed out loud like one of those jerks in libraries who's telling everyone, yeah I might be in a library like you but I'm so lost in this book that I forgot I wasn't supposed to be making any noise, and can't you tell how much I just understand what Joyce is saying since I obviously find him not only legible but honestly just a funny guy? Just a real old big cheese?

Of course it's possible she was faking it. Like maybe she had learned to time her pages by counting to seventy in her head, and then laughing every two or three pages even though she had no clue what she was looking at. Maybe she was a really good actress.

I would feel pretty bad if that were the case.

There was this group of teenagers outside at the same time that was trying to cross the street from the other sidewalk. They were about to step off the curb and make a beeline for the shop door when

this ice cream truck whizzed by out of nowhere and nearly knocked down the shortest one, this surprisingly tall Asian girl who was wearing different colored rain boots.

The woman by the counter choked a little on her crumpet, or maybe over some especially explicit detail, and readjusted her chair.

By the time they regrouped the chance was gone. Someone on a bicycle rode by and cut them off, and then it was just your normal steady stream of impossible traffic and I knew all hope was lost for them. I mean, the Asian girl tried a few more times, but by the time everyone else

was ready to take a few steps some bus or whatever would come rolling along and the chance would be gone. The one time they actually had a decent shot at crossing, this taxi that had been idling for the last half hour pulled up in front of them because he thought they wanted a ride. The guy standing next to the Asian girl talked to him through the window for a few seconds and the taxi drove off, and they all got back in line formation with their heads moving left and right, even though it was a one-way street, sure that there was bound to be a break in the traffic soon and it was just a question of waiting it out.

That kind of stuff makes me really mad. You either cross the street or you don't. You either wait your turn or you go full steam ahead and don't look back. You can't do both.

It's like with my grandpa. You don't wait to get a modem until three months before you go blind and then expect people to feel sorry for you. Or with that lady. You can't wear super pink lipstick and then pretend to be so wrapped up in what you're reading that you don't notice the food hanging off your face.

Finally after ten more minutes I left the tea shop because the woman wasn't interesting and those kids wouldn't make up their minds. ■



**Tree Line (Caorle 3)**

**Julia Rooney**

*Oil on canvas*

60" X 48"

# Sweat

FICTION | STEVE STRICKLAND

Definitely should have brought deodorant, this always happens. Fucking sweat. The brown paper towels are wreaking havoc on your armpits and the sweat is still gushing out all over your dress shirt. Fuck, your armpits hurt. It would definitely be better to bleed than to be sweaty though sweat, the stain would be smaller and you could totally pass it off as a sports injury. If you put your jacket back on, you could cover up the stains, but that would mean opening up the floodgates on your face and you really don't want to want to walk around with sauna-face all night.

Your best friend walks in and wonders why your bitch ass has been in the bathroom for five fucking hours and reminds you that the dance doesn't last all goddamn night. You tell him to fuck off and pretend you have diarrhea so he leaves you alone. He says he'll meet you outside once your period is over. Bastard. Shit, why didn't you think of going outside where it was cooler? Whatever, you dab at your leper armpits one last time and head out to wind your way through the crowd.

Peering up at the disco ball in the middle of the dance floor, you think of all the other dances where you've gotten nervous as shit and ended up sitting with the guys outside. Your heartbeat catches up to the beat of the flashing lights and thumping music and you hurry outside. Hey, at least you haven't thrown up at all this time. It's the little things. Small victories.

The over-decorated gym looks just like all the ugly girls who tried too hard and have too much make up on. You can see your douche bag principal hitting

While their behavior seems aimless, even you know that their dance around each table of men has been carefully prepared for, planned, and rehearsed at least a

“Even you know that their dance around each table of men has been carefully prepared for, planned, and rehearsed.”

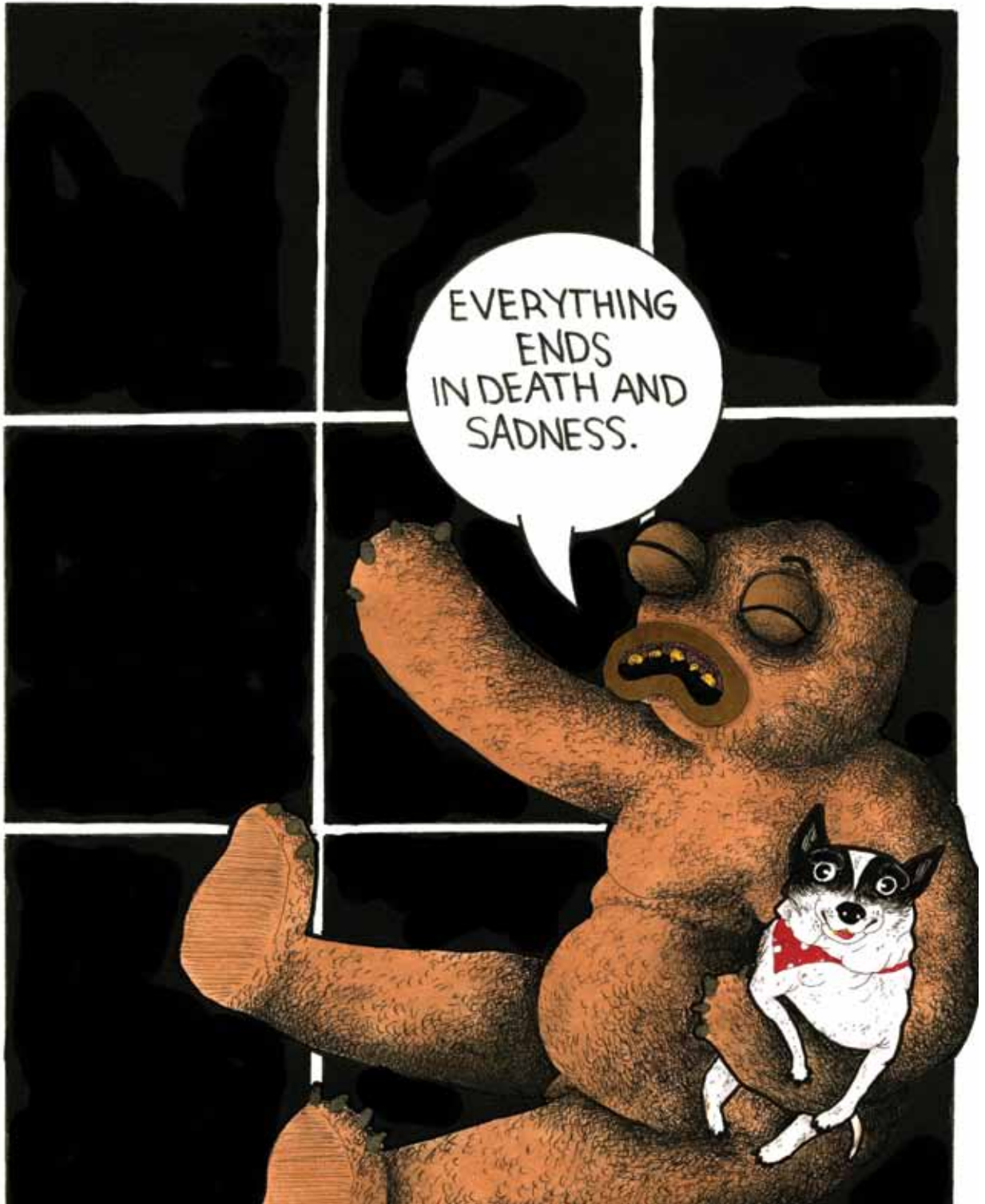
on your chaperone aunt whose presence eliminates any libido you possessed and leads you to determine that you are ready to go home. It's 9:30. You aren't sure if this is an excuse or the truth, but you really wish you were watching shitty Saturday night TV shows with your mom and dad, even if you do hate them. At least you wouldn't be sweating at home.

You find your friends outside sitting in a circle, no females in sight of course. They are debating who they should ask to dance even though they all know there is no way they will get the courage up to ask any of the attractive girls.

Herds of semi- to un-attractive girls flit around your table like schools of fish.

hundred times. You wonder if dances were this uncomfortable back when everybody waltzed and shit and grabbing a girl's hand was scandalous.

Easing back into your chair, you rate girls for about a half an hour with the guys until it dawns on you that your jaw is sore and you realize you've already gone through your whole pack of gum and most of a whole box of orange Tic Tacs. You sweat trying to get the last two Tic Tacs unstuck from the bottom of the box. ■



**Everything Ends in Death and Sadness**

**Kayla Escobedo**

*Ink and marker on paper*

*9" x 12"*

# Forgiveness

POETRY | LOUIS EVANS

As though emotions were odd, expensive clothes  
that one was constantly in the business of changing.  
As though there was some vast oak wardrobe,  
filled with glistening suits,  
and each morning he walked through it  
in milk-white silk pajamas  
labeled nothingness  
and forgetting.

— *Louis Evans is a member of staff writers.*



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