

nim·bus- (noun) 1. an aura or halo
surrounding a person or thing of
literary quality

Literary Editor	Alexandra Videll
Design Editor	Sarah Sutliff
Copy Editor	Misty Rosso
Assistant Editor	Zachary Weinstein
Staff	Michael Garamoni
	Lauren Katz
	Kelsey Pierce
	Sophie Sergiadis
	Andrew White
	Sophie Wohlers
Advisors	Professor Andy Needle

Letter from the Editor(s) :



"So, uh, Sarah."

"Yes my lovely beauty face, Alex?"

"We sorta have to put out a book this semester."

"Shut your fucking face."

"...I can't..."

"I hope everyone appreciates the meals and naptimes we have sacrificed to make this shit happen."

"Doubtful. Like three people read this thing. One of whom is my mother."

"Our boyfriends will read it... if we force them."

"Maybe yours will."

silence

"Just kidding. Mine totally will...I think."

"So, shall we tell our five devoted readers the inspiration for this issue? Or shall we make them wonder?"

"We should probably tell them, or five readers will become like 2. Or just my mother."

waves "Thanks Mrs. Videll!!!"

"Anyway. On a more serious note. This issue."

"This issue is our badass rebel

teen child (whereas last spring was our beauty queen)."

"Personally, I like the rebel one better. Her eyeliner is always flawless."

"Oh. See in my mind it was a dude. Black spiky hair and a name like Xander or something."

"Regardless, this kid really has mastered the perfect liquid line."

"Fair enough."

"Right. So this rebel child is kind of design-less. On purpose. Also we just really like typewriter font."

"And our [amazing] ex-editor in chief would never let us use it!!!! So this issue we are taking advantage of her absence *muahahahahahaha!!!!!!*."

"Uh, yeah. I guess we're kind of rebel children too...minus the eyeliner. I just can't for the life of me figure that shit out."

"I have black hair though! And I wear a leather jacket! Granted, it is actually plastic or polyurethane or whatever the hell they make those things out of... but still!"

"We're digressing again. Basically

we're seniors now and Charisse is gone and we like Courier. And we hope you do too. Actually I'm not so sure we care if you do...which could be why only 5 people are reading this."

"Hey! Let's stay positive. This issue has SO MANY pieces... more than last spring!"

"You're right. Which is why we need to thank everyone for submitting and keeping Nimbus afloat. We can't always just rely on a steady stream of caffeine and sarcasm."

"Or CAN we..." *twists moustache*

raises one eyebrow knowingly

"I love that the power of the written word allows me to have a moustache."

"Wait...you don't have a moustache? Awkward."

silence

"Yeah...so thanks, submitters! From me, Sarah, and Sarah's (fictional?) moustache."

"We hope you enjoy our brilliantly designed (by myself *bows*) anti-design issue of Nimbus!"

"Wait, I helped! I definitely helped."

"Drawing that back cover image doesn't count as design."

"YES IT DOES, SARAH. That drawing was INSPIRED."

"I don't even know what to say to that. Honest. You have rendered me

speechless."

"Lucky for you, we're out of space! Enjoy, Nimbus readers (all five of you)!"

"And the same goes to all you NEW Nimbus readers (all 2,000 of you)!" *crosses fingers* *knocks on wood* etc.*

"We'll see y'all next semester, if we haven't scared you away by then."

"So now without further ado, we present to you... the BEATNIK Issue!!!"

ALEX & Sarah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Blush 9

What I Remember About a Week In Portugal 10

Nunca me dejas 12

Pomegranate I 13

The Good Earth 14

Even A Butterfly Outranks A Mouse 20

Flight in the Early Morning 22

One Can Never Do The Rain Justice 24

Codeine 26

The Mirror 28

What I Remember About My Night In Venice 31

Colonization For Children 32

Grapes, a Found Poem 36

Things You Do If You Were a Slug 37

Saved 40

Shiver 42

	44	Doll Parts
46		Second Time's a Charm
	48	Underworld
50		My Second Attempt
	52	Supposed To
	55	Ripe
	57	Joy
	58	The Clouds
	61	New Teeth
62		Pomegranate II
	65	Thirteen
66		The Girl Across the Room
	71	Return

TABLE OF CONTENTS

All contents of the Nimbus Literary Arts Magazine are accepted by anonymous judging. Works are judged based on content, originality and craftsmanship. While we would like to accept and publish all works we receive, please keep in mind that our publication is like any other: we function by budgetary constraints as well as a lengthy editing process. If your work was not accepted this semester, it should not discourage you from submitting in the future. Please keep in mind that since Nimbus is an uncensored magazine, some content may not be appropriate for all readers. Thank You.







Blush

Sophie Sergiadis

I am a ball of hair
Please don't look at me
Not ready
I've got wrinkles in my blue cotton
And the knobbiest knees

I am a thud
A bunch of hasty, apologetic

Drippy

Paper towels

Bat wings
And a poorly stifled sneeze



What I Remember About a Week In Portugal

I feel like driftwood. And a
Rainbow. So much potential energy.
I am changed. Lagos changed me.
It swallowed me, consumed me.
I absorbed. Became. Electrical
charge. Current. In my veins. A
drug. A high so very high and
wild and humming I feel the come
down. I cry and I ache. I am so
full. All emotion & heartbeat &
connection and the world is rushing
in. This New World, this Old
World. Filling me to this bursting
point. Overflowing and gushing and
wet. Waves and sunlight crashing.
Dazzling. Shattering apart and
forming back together again
eternally. Ebb and flow.
Ocean. Peace.

Moments. They are moments.
Rainbows. Sagres is the Westernmost
point of Europe. Europe as a thing.
Cliffs. Just cliffs. So much more
than cliffs. The end of the world
they call(ed) it. The End of the

World. It doesn't stop there though. You don't. We don't as a human race a thinking thing believing in souls. We don't and we didn't reach out to those cliffs, walk to that edge. Lay a stone there (as we must) Look out at ocean and sky and that endless line. Truly believe it is the end and then just stop. Turn around and write folklore of the place. No. We, you, I, they see that line and do call it endless. We must reach out more. We don't drop, we fly. You go further. Just to see. You can't not. There is no other choice. You are at the end of the world. Place a stone and find more world.

My skin tasted like salt and sun again, how I forget. I wanted to lick and kiss and just collapse. Lose individual form and structure like a sandcastle when the tide comes in. I am so swept away.

Sophie Sergiadis



Si mientras viajo por el mundo te digo que te extraño,
te miento.
Cada vez que me vienes al pensamiento
hay una corriente eléctrica que corre por mi médula espinal,
Un escalofrío que arrulla.
mis labios arden pensando en tus besos
y todo mi cuerpo se estremece al recordar
tu abrazo, tu piel, tu calor, tu fé, tu energía...

Si mientras viajo por el mundo te digo que te extraño,
te miento.
Mis ojos tratan de apreciar cada detalle
y sólo pienso en cómo describirlo para que entiendas
que estuviste aquí conmigo
que nunca me dejas.
Solo pienso en qué dirías,
cómo lo contarías,
qué pensarías.
Qué harías, si tan solo estuvieras aquí.

Si mientras viajo por el mundo te digo que te extraño,
te miento.
No te extraño.
Te anhelo con todo mi ser
y viajo hasta la dimension
en la que tomas mi mano
y caminas conmigo, a mi lado.
Nunca me dejas

Nunca me dejas
Melanie Valencia

Pomegranate I

Melinda Foshat

Scarlet lips stained red
Silhouette dripped in rubies
Sweetness for the soul
Sour yet juicy

Lying lips deceive
Lovers dripped in crimson flames
Lust is for the soulless
Living yet dead

For every pure pomegranate cut
Eternal Bliss abounds
As pomegranate nectar fills the hearts of some
Pomegranate passion is crowned

For every pure pomegranate cut
Eternal Flames surround
As pomegranate tears drip from the eyes of some
Pomegranate blood seeps through the ground

To drink pomegranate juice is to drink the blood of christ
To drink pomegranate juice is to drink the blood of a man

Which will you drink?
Which will stain your hands?

The Good Earth

Michael Garamoni

*This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper. (The Hollow Men)*

The world has moved on. (The Dark Tower)

I.

Oh, there they walk, wending down the street
The narrow lanes and white-water cars capture not their eyes
For they exist only in the world of each other.
How they flit,
And how they fleet,
And how they wander through the sleet.
The welded pair, the impish two
See them meandering through?

She, the girl with acid green eyes,
Pouring her burning tears on all the world.
He, the boy with dull brown eyes,
The color of excrement and lowliness.
Who are they?

II.

Did you ever anticipate a thing like this?
Do you see them falling from the towering pedestal
You unintentionally constructed?
See how their bodies thud against the ground?
The satisfying crunch as their bones shatter?
The crows settling down to lunch on brain splatter?

*Brains, the crows caw to one another,
Brains, the human delicacy,
Rarest and choicest of human parts,
Brains, all gone, CAAH CAAH*

Ah, Charles, the broken bodies are piling up,
Beautiful bruises blooming on the bodies
Of those who have not yet died.
There is one thing they wish you were wrong about, Charles.
They cannot adapt to their environment once they have
fallen.
No, no. There, they only lay down to rest,
Not peacefully, empty eyes gazing up,
Up, they gaze, but down they go.

*Remember us, they say,
Not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men,
The stuffed men.*



And each year on this day, Charles,
We shall burn their likenesses in effigy.
All of them, all of them. Like the Guy!
Yours too, Charles, because you brought us
Knowledge of this plague:
Evolution leads only to devolution.

The boy with the shit-brown eyes dances gaily down the
street.

III.

Oh, Nausicaä, oh, Nausicaä,
Burner of human ships,
Do you love nature so?
Then burn her, burn her,
Burn the one with the acid green eyes,
For she holds within her palm
The embryo of the Giant Warrior
Who will raze the earth.
Burn the bitch.

Oh, Nausicaä,
Princess Nausicaä,
Are you Yupa's man in blue?
Then smash the embers growing
In her acid green eyes
She has built your toxic jungle
With the help of the boy who holds her hand.
It was she who wrought the ancient wars
And she who yearns to cloud the earth in smog.

Where would Odysseus be without you?
Sleeping with the seaweed.
But do you have the courage
To unmake the evident future
Of toxic waste and burning globes?
You wring your hands
And hop on your glider,
But this valley has no wind.

Meanwhile, the girl with the acid green eyes
Has cursed the world with Smaug,
His belly coated in the gold coins of the CEOs,
(No weaknesses there, Bilbo)
Those bloated, frivolous polluters,
The men who really run the country,
The men who shit red, white, and blue.

God bless America,
Land that I love
Stand beside her
And guide her
Through the night
With her acid green eyes.

IV.

There they walk, hand in hand,
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily
Life is not a dream.
How they rend,
And how they run,
And how they laugh, "The world is done!"
They never lose,
They never die,
They're here to kiss the world goodbye.

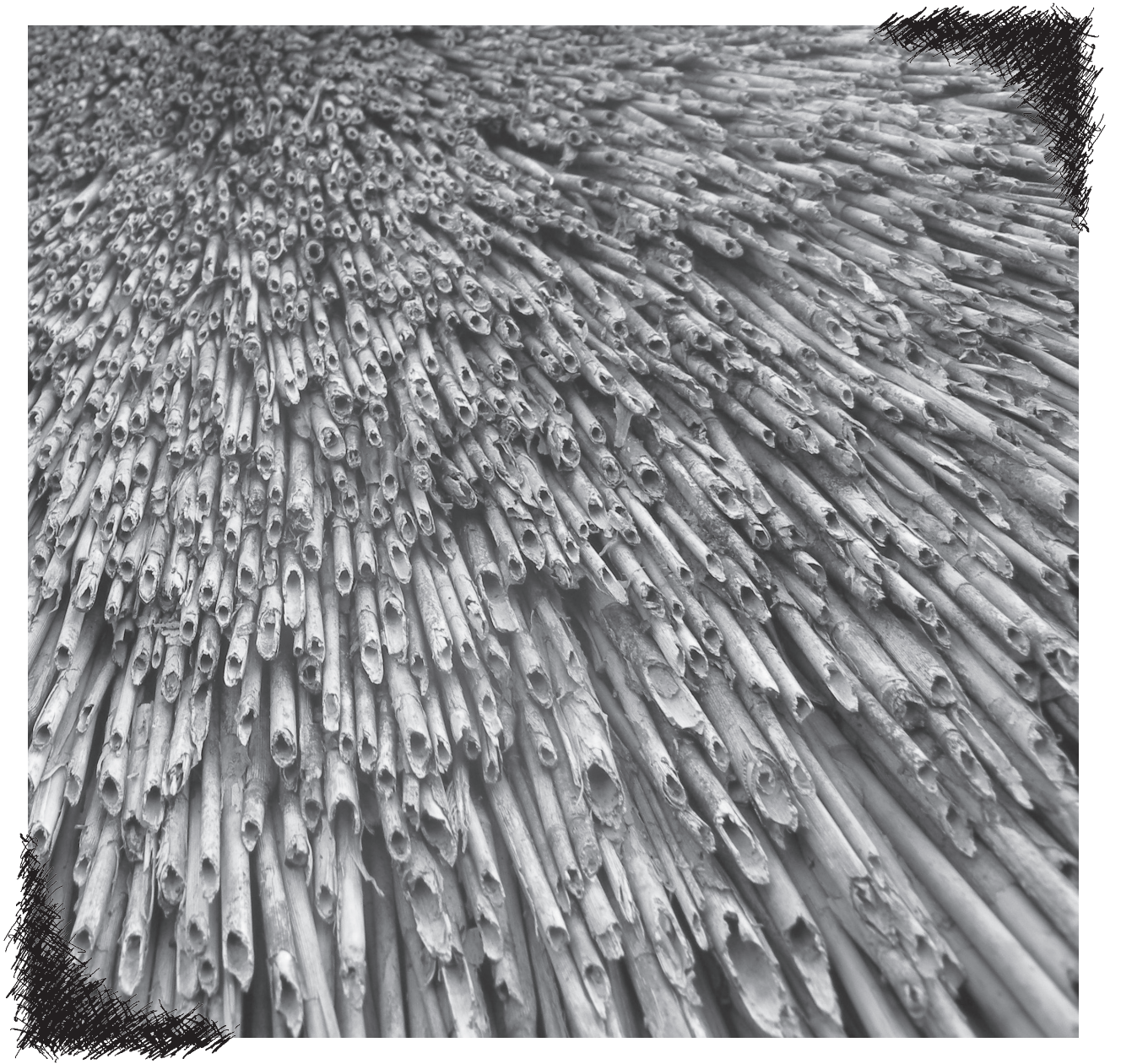
In her eyes is reflected a barren and desolate world
The world of her dreams
In his eyes are reflected the Morlocks and the Eloi
The future of man.

V.

Between the silence (now)
And the storm (what comes next)
Falls the Shadow.

The world has moved on.

I think we are in demons' alley
Where the dead men ate their bones.



Even A Butterfly

Outranks A Mouse

Trevor Krafnick

i write not for you squirrels
incapable of deep thought
attention cannot be be paid
by one so poor in life
the wealthiest have not the means to pay attention

i write for the few hawks that fly
for the owls that prey on you rodents
attention to detail
hunters win when the prey get lazy
you are a lazy little mouse
sunning itself from noon until the next noon
hawks hunt you at day while owls do at night

this one i write for i crave your attention
simply to tell you you serve no purpose
grow some wings and fly away
be not a rodent
think like a caterpillar
cloak yourself in knowledge and learn to spend your
mind wisely
sprout with wings anew in this world
be what is considered beautiful
not a trampled bug





A slender woman sat on the cream ledge of the windowsill in a man's bedroom. She glanced at the man in the bed, then turned her head towards the rising morning sky. Her mind slipped backwards to the night before.

Taking his hand in hers, she waited as the man undid the lock to the door and proceeded to lead her up the narrow stairs into his apartment, and subsequently, his bedroom. The man flicked the light switch, and the woman moved towards the

window, gazing out at the night. Turning around, the light seeped into her almond eyes. Her hair lightly tousled, she crossed her slender wrists, taking hold of the bottom of her shirt. Slowly, effortlessly, yet with intention, she lifted her shirt over her head. Unhooking her bra, she stood before him, exposed.

The only audible sound was the soft, slightly elevated breaths of the man and the woman. Eyes glossy, her lower lip quivering, blood pumping furiously to her heart, she slowly walked up to the man. Placing her hand on his chest, she kissed him, and pulled him towards the bed with force. As he unzipped her with his lips, her eyes grew warm and her eyelids began to gently rustle as she gave into his touch. He made his way down her body with his lips and tongue, lightly nibbling at her pink flesh. Entering her, she let herself go free. She felt him seep into her soul, instilling intoxication and terror through her veins.

The man next to her lay in peaceful slumber, though no sleep came to the woman. An hour later, she found herself on the window ledge, following the mounting sun with her emblazoned amber eyes. Suddenly, she rose. Her skeletal fingers buttoned her trench coat. Her thin shadow flew across the wall as she left the apartment, unseen by the man sleeping in the bed.

Hours later, the man awoke, and began to rub his sleep-encrusted eyes. He rolled over to discover the absence of the woman he had spent the night with in ferocious passion. He didn't even know her name.

Misty Rosso

Flight in the
Early Morning

One Can Never Do The Rain Justice

Trevor Krafnick

i wanted to write rain
i dream of speaking it
drawing for you a painted landscape
doused in the colors of dew
a crystal of snow melted on its way down
a cold sort of perfect little speck of light
cast down from the pirates of the air
those ships take on water and bail themselves out
as though the world were crying
i wanted to convey storms
help one see what i see when i watch lightning dance across
the sky
jabbing at the spiteful earth
drenching all with torrents of purity
leaving behind the scent of cleansing
the aroma of nature endures in this rain
i wanted teach of thunder
that mind boggling echo
a lion's roar at a timid rabbit
begging to be called on once more
by the power of the beauty of heaven's bolt
i wanted to echo lightning
become the thunder of applause
break the air so palpable
so saturated with timeless rain
suspended in the humid air

i wanted to know rainbows
to hear the final rumble of pain
as the anguish of the stricken earth falls
as the final tears of the wavering sun collided with the
earth
as one tastes the melted freshness of a snowflake
forever failing, almost betraying the simple smell of snow
as the final drop ricochets off the surface of a glistening
puddle
a prism arcs the sky
promising to remain forever until it fades
i wanted to impart sorrow
to know how the sky must feel
to teach the dew dappled grass to grow
to show for all to see
the contributed to sea
she sends her sighs
brimming with tears
breaking the sky
revealing heaven's light
the sun even shies from rain's splendor
i wanted to understand beauty
and so i looked to the stars
and as the clouds formed
and the gaseous prisons faded
rain usurped my senses
i felt the chilling waters of rejuvenation
i smelled a cleaner soil and dewy moss
i tasted fresh soaked taste buds as i longed for melted snow
i lingered for a moment with my eyes upon a satiated bud
"One Can Never Do The Rain Justice"

Codeine

It's frightening, really, how strange this place can get.
How everything seems better until you shut your eyes for bed
Then the sadness creeps back in upon the morning's shine,
And you close your lids to shut it out but never just in time.

Marissa DiBartolo



The Mirror

Anonymous

The mirror.
 Shimmers.
 Shines.
 Shows.

Fat thighs.
Fat arms.
Fat face.

 "Fat girl, know your place.
 You're not better than the human race," it grins.

She covers her ears to no avail.
 There goes breakfast.
 And lunch.
 And dinner.
 Over and over and over

 Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fattest of them all?
 thought so.

And so it goes for two more months.
"Mirror," she asks. "Will I ever be pretty?"

 "Not if you look like that."
 The mirror never lies.

20 pounds...

30 pounds....

40 pounds.....

Finally, the skeleton weakly smiles back.

It feels- right.

The mirror beams.

I feel- pretty.





What I Remember About
My Night in Venice
Sophie Sergiadis

It was my kind of party
wearing that mask.
I felt alive, dancing in the confetti rain.
And then the dark quiet island made of glass
Fragile,
Too fragile for my wine fueled marry-go-round.
The streetlights in the water
Not of this world.
It felt like a library and I was a bookworm. Hun-
dreds and hundreds of old nooks.
So interesting. Such stories and color in them. Too
many for a night.
Little secret places.
Whispers and yells and so much laughter.
And confetti rain my darlings. Remember. And that
constant music that may have just been the city.

Colonization for Children Melanie Valencia

Once upon a time there were purple people. They were sovereign and had developed every system so their community was equitable. They had traditions of sacrificing animals and people in the name of their goddess Pachamama. No disease was visible and although they died around their 50s, they had a plentiful life and understood the cycle.

Then came the yellow people. They had things that the purple people had never seen before. Through mesmerizing the purples, the yellows were able to subordinate them. The purples' systems for sanitation and health, for passing their knowledge from

generation to generation were sent to oblivion due to the oppression. With time, some purples grew resentful and wanted what the yellow had. POWER. The yellows raped the purples and were diluted. The purple-yellows were called indigos. A lot of purples died because of all the diseases and abuse that the yellows brought. Indigos also suffered but survived. Indigos did not want to be under the yellows' power anymore so they started a revolution.

The indigos took over and the few purples that survived were isolated. They became the 'poor' according to the indigos and yellows. Yellows still thought that the indigos were unworthy and treated all other colors as inferiors.

The indigos emulated the yellows for centuries and marginalized the purples. As a result many purples left their communities to become more like the indigos and yellows. The purples struggled because

they had lost much of their knowledge on how to care for land and resources but with time they were able to recover many of those systems.

Some indigos started realizing that the purples were some of the wealthiest in wisdom and decided to start listening to them and learning. Other indigos only wanted to be yellow. Very few were happy as indigos but still followed what the indigos that were following the yellows would do.

Since the indigos had also oppressed the purple, one day the yellows felt pity for the purples and decided to help them against the indigos.

A lot of purples were dedicated to get food and water, take care of animals and build their shelters. One day the yellows started handing them money so that they could be "empowered". Some purples liked money and started asking for more. Other groups of purples disliked money because it brought fights to their communities. These groups warned the yellows not to come or they would shrink their heads. Some did not listen.

Some yellows decided to go into communities to tell them that how they were living was wrong, that they needed running water, toilets and jobs (with money involved). They told them that carrying water was a waste of time and offered 'solutions' that yellows had implemented seeing so much disease -the solutions were much like what the purples had had before the yellows came-.

Many of the purples saw that the yellows were unhappy with the recommendations they were making. Their children were alone and killing without understanding the reasons -any times it happened because the yellows wanted power over other colors-. Moreover, the yellows did not have a good relationship with



Pachamama. Some purples, seeing this, rejected the yellows' solutions. They would simply smile at the yellows, may be share if the yellows were willing to listen and then let them leave.

The yellows felt good because they thought they were helping the 'poor people'.

Some indigos that were mixed among the yellows saw what the yellows meant by the idea of helping people and decided it was their role to work that way too, so that they can be more like the yellows.

Other indigos with power respected the purples and seeing what the yellows were doing, a governmental bridge was created so that the purples could be sovereign. The yellows thought that the indigos were being evil by doing this. Some indigos even started to pretend to be purple so that they could utilize the yellow to get money -most yellows did not notice-.

Many indigos then started not liking their yellow side and wished they could be more like the purples, but there was no way back.



Grapes a Found Poem

Leo Schuchert

Grapes rimenin', sapphires and
rubies on an ivory vine.
Blowin' in the wind
through sun and rain,
shine all colors of the rainbow.
Hurry quick, grab a stick
put 'em in a bushel
haul them down,
take them to town.
Ready for squeezing
into greed jade wine.

Shiver your way around
You are ugly and gross
You eat my tomatoes in my garden
Be aware of the young boy coming with the salt.

Things To Do If
You Were a Slug
Brittany Talvy



Featured Author



Jessica Melillo

Jessica Melillo is a senior psychology major and an avid lover of all things writing. Though she intends to pursue a career as a therapist, she also hopes to someday become a published novelist. Her writing is inspired by e. e. Cummings, Sylvia Plath, Andrea Gibson, T. S. Eliot, her own personal experiences, and a myriad of others. She is honored to be featured in Nimbus as the featured author this semester!

Jessica Melillo

I,
with my wonky bangs
and foul mouth
and too-long arms
and legs,
am a force
to be reckoned
with.

When I was young
and
sad
(aren't we all young and sad
once?),
I was but
a whispering
little wind
in the twilight
without enough
gust
to move any willow's
leaves
or Monarch's wings
and
there came a time
I nearly resigned
to
being
a static,
motionless calm
that hung quietly
without rustling any feathers (because I
could not rustle my own).

Saved

But, one day,
with my coffee cup
and cigarette
and droopy lids,
I turned to face the
cerulean sky,
cloudless,
birdless,
but content,
and remembered
that even empty things
will fill again,
that even empty hearts
must
beat.

And
so
even when I tire
at night
and cry for what is lost,
I live
and live
and live and live
and
blow
the
demons
down.



I have ash in my mouth
and it's been more years
than I can count (but really,
it's been three)
and I still have an ache
in my chest
from this mess
that you left
when you turned away
and did just that,
left,
I mean -
you know what I mean -
I still mean
Nothing
to
you.

I am thankful
that I no longer
dream of holding you close
or leaving everything behind
just to call you mine -
I am someone's
these days
and he is the
mine
I will leave
everything
behind
for -
notnotnot
you.

But still this remains -
I am standing
at the airport
and the plane
has taken off
without me
and I am boarding
another
but I am still so
sad
to have been
abandoned
without even
so much as a moment's
notice.
I'm not asking for
first class
or a hot towel
and a mimosa,
I'm asking
for some
courtesy,
goddamnit,
a little acknowledgment,
a little "hey-I-loved-you-
once-upon-a-time-long-ago-
did-you-know?"
because I don't know
anything about
you
anymore.



I am happy
without you;
I am happy
I knew you;
I am happy you're
happy,
if you are,
out there
somewhere
in this big, big world,
a world I thought
would swallow me up
when I left
your side.
But it didn't
because it couldn't
and I wouldn't
let it
though God knows
I debated it
all those nights
I lost myself to smoke
while you were
fucking
someone
else.

Maybe one day
we will meet
in the street
and shrug
and shake hands
and exchange numbers (even
though we have them
and
even though we'll never
call) for coffee
we drink better alone.
And maybe I will look over my
shoulder
at your back (again)
and
wonder
if (to you) I am still
a woman scorned
or a little
girl burned
or
just some ironic anecdote
from your past (that you
tell your new friends)
like The
Match Girl,
martyr for
the
Cold.

Shiver

Jessica Melillo

Doll Parts Jessica Melillo

It has been a long damn
time
and sometimes even
longer than it seems
(I don't even know what
the fuck that means,
but allow it anyway,
I'm sleepy)
and I wonder if
the remainder of my days
will be spent
hovering over my
reflection
in the floor length,
grasping at my excess
and sighing
in disgust.

Once more bones
than flesh,
my heart now drums
against
my chest in the
anguish
of still being able
to beat at all
and my skeleton creaks
and whines
and yearns to jut
and stick
and poke out

beneath taut
epidermis,
disappointed by this
gauzy
porcelain film
now residing in its wake
(don't worry,
bones, I'm just as
disappointed).

Do you know how
difficult it
is
to feel this skin
when
I am
crawling out of it?

Do you know
how much
I ache
just
to
ache?



Do you know
how cold I felt,
how long November
was,
my frozen brittle bones
breaking
in the snow?

He stuck a needle in my
skinny arm
and it hurt like a bitch,
my mouth twisting
into a
scowl.
He chuckled,
wiping the small smear
of blood,
murmuring,
"That wasn't so bad was
it?"

The muscle the needle
had pricked felt
hot
and sticky with
a prickly,
wincing ache
and in spite of myself
and
my sad little child's
limbs,
I whimpered.

"So what brings
you here
today,
the day
after
Thanksgiving? A little
early for check-ups, no?"
My mother shifted,
uncomfortable,
my cracked
and dry lips
offering
a weak smile.
"I'm hungry,"
I tried,
the smile dying,
my teeth clacking
at the lie,
his face becoming long
and sad
and
understanding.

"Karen Carpenter, the 70s..."
he trailed off, attempting
sympathy,
but how could
he understand
what
a textbook had whispered to him
years ago

in the back of a musty
library?

I shook my head,
trying to silence the
demons,
trying
to shake them
out.

Fuck Karen Carpenter, I
thought,
fuck her and
her legacy,
her memory,
I'm just as important
and this is mine
mine mine mine
mine,
I tell you, and
she can't have it
anymore,
she can't have it at
all!

I felt the blood rush to my face
and I just
wanted to die (wasn't I already?)
and I said,
clear as day,
to the man in the white coat,
the man who had
held me as
a baby,

fresh from the gaping
pink womb,
who had
called me "Jessie"
endearingly,
even though my mother
had forbidden it:

"I
have
come
here
to
live,"

and the shadows
leaked
from my
skull
and
fled.

Second time's
a charm.

Jessica Melillo

I have always been a
Bad girl,
tricky,
sticky,
mad
as hell,
but you have
brought me
to my knees
in prayer (in more
ways
than one)
and when I lift
my voice
to the heavens
beyond,
my
song
is but
a
breathy
whisper.

Underworld

Jessica Melillo



when it comes
to matters of
"the positive"
I am mute

perhaps
it is out of a perpetual
respect
that I keep all good things
silent

I dare not sully these
with my imperfect words

[I dare not jinx it]

Sarah Sutliff
My Second Attempt

grief pain loss ache
these
they demand elaboration
order up my
continual fruitless striving
to solidify
to pin down my discontent
in a causal state
of imperfection

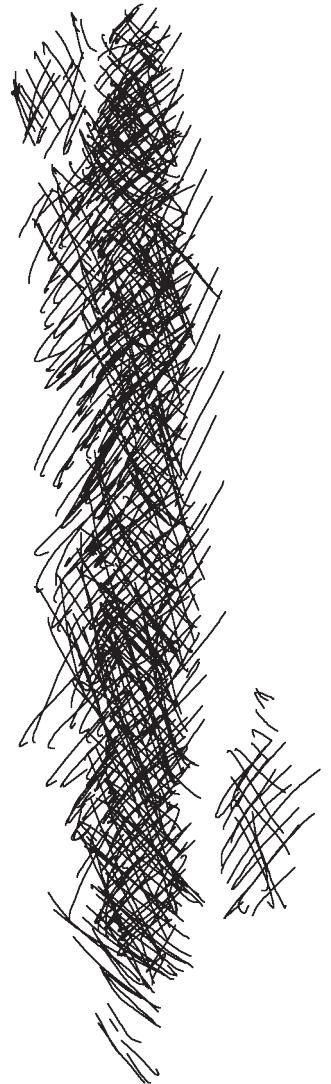
lack described by lack
how perfect here.

but contentment...

all that is full
and ripe
and present

to this I must commit

no
I dare not taint that actuality
with an attempt.



Supposed To Anonymous

Since the day I arrived in Catholic school, I was given a list of 'shouldn'ts' and 'supposed tos'

You shouldn't take the Lord's name in vain
You shouldn't talk in church
You're supposed to go to confession
Wear your skirt to 'here'
You shouldn't have sex before marriage

And not just from the perpetually pursed lips of Sunday school graduate turned educator did I hear the constant cadence of things that 'Thou shalt not'
But also from the lips of others that I deemed wiser flowed precaution after precaution, and contingency after contingency.

You shouldn't let him kiss you on the first date, what will he think of you?
You shouldn't trust people too easily, that's how young pretty girls find themselves in trouble
You shouldn't let him bed you before the nth date, what will he tell his friends
You should focus on your future-sacrifice now-your time, your fun, your life experience- it will pay off later

I know that those spewing these good-intentioned or ignorantly traditionalized adages somehow believed that all-in-all they were good for me.

That they would keep me from pain, or danger, or humiliation.

And to all those good intentions I must remain grateful for the attempt....

However....

A day arrived when I discovered that sometimes it feels soooo goddamn good to take the lords name in vain- especially as the words leave an uninhibited mouth as a bruise begins to make its temporary home on a freshly stubbed toe.

A day arrived when I wore my skirt to 'here' and discovered how it brought all sorts of delightfully foot-lightening attention, whether it be by the depth of men's jawlines or the height of nun's eyebrows.

A day arrived when I smiled at someone on the train, and subsequently had an engaging, enlightening, and overall unthreatening conversation with another human being, and realized, young and pretty doesn't necessarily mean a one-way ticket to abduction.

A night arrived when I let him bed me before the nth date, and I knew he'd tell his friends that it was goooood.

A day arrived when I did not a lick of focussing on my future, and discovered that I couldn't control it anyway and I might as well savor some time, some fun, some life experience.

I came to find that all these 'shouldn'ts' and 'supposed tos' could mean something to someone, sure. That they could prove accurate at the very least, if not brimming with wisdom.

But how would they know-
If they hadn't been proved wrong

How would they know if they never tested the 'supposed to', never held the 'shouldn't' against the intricacies of their circumstance

Well, they wouldn't....

So screw 'supposed to'. Indulge. Restrain. Succeed. Fuck up.

Make your life an authentic series of trial and error.

And if I could give you just one bit of advice, or will you to do just one thing- it would be Thou shalt learn for thyself.

Ripe

Your lips have the texture of a peach,
soft and delicate to my touch
They have the sweetness of a recently picked and squeezed
ripened mango.

They remind me of the giggles of the first
Mischievous I ever committed as a child
And the numbness the wind produces
When it has been hitting for a long time
They have the grace of the first drop
Of rain after a long draught
And I long for them;
If I could only kiss you now

Melanie Valencia



Joy

Sarah Sutliff

[and the timid tears they come]

my bag is ripped
the faded fibers of
red and brown and black
pulling
the days disintegrating
that which once
held strong
busted at the seams
too much within
now appearing without.

this cotton and thread
reality.

but wherein entropy
lies a that which is
nature itself [the teacher of
destruction]
but there is
a continual construction
production
a proof in creative endeavors
but then in the fraying fabric
of yesterday's new
there is doubt.
it is in the fabric's weave
to come undone...

so nothing is
more than a blip.

The Clouds

Michael Garamoni

In the sky I saw the history of the world

Reflected by a fleet of clouds sailing above me
In the deep morning sky.

I saw a cloud for North America
Darker than the others and lumbering forward.
There was a cloud for South America
Flowing partially obscured behind spring-born trees.
There was a cloud for Europe
Connected to cloud for Asia
Separated by a Mediterranean-like patch of blue
From a cloud for Africa.
I even saw a cloud for Canada
Racing along behind the North American cloud.
If there was an Australian cloud,
It stretched off beyond a vast evergreen.

The continents drifted off away from me
Alone and small on my park bench
And the sun burst forth between Canada and
A wispy cloud for the North Pole.

But, the thing that struck me the most
Was not these clouds in constant motion
Flowing, waxing, waning,
Tendrils spreading and curling in vast beauty.
I was instead astonished because the map of the
World In The Sky
Was converging, as if each continent was reaching for the
others
In a cosmic attempt to return to Pangaea,
The primal world before the stain of Man.

In the midst of this, I witness the arrival
Of a new Old cloud.
Atlantis, returned to glory from the deeps,
The sun casting beams of light brilliantly behind it,
It lived again for but a moment
Before the reaching continental clouds swallowed it up.

I became aware of the desperation
With which each cloud reached,
Reached across a chasm of ponderous, dissociated blue void,
Reached for the Old World.

It was fleeting, though.
Gone in a moment or two,
And the clouds never united.
Instead, they raced onward, ushered by the wind.
And by the time the world map was almost out of sight,
It had already swelled into something unrecognizable.



I'm trying
And failing
Over again
For you
My poor hero
My Blind King
The eager champion
Drunk in the dark with a monster

New Teeth

Sophie Sergiadis

My eyes don't meet your eyes
Drinking what's left of you out of the one shot glass you
didn't break
Hopes and fluids and a year of your life
Slicked on the walls
Salt and a lime wedge sucked to the rind
Swell on my tongue, in your wounds
Sideways smile

Screwed smile

I've got these claws
OPI brand Classic Lacquer - 'I'm Not Really a Waitress' Red
That's not the only thing I'm lying about

But I'm running now
Dancing away, blood on my hands
There's a sunrise I've been dying for
See if I turn to stone
There's a sunrise I'd kill for
Some air I need to breathe
Crack these dusty ribs on
I want so much more
I want so much more than you

Pomegranate II

Melinda Foshat

Her mother's greatest gift from God,
a child more lovely than them all.
With innocence trickling through her veins,
she brought joy to all who passed her way.

Hope hidden from the world,
beneath her porcelain freckles.
Her mother told her to keep it there,
for fear that from the world
It would be shattered.

Still the girl played with her curiosity
which lead her to places near and far.
She traveled one autumn day
and found herself at the local bazaar.

She swam through a sea of fruits,
and climbed a mountain of veggies.
Then she came upon a valley
where an old beggar was standing.

To most his stature was low,
but to the girl he seemed quite
tall.

While others turned their gaze,
She smiled at him sweetly,
thus making the poor man bawl.

From his pocket he pulled a box,
wrapped in tissue and gauze.
What he began to tell the girl,
seemed to her quite odd.

Never have I seen a child as
fair as you.
While others judge with blinded
eyes,
you see straight towards truth.
Let this gift break the bonding
ties,
and free man's soul from man's
lies.
So I give this gift to you,
that you may decide for yourself
what is and is not true.

The girl took the gift home to
her mother,
who nearly fainted upon opening
the box.

Inside was something quite
special,
a pomegranate the color of a red
fox.

The girl had never seen anything
like it.

She asked her dear mom what it
was.

Her mother thought long and
hard,
then said with a quivering heart

This my sweet child is a
pomegranate,
A gift from God to us all.
Inside runs the blood of christ,
meant to crumble our sin's wall
which keeps us separated from
God.

Today pomegranates sit on satin cloths,
not on wooden tables.
They are cut open by Kings and Queens
and kept sealed from the hands of disabled.
It is what makes noble men holy,
and peasants unworthy.
They rule the land through the ages,
while we sweat, bleed, and fall.

Remember my dear daughter above all,
for every pure pomegranate cut,
a King gains a ruby in which he adds to his crown,
a peasant gains the hunger in which his stomach drowns.

A cool burst of air flowed through the room.
Winter chill had finally arrived.
As the girl cut into the pomegranate,
juice spattered her once youthful façade.

Her freckles now red and slippery
with blood stained tears,
released the hope that once hid there.
Cascading to the ground,
smashing into the scraps of her broken heart.

A trumpet was heard from the castle.
Her mother did not eat that night.

thirteen



here is me
 hoping that you know
 [without me telling you
 of course
 that would be just plain embarrassing]
 how often I think
 of that scar on your lip
 and the way you say
 goodbye
 on the phone so abruptly
 just to make me mad
 [and that little laugh after
 to show your jest]
 everyone always thinks of kisses and walks
 and glances and the first touch...
 I think of you
 throwing up in my toilet
 and telling me
 I'm wonderful.

Sarah Sutliff

The Girl

Across The Room

Marissa DiBartolo

I sat and listened to the poor girl's pathetic answer to every question posed. Every word pronounced precisely in her mouth. Never leaving one syllable without her callous cackle taped to the end of it. I watched the words roll off of her tongue and pass her lips with utter perfection and, from my end, an undying sense of disdain.

She was a Christian girl, a smart girl, a studier. She was not the type to understand things upon first glance, but she was confident in her intelligence. She raised her hand and answered every question to the best of her ability, and every answer was just short of insightful.

Her hair was pulled back sloppily and she smoothed it consistently with her dominant hand, stopping every now and then to make some unrelated nervous gesture between thoughts.

She had a thinning cable knit sweater hanging on her shoulders, making her body look feverishly unappealing, and making her all the more infuriating.

Her eyes were bright with ignorance, her virginity apparent, obtrusive, and overly irritating.

I watched closely with wrinkled brows, a condescending glare plastered across my freckled, sallow face, my lips pulled in tight.

I sighed heavily each time she spoke. Each time she uttered some horrific line relating to the bible and her limited knowledge of Christianity that has been shoved down her throat by preachers and parents alike. The kind of Christianity that only her mother could admire. The kind of Christianity the professor himself openly despised, and the kind I had no respect for.

I concentrated hard on her, waiting for something to differ, but it never did. Her attempts to please the man in front never ceased. She never gave up in her confidence, no matter how flawed her perception of reality was.

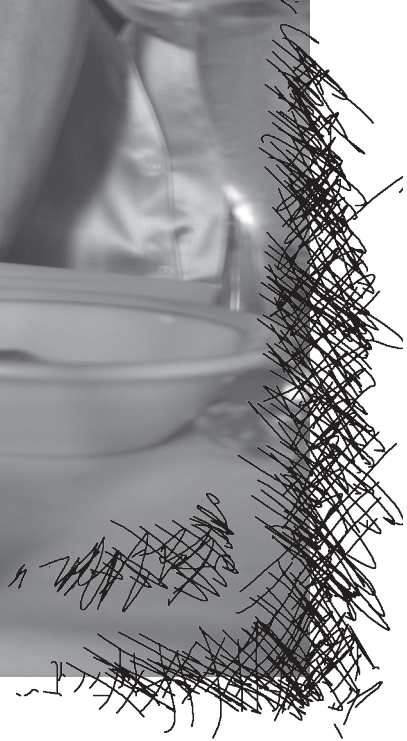
I thought I felt sorry for her. I rolled my eyes in sheer embarrassment for her. But here she was, trying as hard as she could, showing off her intelligence (or lack thereof) in the worst way possible, but she was doing it, and I was watching.

I hated in this girl what I worried was inside of me. A noticeable lack of intelligence, a hint of overzealousness, paired ever so terribly with ambition and an unnerving regard for what people think.

How many times, I thought, must I have been the girl with blushing cheeks aiming to please and impress by lecturing about topics I knew nothing about. Hoping to God there wouldn't be some horrible girl glowering at me from across the way, preying on my every insecurity I tried so hard to mask.

I fed on her weak spots; I loathed them, basked in them. I wasted my time wondering if she is happy when she packs up her things or if she can feel me judging her every move from just a few chairs away.

I touched my hair nervously. I felt the soft coils get stuck between my fingers. I glanced around and saw a girl to my right quickly avert her eyes away from me. I swallowed hard.





tonight smelled of campfire
and freshly cut grass,
the world still flickering
with newly born streetlights
and the dying twilight sky
of gray and blue and
the fading pink of the west
movement in the still
black silhouettes in
silent anticipation
trees and homes and powerlines
stand [with bated breath]
paused
the moon, lingering
at the ends of streets and
above houses
overseer of this momentary calm

return

Sarah Sutliff



Sarah Braun 7, 10&11, 22, 27, 29, 30,
38, 49, 56, 69

Melissa Brenman 72



Melinda Foshat 34, 60, 70, 72

Danielle Lucchese 8, 45

Zachary Weinstein 19

Image Credits

