



B222

Issue 3 | Spring 2024

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Visions of Home





Masthead



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Letter from the Editor

The concept of home can be extremely subjective. If you're lucky, you may have known many homes over the years and will still have many more to discover as time goes on. Some people may have only ever known one home and yet they can still smell their favourite meal cooking, see their favourite smile, hear their favourite song being sung off-key from a familiar mouth, taste the sour keys from 7/11 near their childhood home, or feel sunshine on their legs as it creeps in through the foggy windows of spring.

When the *B222* team first picked *Visions of Home* as the theme for the Spring 2024 Issue, we were eager to see how home can be interpreted by such a diverse student community. I spent the past few months reflecting on what home means to me and as hard as I tried, I couldn't settle on an image or definition that felt right. I looked to the multitude of submissions that we received to clarify my thoughts on home.

As always, my team members and I were impressed by the way people were inspired by our theme. We saw poems, short stories, creative non-fiction, experimental writing forms, photographs, illustrations, paintings, and songs that were all truly unique. It was wonderful to see that everyone had a different vision of home. Combing through these submissions and working alongside our contributors has given me a glimpse into so many people's lives and minds. Thank you for inviting me into your idea of home.

At Sheridan, we have students from many different cultures, countries, counties, cities, and upbringings; despite our different backgrounds we all have Sheridan in common. It has been home to many of us whether you're just beginning your journey or are nearing the end of your time here.

As I close the door on this chapter of my life as Managing Editor at *B222*, I am grateful for the opportunity that it has provided for me to allow myself to grow and move forward

on my journey. With the foundation and framework that has been created, I am confident in the long-standing structure that we have all created with *B222*. I look forward to its future and continued commitment to our students.

Sincerely,

Arianna Zangara
Managing Editor





Home is where the mess is

Lauren Otto

Third Year - Illustration

These images are a representation of the artist's home. Her home is characterized by children playing, dust in the air, and dirty windows. A house ought to be well-lived in, as this artist's home is.

El Sofá

Antonella Finch

First Year - General Arts and Science

It's all a Russian roulette to see a couch these days.

When I see a couch I remember the afternoons that I spent with my little sister. We were just lying against each other. We didn't have to be doing an activity together.

Most of the time we were just doing our own thing. She, drawing some crazy comic that she would show me at the end of the day, me reading a book that I would later explain to her.

We didn't speak in those moments of peace, we didn't need to. Most of the time we didn't even recognize that the other was in the room at all. We were just there in the same moment, in the same room, on the same couch, that was it.

Now I can't do that. Now we are thousands of miles away.

Some days I feel like I'm overreacting, because It's not like I can't see her anymore.

In today's world, I can speak with her using my phone, see her in video calls and talk about our days like we used to.

The thing is that I miss her touch.

There are days that that doesn't matter. My mind is busy with other thoughts and I let the time pass. I can sit down on couches and I don't think of her, because I'm just lost in my own bubble and I don't have the opportunity to notice her absence.

There are days that it does matter.

There are days that it is the only thing that I'm thinking about. Like a poison that is infecting my thoughts and paralyzing the world around me.

In those days sitting on a couch seemed to be the hardest action ever. Those days I feel like I'm waiting for a ghost. Waiting to feel the cold of her little toes touching mine, or her warm cheek posing on my shoulder. Her weight next to me. Her hair in my lap. But at the end nothing happens and it is just me

waiting on a couch.

I still have things to do, duties to complete, classes to attend, places to go, a life to live. It is just that now is different, now my life has a before and an after, now I can't stop noticing details which I didn't think about before.

One detail of my after is that now, in the bad days, I can't sit on a couch.

7 Steps Through the Door

Victoria Lilley

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

1. Your dad is Captain Hook, smile-snarling as he chases you, giggling, around the dusky pillow jungle. He's not really a villain, just upset you forgot his birthday.

2. It's 6:00 and you come home to a chocolate cake. There's no special occasion—it's not your birthday—just a Tuesday. Your mom thinks Tuesday deserves a cake.

3. Candy melts on her tongue, turning from pink to turquoise. It's hard to resist spitting it out in her hand to see the colour change, and even harder to look at the sticky stain blossoming on her new white dress. You make her tell the story five hundred times.

4. The walls used to be orange. The couches brown. You hated them, except in autumn when the sinking sun made it seem like the room was on fire. Now, in the winter, the gray walls ice over.

5. A road trip to see a band no one else knows always starts with blasting ABBA and ends with disaster that turns into the time of your life. Are tornadoes why you don't travel often?

6. When the movie's over you lie in bed with the Christmas lights still glowing in March, discussing plot points and Peter Parker and which *Little Women* character you are (Amy and Jo).

7. You have more books in your house than you'd ever be able to count, more words ingested than you could number. There's even a secret shelf that swings open silently—into nothing exciting. Page after page, you still keep an eye out for looking glasses and watch for wardrobes.

(my middle name) is now
synonymous for 'helper' —
are you in need?

See war
drobes are a stale
mate to deal with but I
welcome your war
zones. We can PAX
up any unpatched
up wound in your
closet together —
do you have a manual?

Give me your
schematics, antics, antique
feuds still hiding in your
attic. And I know you're a Wayfair
er: how I wonder how you wander.
It's easy mathematics: two bolts are
better than one so let me
in.

Our Home is a Batty Place

Thomas Martins

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

I muttered to myself: "I hate the cottage." That much was true. Little Maple Hedge, or whatever the chipped paint of the little sign used to say, was a downtrodden little camping trail fit only for the little scavengers of the undergrowth. The cottage country was home only to Canada's grimmest of raccoons who lived under the decks of the country's grimmest of seniors. I thought, over the last romp, I counted another four grease monkeys whose masks were darker than their brittle undergarments hanging from the wires of their yellow lawns.

Recalling the rot of cottage country only renewed my disgust for it. All the wild mushroom spouts gushing through the floorboards. All the restless nights made by the cawing of amorous birds of prey. All the fifty-two-year-old men hugging their problems away instead of knocking their teeth out as they did two years prior. Let that all be water under the bridge as we crossed said bridge for home.

My muttering kept at a stiff and unrelenting pace. Those whispers sunk beneath my tongue where there was no escape. The rest of the car's inhabitants would not be alerted to my silent tantrum. The cottage country was no man's land and every child knew that. Every child was witness to the inadequacies of cottage country: endless fields of long-dead tractor-trailers, twelve tons of litter, and asbestos, that old material deemed fit for overseas nations yet not for Canada. My muttering shifted as the sun's gaze draped me. That light saved me even. I muttered a different tune: "There's no place like home," clicking the heels of my running-shoes together.

Thrice I repeated the words of withered Dorothy before leaning closer to the fried, golden window under the heat of the late autumn sun. And again, I repeated that saying of old Hollywood magic until my left cheek melted with the window. The heat and the spell kept me hallucinating the loathed cottage country. I feared, then, a tornado would fling

us back into the quicksand of our so-called estate's backyard. I repeated the incantation until the door swung open and I nearly flew from the car to the asphalt—though I was blocked by a seatbelt (never forget your seatbelt)—to which my mom shrieked. I looked up at her. Her brows turned from dazed yet enraged to a slovenly disappointment.

“Go do your essay,” she said. “Like you wanted to.”

I may not have been as adamant about completing my homework as I let on. Not an hour later, I moved in silence to reward the blank Word document I had created. I peeked beyond my door, next to which lay an arrangement of stone tiles, the door to the garage, and the door to the kitchen. I tiptoed through to avert the suspicion of my family. From the broad white cabinet my fingers slithered around the plump and helpless figure of a candy bar. The silence was pierced, by what sounded like the squeal of vermin, when my snaking fingers constricted the bar. As my serpents retracted the cabinet doors slammed shut. My dad opened the cabinet, gently, to allow my predacious fingers a moment to breathe. I turned to retreat. Before I could leap away, he shouted for me to submit the contraband. I obliged him. He told me how mom was upset enough by the cut-down excursion. With my head lowered, I returned to my unrelenting essay.

I would not return empty-handed. My dad had not seen a lone chocolate drop to the depths of a back pocket. Silently I closed the door, sealing the laundry room from the kitchen, and passed the bins stuffed to the gills with clothing. I huddled over my desk and, feverishly, relieved the chocolate from its prison. Around the corner of my eye, something darted away. In a moment of confusion I looked around. I concluded nothing was awry. As I bit down another flash streaked by, but this time it chirped—no—it squawked and it squeaked like the flying rat it was! It would seem a bat had grown tired of cottage country too; it too must have loathed that place.

mother was already drowning in disappointment. With my head lowered, I returned to my work.

It swirled overhead. I let out a shrill cry, like my mom had.

With haste, I retreated into the laundry room, giving ground—or sky—to the rabid beast. I ducked behind a mound of clothes and plucked my dad's trusted fishing net, which had never caught a fish. I swung and twirled that wand. From the highest cupboards to the lowest of buckets the stick flailed against the flying rat. Cleaning products crashed to the floor. The eggshell walls got marked and streaked. Eventually the panicked vermin ensnared itself as I swung blindly with fear.

My dad rushed into my room. He became distant over the chocolate—then intimate over the fishing net—and finally spooked by the confined vermin. He gave off a gibbering noise when he saw the bat. If I sounded like my mom, he sounded like the lost Stooge. He came to his senses once he noticed the feeble mammal ensnared and crying for help.

Heartily, he told me that home is just like the cottage. I told him we should stop this batty trend, to which he chuckled.

The two of us lumbered through the laundry room into the garage at the house's far end. The two of us, together over the introduction of a little bat to the home, must have looked as graceful as Farley and Spade as we opened the door to the outside. We released the castaway into the waning sunlight. It glided into the cowl of the treeline. Among those trees, I think it found a proper home. We retreated to the laundry room. There, my mom blew a gasket over what remained in the laundry.

From the Land of My Conception

Rachelle Lawka

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

The Coot looks at me
as though I am some strange, unwelcome creature in its home.

It does not know I have spent a lifetime memorising
the way the lake it swims upon
glistens beneath moonlight, or how salmon
who swim below it
break surface of water every spring in heaving
harmonious dance—I can see it:
in the way it cries out with disdain,
in the very shape of its elongated beak
beholding me from its shore of the water
that it believes, indubitably that I am undeserving.
That all I know is to take
 and take
 and take
without ever giving back.

I cannot help but cry from its penetrating gaze, from
the belief that my bones belong to an outsider.

I want to yowl and scream, to weep
and whine to the Coot's forlorn shape that this place
is as much my home
as it is its own.

The water it treads is the same water
I have both lived and drowned in, both
perished and found myself born anew again.

My bones were made from sand of shore,
my blood from broken bodies
of dragonflies who dared fly too closely

to water's edge.

My skin mere fragments and particles
made of billowing bulrushes, my eyes
rich brown of land from which
everything eventually returns
and grows.

I am both woman and animal,
both plant and girl, carved
from the very same corpus which
the Coot was first made.

We are undulating atoms, a giant mass of matter
becoming and unbecoming,
giving and taking,
breaking and repairing
all that we have ever been given,
and all that we have ever known.

In the tender body of lake, where
salmon dance and loons sing and
the stark forms of swans mate year after year; where
the Coot's plump ebony body now swims languidly about
in dizzying, frantic circles—

there, I burrow myself deeper into thick muddy rushes,
where land meets water, where unfamiliarity
breeds familiarity—

there, I stretch taut skin from chest, removing
rib after rib, tendon after tendon, discarding
pollution, swallowed cement, the pieces of plastic embedded in
my tissue. I purge them all

T H E R E

filling up empty spaces left behind
with mud and water and algae and cattail

until I am made up entirely of the same rough-hewn fibres
of nature that both the Coot and I have always sought to make
our home.

the day that reminds me of you

Jesse Lynn Train

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

Today I went to the market and passed that favourite stall of yours.
The green stalks were thick and strong, the petals veined and
plumped. They were only fifteen dollars.

They were your favourite.
Ms. Luna at the fortune booth still refuses to read my palm.
That bad luck, she says, is still around.

Today I went to the beach and stood in the water you found too
cold.
My feet bare and buried in rolling waves of sand and sea.
A fish swam around my ankle.
You would have screamed.
There was a family there, a mother and a daughter. They love
more than we do.

Today I stayed at home.
I lit a cigarette but did not smoke it. I laid down but did not sleep.

I sniffed whiskey, I sniffed rye. I do not drink.
Here and now is the day that reminds me of you.
Of the day that you left, no other words slipping from your lips,
But well wishes and a kiss.

Till Those Clouds Roll In.

Carter Robert Hawkins

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

Maybe I'll ride into town to get him somethin he didn ask for but has the possibility of bein surprised by; the day seems good for a bit till those clouds roll in from yonder. He really isn one for surprises though, more someone who wants what he needs. When he ain purchasin somethin he don need he acts impulsively, like he did with that Stetson made of beaver from the North. He wears that thing even when perspirin down the side of his eyes and inner linin is stained like teeth. Or how he built that chicken coop. He borrowed a wagon from the closest neighbourin cabin owned by Mr.Richards, trudgin that thing five miles for lumber and seven miles back to the house. Ma said we coulda just cut down a tree round the cabin, but Pa rather keep the forest dense. He built that coop on the side of the cabin but was afraid if he bought chickens, lettin em roam would put em in peril once they found their ways in the stable. Moss grown over the coop now, rottin from moisture off the stream that passes ten feet from the house and pools a broken lake down a quarter mile. It's hard usin bad lumber so close to water. It woulda been as good to make it outta twigs.

Ma is standin inside makin coffee on the stove, whistlin some song she learned growin up in the North. She loves that stove. It was the promised item Pa made to her when movin up to Wyomin. But he still waited till her birthday to acquire one. Pa always said don gift em nothin less you can eat it, drink it, smoke it, or snort it. I bought him an already made cigar one year, but he said it was too light and lasted too long. '*I prefer a quirly, Taylor,*' he said. I didn understand em till he said he just liked rollin his own. I've realized over time it is somethin he'll do to give himself a break from life, or work, or me and Ma. He sits in that wooden rocker on the porch, his breeches still dirty from Konkan's ranch, rollin on his leg tobacco from a pouch or tin, dependin if it was a trade with the Arapaho or if it was bought from the general—which is

only when there hasn't been any trade. He was one for plug in the past, but we all got tired of the spittoon, smellin' of rot carcass and havin' to empty the sludge into the lake, the fish tastin' it with open mouths, it stickin' to the white of their eyes when raisin' up their heads.

"What are you doing sitting on your father's chair?" Ma walks past me with a decayin' tin bucket to the stream. Her bare feet pick up shed pine needles that rise and fall back to the ground. It starts to rain through the grey sky, the pines and aspens pointin' to it, protectin' Ma from soakin' till she gets past the stable. She waddles the bucket till she runs under the roof which is pourin' its own heavier downpour.

"I'm just thinkin'. What should we do for Pa's birthday?"

"I don't quite know. Birthdays weren't really a celebration until you were born. It was only a date that was printed on a piece of paper. It wasn't until I told your Father I was havin' a baby on his day, what... fifteen years past. We kept the tradition since then. But your Father always thinks back to that one."

"So it's your fault we celebrate it then?" I laugh.

"Actually, it's yours."

The rain makes the landscape smell of breathin' soil. Mushrooms hold water on their caps, exhibitin' their marbled stained ash against the autumn scene.

"Maybe I'll get em some chickens and fix the coop."

"He doesn't need anything for his birthday, I promise you," she says against the pitter of water. "He's just thankful you made the move with us. We know you preferred the West."

"I've never seen so much rain in my life till we travelled up here."

"I know." She pauses and looks out, past the door which she's standin' in. Pa starts steppin' in on his horse, tippin' his hat to Ma, lettin' the rain hit his hair. "Isn't it nice?"

Good Morning Good Morning

Alex Yau

Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

“Good morning,” said the boy named Jeffrey.

“Good morning,” I said.

Let’s see, the last time I said “good morning” to Jeffrey would have been three thousand eight hundred twenty-two days ago. Roughly the span of ten years—enough for a change in parliament, or a recession in the economy, or to age a fine wine.

Those three thousand eight hundred twenty-two days passed by quite unceremoniously. Like floating in a boat in a shallow sea. No course of our own, the ebbs of time having long passed us by. The sun would rise every morning, arch overhead, and dip back in the water. Peering over the side, the sea was totally clear. Reflections of white clouds punctuated the blue sky. No birds flew from any direction. If anybody were to ask me, “What did you do during these ten years?” I wouldn’t know what to say.

The fall I turned twenty-six, I was invited to attend an old classmate’s wedding in London. We planned to catch up the morning before, but circumstances had me arriving two hours early. My classmate’s house was a short stroll from Western University, so with nothing else to do, I decided to kill time around campus. It was eight-thirty when I got out of the car, pulled on my jacket, stretched, and headed through the front gates. In the soft morning light, dark pools of yesterday retreated along the field. Sugar maples and ginkgo trees wore the fresh scent of rain, brief flickers of silver nestled in their leaves. Halfway across campus, I unexpectedly ran into Jeffrey.

I couldn’t tell you why my initial reaction was to pretend I didn’t see him. Perhaps I was afraid, but then, I didn’t know what of. What did you say to someone after ten years?

“You sound so different,” was the first thing Jeffrey said to me. He looked much like he did ten years ago. Jeffrey always had a cheerful disposition. His face was round and his short hair stuck up like a young Deryck Whibley. On that day he wore black rimmed glasses and a brown tweed coat. He had just finished marking some papers, he told me, and I caught him on a short break.

“Do you remember Saturday school?” Jeffrey asked me over a coffee. We had made our way to the cafeteria.

How could I forget? The image of Jeffrey was clasped to the image of Saturday school, like bundled manila folders inside my brain. Finger through and you were bound to find both files barely separated, by nothing but a thin, blue divider.

Jeffrey and I had both attended a Saturday language school in our youth. Having immigrant parents all but ensured our enrollment—a futile attempt at rediscovering our cultural language. For three hundred seventy-eight Saturdays, I woke up and went to school, where I would see Jeffrey, feet dangling on the podium of the atrium. Waiting for our friends and the morning bell, we spoke about ordinary things: TVB dramas, Saturday cartoons, quizzes on dictation, how we wanted to leave.

Our school was a borrowed space—it was a Catholic school during the week—our classrooms the kind with educational posters, a Canadian flag, and a PA speaker. The room always emanated the smell of burnt pencil shavings. We often spoke in English (our teachers never liked that), and our morning announcements were held in English by our old, white principal (I always wondered why he wanted to supervise a school of Chinese kids). Every week, we were reminded not to mess with the belongings in the desks. We took our seats, collectively yawned, hung our coats on our chairs, and the day would officially start with a greeting: “早晨!” *Jo Sun! Good Morning!*

For three hundred seventy-eight Saturdays, Jeffrey and I said “good morning” and sat next to each other, perfunctorily solving the many challenges of learning our own language. I

was always impressed with his retention for it, that he even had time to study. His parents were rarely home and his grandparents spoke not a lick of English (other than the word “eat”). On weekdays he cooked for his sister, or was at Kumon, or taekwondo, or Air Cadets. He studied alone, ate alone, created for himself his own worldly existence.

I thought back to a time when we were studying in his dining room. In the warm summer evening, the room, like a floating lantern, bloomed tepidly in the mellow darkness. Through the grid of the screen door, crickets chirped among the rumbling of neighbourhood air conditioners, the low droning washing ashore in our minds. At seven o’clock, Jeffrey closed his notebook, walked to the kitchen, pulled out pots from the cupboard and opened the refrigerator. I offered to cook—I had started learning to cook then—but Jeffrey said it was fine and carried on with swift, practiced motions. He was the one who always took care of things, after all.

During our last three years of Saturday school, our program shut down from low attendance and we were forced to transfer to a neighbouring school’s language program. We were sixteen then, displaced in an isolated space, with no familiar faces but each other’s. Of course, with graduation near, we were sure that if we put our heads down together we could get by like we always had.

Except I didn’t make it to graduation. Before our final year, I dropped out and left Jeffrey behind. It was fall then too, the earth eroding with the brittleness of rusted bronze. Frail trees languished along the stale path to our school. Breathing that bitter air, my lungs stung, even long after I entered the front doors. I wondered what Jeffrey thought that day when I told him I was leaving. I wondered what I had thought on that last day of class. Jeffrey’s seat was one row in front of me, and when he turned around, as he did every Saturday morning, I remembered his expression was of the fall.

Habitual

Erin Brenneman

Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

What of the spaces I used to inhabit?
To inhabit is to know time intimately,
is to await the season's passage,
is to watch the tree's stars
fall from grace, settle against
snow;

it softens at first sight of spring.

Love is sacrifice,

loving means letting go,

it knows,

as the paint peels back,
revealing the heart of this home
of four walls; before it, the fields
bled into one another without fear
of death, but

they did die;

and I wonder, would I startle
at the passing of seasons
as I do the suburbs which stretch
their sleepy limbs, shake my shoulders,
rouse me from dreams of a landscape
lost in my leave?

And my return
cannot recover what I once knew
though I certainly try, residual
rage rises at the sight
of these dirt roads, does not recognize
gravel giving way to asphalt,
refusing to register—

shock—

at these changes,
foreign familiarities you feel
you should have expected

as one does those shifting seasons,
and maybe you would have
were you to witness it in seconds
over months, rather than all at once,
granted a gradual grieving,
but you must mourn
those months in the minutes it takes
to travel that lane, leading
to a home you

no longer inhabit.

An Evening in my Home

Lekan Olasina

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

[the television drowns in hardly perceptible news] [my stomach roars defiance] [a door creaks in reply] [yoruba flies from my Mum's throat] [a stair bench presses her bodyweight] [my Dad avalanches a response] *I felt nauseous* [the table clashes with cutlery] *for a while I felt nauseous* [paprika & oregano flirt with my nostrils] [Dad's grunts gallivant] [an airplane monologues in the distance] *I felt nauseous and now I feel* [the ottoman recites his annoyance] [wine glasses BEAM to be chosen] *non-nauseous but in between better and* [Mum's mother tongue croons around corners] [the wardrobes war with themselves] *good enough to do my homework, it's piling* [forks and knives riot for my interest] and time is dying by the minute [Mum drums a plate onto the table] [the cupboard ghosts her] [silence settles on the throne] *but I'd rather keep typing* [a plate evacuates from its hold] [the microwave SLAMS like poetry] [my faucet w h i s p e r s] [the heater sings nothing] *this poem, this poem is* [toes shuffle] [language swings from wall to wall] [cutlery bangs like a 45] [voices raise ceilings] [Dad says *O dā* discussion-ended] *a nice one, I like its* [spoons trash talk] [the microwave arrests my ear lobes] *its pace and its place, it makes me excited* [the food subpoena my belly food court appearance is missed] [the armchair ROOOOOOOOOOOOOCKS to Kings of Leon] *for what's next, I hear* [the floorboards kidnap my tempo] *myself running out of time, I* [Dad declares CC: the TV channels bow in obedience] *must put down the pen; the virtual fingertips writing this* [the carpet burns wildfire warmth] [my sister's absence screams] [corollas colonize my streets] [midnight murders the day] *melody and sonnet; this isn't a sonnet or a* [my refrigerator cackles] [moldy cheese curses back] *melody but a waste of time* [BBBBUUUUUUUUZZZZZZZZZZZZ: my alarm earthquakes] *I hope this poem wasn't a waste of time.*

Homemade Banana Bread

Lauren Redwood
Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

HOMEMADE BANANA BREAD

This homemade banana bread recipe peels away the crusty layers of the unnecessary, and is a delicious treat to be enjoyed in the backseat at the drive-in. Packed inside are the million dreams only discussed in privacy. The recipe brings out the flavour of a summer night, when you were a kid yelling “CAR!” as your friends disperse to the side of the road, clutching buckets of chalk, hockey sticks, soccer balls, and dolls. And it raises the question: is home only a place?

Prep Time: Falling off the swing in the playground

Cook Time: Months and months

Total Time: A lifetime

Servings: 1

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups of crocheting on the sofa with granny
- 1 teaspoon of sprawling on the grass
- ¼ teaspoon of texts from friends, even the ones across the country
- ¾ cup of opening a comfort book, the spine taped up
- ½ cup of butter, you want the banana bread to be rich, rich in memory, in texture
- 2 sessions of belting songs in the car
- 2 ⅓ cups of mashed bananas, yum

DIRECTIONS:

Step 1: Preheat the oven to 350 °F and remember to let out the dogs; they love to play in the

evening. Fresh spring air greets you on the back step and vanilla trails from inside the powder room. The world is on pause this Sunday. Stand here, right here, in this backyard as the dogs prance around. Collars jangling. Mouths open, tongues out, teeth flashing. One wouldn't think this cluster of memories is where my home lies, but this is where I lay to rest when my bones grow weary and my heart feels undercooked.

Step 2: Combine the ingredients. Stir in the face of mortality; these memories are not mortal. Pour into the racing game I'm playing with my brother, the sun setting just through the round mirror across the hallway. We pour the wine under the table. Don't worry—I'll fill your cup. Tip the bottom up so it coats the throat. The clock strikes 12. Happy New Year! Blend the nights where laughter is needed and silly videos are played, where I glimpse that one dimple on your face. Knead our favourite songs and you're there, listening to me, to it. Should we sprinkle some chocolate chips?

Step 3: Bake in the preheated oven until a new journal page is flipped, a new candle lit. The banana bread must be soft inside. Sculpt it like hands that slide and mould pottery as the studio's cats lounge on the countertops and shelves. Granny is bringing in more glaze. Unspoken words are written across the treetops and clouds pass through the open sky roof. My hair reaches in the wind as my friend's new puppy slobbers on my legs in the back seat. He's very keen to lick my face. I lay to rest in your arms, smelling the cinnamon from your tea and the banana bread curled up like chocolate labs in the oven.



Woven Low Stool

Lindsey Ainsworth

Third Year - Craft & Design (Furniture)

A light and colourful addition to a home, this stool is simple yet playful with a handwoven seat. The twine was an exercise in sustainability, being made with fabric scraps.



Home Sick

Meghna Chembil Palat

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

CW: child abuse

When mom and pop—I mean Mrs. Lisa and Mr. Andrew. They told me that I wasn't supposed to call them mom and pop. Mrs. Lisa and Mr. Andrew would play a game every night. Mrs. Lisa called it the "screaming match." She always won round one, but Mr. Andrew always won round two, which began when the glasses started breaking. Mrs. Lisa had a lot of bruises at the end, but I didn't think it hurt her because she never went to the hospital and her bruises magically disappeared. I've wondered if she could make mine disappear too, but I would *never* ask her that.

My teddy bear, Mr. Ruffles kept me company when the screaming match lasted until midnight. I named him after my favourite snack, Ruffles, which I would steal from the pantry when my stomach ached from hunger.

I found Mr. Ruffles in an empty shoe box by the corner of my bedroom. I was helping Mrs. Lisa bake a cake when I accidentally dropped the spatula slathered with cake batter, and when she saw the mess on the floor, she was not happy. The rest was a blur. When I woke up from a long nap, there were bruises on my arm and I'd wet the bed.

Mr. Ruffles got up from the shoe box. The tie on his trench coat looked crooked and his dandy tool belt hung around his hips. He cocked his head when he saw me. He was just as surprised as I was. I thought stuffed animals only came alive in movies, but it didn't matter to me either way, because he promised he'd use his tool belt to build a rocketship so that we could go on a magical joy ride. He looked at the moon, eyes were shining from its light as he told the story about Goldilocks.

I dreamed that one day I'd own a big home just like her. I'd have a lifetime supply of porridge and own a thousand chairs

and a thousand beds. Mr. Ruffles was proud of me for having dreams because he couldn't dream. I told him he'd have his own room one day in our dream house. He'd get his own companion instead of being mine all the time. Her name would be Mrs. Feathers and she'd make him smile big. They'd rest on the fireplace and look outside the window to the backyard, reminiscing about their dream lives.

That night, he took my hand and pressed it against his fluffed chest. I was confused at first, but then he leaned in, touched his forehead with mine and whispered into my ear, "We are one and we always will be." That was all I needed to hear. He wiped my tears with his handkerchief, and healed my bruises with gentle strokes. The rest of the night was peaceful.

When I woke up the next morning, I couldn't find him. I searched for him in every spot in the house until I found him in the basement. Poor Mr. Ruffles. . . . His beaming eyes and the loose threads around the buttons on his trench coat sat in a bundle on the cold floor. A pair of scissors had torn through his heart like a deadly toothpick. My heart was aching too. His tie was slightly ripped and it was his favourite thing in the whole world. He felt fancy in it.

I tiptoed into Mrs. Lisa's room. Mrs. Lisa snored peacefully. She was a deep sleeper. I carefully grabbed the sewing kit from her desk. I pricked my thumb and pinky trying to sew Mr. Ruffles back together. Down the hall, I heard the *thud, thud* of Mr. Andrew's footsteps. I slowly pulled the scissors out of Mr. Ruffles and used it to cut the piece of thread from the sewing machine. I held him close and crouched low beside the front door as Mr. Andrew opened it and peered in. I closed my eyes, praying for him to close the door behind him. The door creaked shut and I hugged Mr. Ruffles tight. I said sorry for ruining his precious tie and continued sewing him back together.

It was worth every cut. He didn't look brand new in the end. His eyes were in the wrong place and his tool belt was lopsided, though I made sure to sew his tie neatly. I think he appreciated that. I made sure to keep him in a special place in my room where he'd be safe from all harm, underneath the

floorboards in the closet. I'd take him out when I was alone in my room or when Mrs. Lisa and Mr. Andrew weren't home.

One day, when Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Lisa were taking their hour-long nap, I snuck out of the living room window that they left open. Mr. Ruffles held my hand and led the way to the forest behind the park. There were clouds in the sky shaped like hearts and ducks. I waved to the ice cream truck driver across the street, but then got scared that he'd tattletale on me to Mrs. Lisa and Mr. Andrew. Another boy, who looked just like me, flew his balloon in the air with his parents until he let go of it. They picked him up so he could watch it fly away. I had never been up in the sky so high.

After some time, we reached an apple tree. A baby apple swung helplessly as if somebody had shaken the tree on purpose. The wind swooshed against it and it fell on top of a small mountain of dirt. I picked it up and brushed some of it away. It still looked brand new.

There was a compass underneath the pile of dirt. I held it to my heart and got excited as it pointed east. I began skipping in that direction. A few minutes later, I looked down at it. It was pointing towards me. Curiosity shot through me, but my heart felt heavy too.

leave the porch light on T.D.

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

the first song i remember was a rock song, played by my father
who took my mother by the hand
and i watched them dance;
while the cat, all black,
made himself home at my feet
my brother named him pumpkin
why? i could not tell you, it made sense
to us then, as children
with imaginations larger than the milky way
but still, i remember home clear as day
even though i have not lived there
for more than three years.
mother would cut me fruit for breakfast
when i did not ask,
i have my whole life to make it up to her.
father would wake me before the sun rose
and made sure my soccer shoes were tied tightly
so i could run and win and make him proud
even though he never demanded it of me.
my brother left home when i did
a built-in best friend
i've never known a world without him,
so i cherish the times we are all back in the kitchen,
parents cooking,
the smell of pepper as it roasts on the stove,
my brother and i sitting in front of the tv,
and even though im now twenty-three,
mother still cuts the fruit for me.
i don't play soccer anymore, but my father said
he's still proud as can be.
we sit and we eat, and mother says
she has to pay the electricity bill,
its racked up quite a lot

when my brother and i ask why, she says
she leaves the porch light on
every night.
in case he or i
suddenly decide
that we need to come home



In This Moment We Are Home

Lauren Redwood

Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

The dusk settles in soft violet hues over the hills of Circle Square Ranch. It is the beginning of spring and the fields are muddy. The air is crisp and the horses playfully chase your friend behind you while you take this picture, of a curious, mischievous horse named Whisper. A moment forever stilled in youth and nostalgia... and home.

Return to Away

Jesse Lynn Train

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

The river walks up the shore in stone steps. A floating craftsmanship of driftwood and mouldy ropes bobs on the current. Hang on tight for the threads drawn bare, catching slip with every wave. My brothers and I, we run from the top of the hill to the edge of the gravel shore. The last one in the water uses their pocket change to buy us ice cream—the first one, their choice of fireworks.

Auntie brings out the radio, dancing with her Ma to a song about some girl and her yellow bikini. Our cousin prefers Gwen Stefani, but she always disappears before the end of the song.

One of those boats—the ones with the pedals, that can barely fit three people, made out of a hard, blue plastic—floats next to the dock. Sometimes, with enough of a push, the waves steal it away and Dad would make us herd it back home.

Nan, Nanna, and Nanny sit in the sun on the deck, cards in one hand and tequila in the other. They never get along this well without the tequila. They play and gossip and gossip and play until they don't remember which came first, trading the chore to mix the next drink. My brothers laugh in the water and refuse to come in for lunch. Warm currents keep them apart in the body of the lake.

I get out and help Ma and Auntie and Nan set the table, then get distracted feeding the squirrels thieving our lunch. Dad complains about their droppings on the porch, then Ma sneaks over some leftovers with a grin. She has a soft spot for those squirrels.

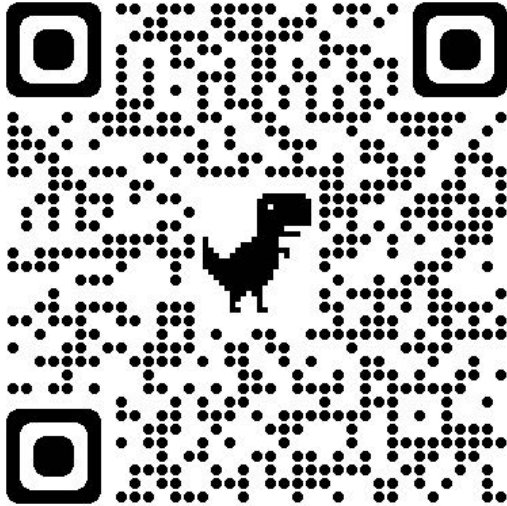
When the sun melts into the waves and the moon takes its place, Nanna and Auntie set blankets out on the rocks and we listen to the crickets and frogs, watch the firebugs tidy the weeds, jump at the explosion of brilliant reds and whites across the night sky bursting from the other shore. Our neighbour's

party, private yet public at the same time, voices ferrying over the waves. My brothers put on a show; they each cast themselves a role and tease one another in funny voices.

Not too long after, the Nanns bark at us: *"Off to bed with y'all. The grown-ups need time."*

We leave tomorrow and the cottage would belong to our uncle for the rest of the weekend. Until then, my brothers, my cousin, and I take our lanterns and wind-up torches and tell ghost stories and play shadows. The last one awake has to go around and turn off all the lights before Dad comes in to check on us, extinguishing the last of our energy and plunging us into our dreams.

Listen on YouTube!



Summer Like Never Before

Alexandra Lilley

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

This song is about being stuck in a moment of uncertainty, but living with the hope that the other side of this season will be bright.

105.7 (Sunny Days)

Ashley Haynes

Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

In the morning the radio is turned on: MOVE 105.7

The music is the voice of this home, a floor-level apartment with a grassy yard for us to play in

The sounds are as classic as our laughter in the summertime,

I can see the flowers growing in the garden, tended with love and sound.

Do you smell the pancakes cooking? Do you taste the scrambled eggs through the breeze from the sliding glass door? It is summer and so the door is always open.

My sister and I bounce a tennis ball on the tiles, higher and higher. Can we catch it?

The song changes and the ball doesn't matter anymore. Now we are dancing, and breakfast is ready.

The music is blasting, but never too loud.

It is the sound of the wind. It is the breath of the season.

Thank you Grammy for the food, thank you for keeping the radio on and dancing with us.

Let's walk to the beach, down the streets of St. Catharines and into Port Dalhousie.

The music follows us, it is the spirit of the city. It follows us to the merry-go-round, still five cents a ride.

Around and around we go.

It is summer and summer is endless when you are ten years old and singing to music you don't yet understand.

The beach is full of beasts, plastic tigers and lions, driftwood in the shape of a shark.

The adventures sprout up from the earth.

This place is a haven for creativity.

How many stories did we tell?

How many worlds did we leave half-formed on the stinking, frothy shores?

Too many and not enough.

Did you know that at one point you could actually buy Willy Wonka bars in Port Dalhousie?

The shop hummed with familiar tunes as we browsed. I found a chocolate bar; my sister claimed an everlasting gobstopper.

"Can I get this please?" I asked the clerk, pushing a few loonies onto the counter, loonies from Grammy, of course.

He has to turn down the radio to hear me.

Bloodlines

Matthew Boylan

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

The family is in motion, each prompted to tasks unsaid but known by all. Food prepared, the smell of salted protein and buttered starches permeate the dense air of the kitchen. Light breathing and shrill voices hover around the legs of the adults as the children partake in their fragmentary games, where the bodies and rules are in constant motion.

Bodies in motion—conversation occupies the spaces in between.

In the corner sits the uncle whom no one ever sees, compelled by birthright to attend a single family gathering a year—a man composed entirely of reflection and wary apprehension, whose eyes reflect a sadness masked by a face of quiet contemplation. It is no use to ask him questions—his answers are entirely composed of generic platitudes. His multitudes are hidden within his depths, and he will bring them to his grave.

In the kitchen stands the grandmother, a lifetime of knowledge contained within each rise and fall of her hand. Her smile belays warmth that no fire can replicate. No melancholy can withstand a hand on the shoulder and a kiss on the forehead. With each passing gaze it becomes readily apparent why the Earth is considered a mother. Like a symphony, the meals here are not simply prepared, but composed. With each passing year you cannot help but notice each movement becomes more laboured, words become fewer and farther between—but the smile remains. And as each passing moment brings us closer to the end, we can close our eyes and dwell within that warmth.

In the Kitchen stands the youngest daughter, and she confides in us her fears.

She fears the interlocking brick of the sidewalk, the tapestry of architecture, and the symmetry of the ascending towers of her home.

She fears repetition.

She fears the patterns of her mind, dynamic and consistent.

In the kitchen stands the oldest daughter. Determined, singularly focused, she began her portion of the meal at home. Her husband could not come—he was “busy with work”. Drawing upon the collective memory of her mother and her grandmother, she strives for perfection—a portrait of composure. We are all composed of the collective memories of our past. Her focus masks the nagging doubt in her mind.

He was always busy with work.

In the corner sits the father; he lives in blissful ignorance. This allows him the ability of unbridled conversation with the uncle in the corner, whom no one ever sees. Their conversation will not be transcribed by the poets, or recorded for future generations: it simply happens. Platitudes and quips, observations and commentary—it flows as any river—drawn on by the force of gravity.

In the dining room the mother is in motion: ageless, defined by fierce independence and composure. Within her resides all, and she lets none see. The world has instilled within her this necessity. The lines on her face and her clenched jaw are beginning to show signs of aging, yet her sharp beauty is stark against the ravages of time. Her arms remain open for all those who rely on her strength—for strength is transitory—and hers must be passed on.

In the corner is the collection of cousins. They are deep in conversation about worldly events.

One believes things are bad, while the other supposes things are good. One believes that things could be changed, while one wants to maintain the status quo. One of the others is not interested but chimes in now and then. Youth instills in us a concern for the worldly, and within their circle rages the fire of youth. This, too, will pass in time, as the world wearies them with its inevitability and repetition.

I sit by my grandfather, who sits by the television, for all grandfathers—either from lack of patience or familial fatigue—must sit by the television. Sports and news are entirely irrelevant to a man of such age. As a young man, I stare and

wonder what he thinks. Once comprised of youth, his eyes his eyes are now glazed, mouth set in a corpse-like grimace. Time attends to us all, yet how do we attend to those with little time remaining?

The cousins' conversation rages in the corner while the father laughs at his joke and the uncle smiles in kind and the daughter fears repetition. The grandmother smiles as the mother is in motion. The children's games take on new dimensions as they run by the television, and the grandfather is sitting as images pass him in slow motion. Worldly events pass by on the screen and the grandfather watches. If anyone were to look closely, they would see he is breathing slower. His eyes wander and he opens his senses to the sights and smells of a household in motion. Images from a lifetime take place in an instant; for him, everything in his life has taken place in an instant. He smiles.

For him, time has stopped moving.

Cranberry Forest

Dani Arieli

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

In the auditory stagnant of my familiar
darkness, these honeyed fingers
and cranberry lips meticulously germinate
beneath my pine-prickled girdle, and I writhe
longingly in the presence of my own comfort—
my effete veil of golds and sour soot,

my rapturously rasping and tranquil
lamina that is home! The blood of

my berries lap richer than a hare's
blest foot, and they burst into fragmented
purity for no man. My leaves may be redolent
of maple mischief, but they wilt only under
the perverted prodding of the other; for my
bloom flourishes under the sun of my mind,

and the moon of my fidelity.

This enclosure of feminine frailty and effeminate ferity
bears only witness to the berry-crested piquing
of the forest; the virtue of elk, the silver snare
of fox, the omniscience of tawny owls—this skin
will know only the delicacy of my care.

So, when I shroud my dicot in the sultry
crepuscule of my own, dianthus countryside
at the first peak of dawn, I need not pry my
eyes to another's seed—nor reach and beg and
cheat for the soothing of humanistic desire;

instead, my home is in the wondrous
treeline of pendulum-shaped

stars, fruitful bushes of bittersweet
decorum, and the coltish lilt
of critters chattering birdsong.

Only within the fingerprinted smears
of cranberry-creased urgency
and dotted and dabbled diaphaneity,
will this forest bend its branches—
welcoming me home.

Around the Sun

Filomena DeRose

Second Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

There's never any fear when nights like these come to an end. When the flames dwindle to embers and ash. Alessia pokes them, even glances at the forest and eyes the logs we can lug over to reignite the bonfire. But moonlight is limited.

There'll be another night of burnt marshmallows and outdated high school gossip. Seline and I will dance along to 80s pop songs, stumbling to the sun-bleached grass. The next time we drive up to a weekend rented cottage we'll sip handcrafted slushies and gorge on charcuterie platters and get cookie crumbs inside our tank tops.

When the autumn fog rolls in, and temperatures dip, we still insist on cold drinks. We walk to the boba shop, in mismatched Halloween costumes, and patiently wait for our orders. The park on this side of town is always empty at this hour, so we head there as we fill up on bubble tea and waffles. Seline sighs, breath leaving in warm puffs, as we huddle inside the mouth of a round slide. My leather jacket doesn't provide much warmth, no matter how much I curl myself inside it. Alessia has resorted to sitting on her hands. Even though we could head back to my driveway, we continue to shiver in the park.

We take turns letting each other yelp out frustrations. The trees eavesdrop as we vent about people who've hurt us, fear of leaving the world of academia, workplace annoyance and shitty management. Pent-up drama releases in huffs and shaking hands. Bubble waffles catch our tears. Our inner children heal one another.

To escape the winter slush, we huddle around the dining table exchanging presents, spilling coffee, or shouting over one another during a board game. Some nights, we let ourselves get snowed in. We marathon movies—gasping at the screen

as the characters do the exact opposite of what we yelled at them to do.

"Neighbours across the lake must be able to smell the popcorn," Alessia jokes, as Seline microwaves her third bag. She crumples the cellophane and tosses it at Alessia but it floats down, a few centimetres away from her, landing on the counter.

"That's just your way of thanking me for pausing the movie because you're scared," Seline says. "So, you're welcome!"

"Am not!" Alessia laughs.

"You've been watching from behind that pillow," I say.

"Y'all insist on horror—I don't care for it."

"You're scared of it," Seline says, pouring the popped kernels into her bowl.

"It's okay." I pat Alessia's shoulder. "Seline can fend off zombies with her popcorn breath—"

"I thought you were on my side!" she scoffs and the popcorn she throws lands in my hair.

These scenes, our banter and teasing, will roll though the reel, again and again. Like film, we're projected into my place, Seline's apartment, or Alessia's basement.

Sitting on the seesaw in early spring, on a night frost coats our throats, we giggle and launch one another into the air as if we were twelve years old. I rig the rhythm, slamming my weight down to the mulch-covered ground, while Seline shrieks and kicks. Alessia, who ran off to explore, dangles off the monkey bars.

Seline shouts "Hope you fall!" as Alessia begins showing off—pull up after pull up.

Our friendship remains playful as we grasp the straws of adulthood splayed ahead of us. Well into our twenties—too old for this jungle gym—we find playgrounds, and call them ours.

The night ends and we split off. *I'm not ready to go home.* But home isn't a single place I can push a pin into on a map. It's not an empty cottage or boba shop full of strangers. A park with plastic swings that bite our skin only feels like home

when Alessia and Seline are there with me.

The three of us meld our memories at the scratched dining table as Seline dares me to lick the chocolate drizzle and melted ice cream off the plate, or outside our old school where Alessia bets Seline that she won't slide down a snow-covered hill on her math binder, or in Alessia's backyard as she picks up her guitar and plays the sweetest melody. It doesn't matter whose house we're at when we queue up music videos for our karaoke session, as long as our lungs burn and we can't stop smiling as we belt along to the ballads. There's never any fear when nights like these come to an end.

Déjà vu

Dolores Kit

First Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

Butter sizzles, pops, smokes;
Sunday pancakes
in the iridescent grey of dawn.

Your kiss, sticky like maple on my lips;
it smacks of home.

I wish it didn't.

You talk more than my mother's parakeet,
Aureolin chatter, saturating the air;
a warm, unknown aura
illuminating you from within.

Everything about you is new.
There are baby trees
growing on your window sill.
You stir cinnamon in your coffee.
Who does that shit? I like it.

You are soft: waving your arms,
irate on my behalf
when I told the 'why' of the scar on my hip.
You call my past loves blasphemy.
So, I stopped telling you about them;
choking on ghosts, sucking the fetid slime
of decomposing trauma across my tongue,
down my throat, into a rotting sea
of stagnate memory.
I don't want them to taint you.

Knowing you has made me superstitious:
I knock on wood,
I don't unpack the last box,

the most important one
with my diplomas and childhood knickknacks.
I say we're not really dating,
I say I don't not love you;
anything to stave off the day
you become yet another misbegotten home.

The Island

Victoria Filippo

Third Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

CW: Implied self-harm and misogyny.

My family has lived on the island for as long as our blood has existed.

My brother rules it all on his throne made of silver spoons and sewing thread, sprinkled with volcanic ash. He is the last boy who can pass on the legacy of our people, our namesake. He wears no crown, but rather, a necklace passed down from throat to throat of every patriarch that ruled here before. He is young and arrogant, and most of us women believe him to be tyrannical.

My father, second-in-command, says nothing of his father's necklace on his son's throat. My uncle, the rightful patriarch, looks into the vast blue sea and pretends to know nothing—as if he wasn't the one to hand the necklace into my brother's lap.

No matter. The women are unbothered, for they only have one loyalty: the piece of gold around my brother's neck, the personification of Mezzasalma blood. The same my grandmother and mother bleed, yet they are held down by the weight of their maiden names—never truly a Mezzasalma, but always an Angeli, a Spitili, a Martino. We were born Mezzasalma women, yes, but one day we may be a Smith, a Plath, a Ferrari or a Rossi. No matter what, even then, we will never truly be a Rossi or a Ferrari because we are held down by the weight of our Mezzasalma name, the one my brother gets to keep but I must barter away to some nobleman on the mainland, far away from the sandy embrace of my grandmother's sunken-in face. How my sister and I tip-toe the shore as if it were a living thing, avoiding foamy salt spray and our mother's tide. I wish not to leave this island, with the olive trees and hazelwood.

I wish to rip the golden necklace from my brother's throat

and throw it to the waters, where the dead have floated from our grasp, and allow them to decide—is it better to be weighed down by a name or a cinder block? Is it better to be sold to another man than to be manacled to an expectation? We will never bargain our last name again, sending it out into the night like a whispered yearn, never to be upon anyone's lips again.

I *am* my name, and that is one thing no one can take away.
Not a man, not an island.

I sit in the thicket, watching my brother who shares my eyes, my mouth, my nose—the one I had first—and listen to him lament to my dad, uncle, and his courtesans who hate him as much as I do. His words are covered in poison, and I allow them all to drink. I will wait for my turn.

The next morning, my cousin leaves the island to marry a wealthy man. She brings helenite and stones of all shapes, colours, and sizes, as a memory of the island. She never returns after that. We do not know what becomes of her namesake.

AA-Wing at Sheridan College

Vivian Cheng

Third Year - Illustration

This digital painting is of a view the artist has seen for the past five years at Sheridan College.



Four Years this April, Two Years Ago this May

Blythe Smith

Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

It's difficult to raise your glass to home when, time and time again, you wave goodbye to the people who make it feel like so—your reflection fades in the rearview mirror of maroon minivans, packed to the brim with blue Rubbermaid bins and standing mirrors wrapped with towels, not bubble wrap. The cars taking your friends away are dusty; they spit dirt back at you. You enter through the double doors with speckles of mud and slush on your spring jacket.

For the most part, you know they're going to better places, or that their leaving is just part of the butterfly effect of their poor choices, so, really, you can't whine about it. No matter how hard you may want to.

There are small victories, of course, in your dorm family leaving. You get gifted items they don't want to pack up: loaves of bread, ends already discarded, and popsicles that would melt on the journey home. I have three jars of chopped garlic in my fridge, one from each friend who is no longer down the hall, or up a floor or two.

"Everybody leaves, but you stay here," was something another Long-Time-Stay-er said to me during a summer where everyone had gone home to their families, while we remained situated between too-white walls. It's a familiar sting, a familiar lump in the back of your throat, when you watch your people leave you behind. As another friend slams down the hatchback, shoving their last backpack into the backseat and pulling me in for a hug, I find comfort in knowing the lump isn't as choking as the one when you left.

The home we had been so eager to decorate with polaroid pictures and cactus-shaped magnets hadn't turned out how we expected. IKEA trips. New kettle. Enough floral-printed plates for the both of us. If ketchup could rot, our dishes would

have been done for.

Everything soiled: by infidelity, and by things much more difficult to fix.

Up until the day you moved out, I constantly asked myself whether I would block your number once your last box was out of my sight. I was constantly plagued with the back and forth between us. A they-love-me, they-love-me-not. A will-they, won't-they. The answer was determined by how things went each day we continued to cohabit. Whether things were cordial, and we shared laughs next to the kitchen sink, or whether we played warzone—or worse, ignored as if the other didn't cohabit.

The day before, I remember stating silently to myself that yes, I would block your number, and that would be that. My hands would be rid of ketchup stains, and my nostrils rid of rot. Perhaps I would celebrate. Perhaps I would buy a cake. *Good Riddance* in cream frosting. Wash my hands for five minutes, and dry them on *my* hand towel.

I feel there is no way I can say it at this point in time, other than: I wasn't previously aware humans could make the sounds that left my mouth when you closed the door behind you. A kind of wailing, a kind of howling, a kind of heaving but with nothing expelled. I describe it as primal, that sound. Animalistic. I waited at your window overlooking the parking lot in case you swung around to throw away leftover scraps of cardboard. You didn't, but I still stood there for forty-five minutes, even though I had a shift that started in an hour. Your dad must have thought doing so was unnecessary—a waste of time.

I was glad most others (everyone except for me, practically) also moved out that day, for fear of my neighbours hearing the sounds that escaped my mouth. A dog with a snapped femur, left behind in a landlord-special'd kitchenette.

As I go to throw out the recycling, I catch a glimpse inside the window of my old-old-old room. Now oh-so accustomed to being moved from dorm to dorm, my warzone feels so far away. I see no remnants of shrapnel tangled up in the blinds.

I take a deep breath, remembering a hug that had lingered

too long upon exit. A future slaughtered by circumstances I couldn't control. I tear my eyes away, and whisper that I'm happy that the new inhabitant made my prison look so homey.

I wipe my hands on the thighs of my jeans, get a better grip at the edge of the recycling bin, and carry on.

I'm grateful, in such circumstances, that everybody leaves. I stay here, exactly where I am supposed to be, nested in a dorm with a ketchup-ban. Battle bunker packed away, shoved under my bed in a blue Rubbermaid bin.

Additional Artworks

Front Cover

The Town Mouse and The Country Mouse

Vivian Cheng

Third Year - Illustration

This block print is based on one of Aesop's Fables. In the story, two mice visit one another and discover that they prefer the home they have always known.



Back Cover and Bookmark

Lost

Kara Woodburn

Fourth Year - Creative Writing & Publishing

Sometimes our connections to home can become clearer and more distinct the further we are from it.



Contributors

Alex Yau is from Mississauga, Ontario. His writing accounts the lived experiences and reflections of second-generation Canadian-Chinese cultural identity. His stories have featured in the *B222 Journal*, *The Publishers Desk*, and soon, *The Familiars Magazine*. Outside of writing, Alex spends his time plotting with his dog, Kiko.

Alexandra Lilley is enjoying her third year in the Creative Writing & Publishing program here at Sheridan. She loves to create, from songwriting to poetry, and even crochet. You can find her enjoying one of her many creative endeavours when she isn't procrastinating, or obsessing over her dog.

Antonella Finch is Verushka Vásquez, born in Venezuela. When she was four she moved to Colombia and completed her high school in México. She is currently in Canada and this has all given her a special form to see the world. She thinks that writing is the best way to share a point of view to the world, so she will take her chances to express her own perspectives and emotions with her work.

Ashley Haynes is an author, entrepreneur, and photographer. She enjoys travelling and spending time with her pets. Her writing primarily encompasses a number of themes such as memory, grief, and self-discovery, and she loves to write pieces that give readers an opportunity to look at situations through a new lens. After graduation, Ashley hopes to work in a marketing role for a publishing house. You can find Ashley on Instagram @Ashley.Haynes.Author

Blythe Smith is a Canadian author, poet, and essayist. Smith is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in creative writing and publishing at Sheridan College, and her writing has been featured in literary journals such as *B222 Journal*. She currently lives in Keswick, Ontario, with her cat Guillotine.

Carter Robert Hawkins is from Hamilton, Ontario.

Dani Arieli is a poet and fiction/creative non-fiction writer, and has been nose-deep in eloquent and tasteful prose for as long as she could deftly twirl a pencil. She flourishes when crafting works that push the literary limits of the imagination, and has since been published in the 2023 Fall Issue of the *B222 Journal*, with her poem, 'Fo'lornne, the Feathered Saint'.

Dolores Kit is a Canadian-American poet and writer. Her passion for writing is fueled by her experiences as a queer, neurodivergent woman and her belief in the healing and transformative nature of art. She proudly calls Toronto home and is pursuing a degree in creative writing and publishing.

Erin Brenneman is a writer, editor, and reviewer based in Mississauga, Ontario. She is in her fourth year of Sheridan College's Honours Bachelor of Creative Writing & Publishing program and most recently had a review of James Lindsay's *Only Insistence* published in Issue No. 5 of *The Ampersand Review of Writing & Publishing*. After graduation, she will be attending Simon Fraser University for their Master of Publishing program.

Filomena DeRose is an aspiring author who enjoys romance, fantasy, ghost stories, poetry, and more. She is working towards an Honours Bachelor of Creative Writing & Publishing at Sheridan College, Canada. You can find her reading in the park, writing in a cafe, or walking down a wooded trail.

Jesse Lynn Train was born and raised in Newmarket Ontario. She uses her creative skillset play with imagery and intent as she explores themes of family, grief, and death.

Kara Woodburn enjoys encountering new ways to share stories. She hopes to one day make a living by creating an endless stream of comic books.

Lauren Otto enjoys taking documentary and portrait photographs. She would characterize her look as authentic and natural. Particularly interested in the narrative aspects of photography, her art conveys the vulnerability that accompanies everyday life and its realism. Having a large family and witnessing her sister develop into a strong mother intrigues her. She finds a mother's relationship with her child and the intimate moments between them to be compelling.

Lauren Redwood is a fantasy writer and poet. She has poetry published in the *Dot Dot Journal*, the *Collecting Dust* anthology, and the *B222 Journal*. Lauren spends her days wheelchair racing on the track, crocheting, and reading too many books at once. Find her at LaurenRedwood.com.

Lekan Olasina had a keen interest in the arts as a child. Today, he is a Creative Writing & Publishing student with experience working in the advertising industry.

Lindsey Ainsworth is currently studying Furniture at Sheridan College. She has loved working with wood for as long as she can remember and is enjoying the chance to dive deeper. In her work she strives to consider sustainability of materials, as well as creating beautiful and functional designs which can be enjoyed for generations.

Matthew Boylan with so much to say, Matthew finds it quite hard to write about himself! Matthew is a collection of all the things in his life; his family and friends, inspirations and fears, hopes and dreams, and his pursuit of writing for a living. As vital as breathing—Matthew must write at all costs! He is inspired by beautiful words, and hopes to craft his own for nothing other than a deep compulsion to write. Matthew hopes you enjoy his work, and thanks you for taking a moment to read it.

Meghna Chembil Palat is a Canadian writer based in Brampton, Ontario. She is in her third year of the Honours Bachelor of Creative Writing & Publishing at Sheridan College. Her passion for raising awareness for mental health and domestic violence stemming from personal experiences is deeply reflected in her work. Her published works include the poem, "Fairy Moon" (*Publisher's Desk Magazine*) and the poem, "The Evolutionary Eye" (*B222*, published in 2023). Meghna writes flash fiction and poetry.

Rachelle Lawka is an emerging Canadian poet, writer, and aspiring painter, who has a deep, unyielding love and respect for the nature, which we are all ultimately conceived from. Much of her writing and art is formed around the understanding that both humans and nature are inherently connected, and thus should be embraced equally and wholeheartedly. When she is not writing or painting, you can, instead, find her tending to her plants, reading her cat poetry, or exploring a new hiking trail.

T.D. otherwise known as Talia D'Intino, has been writing since the day she could remember. Born in Niagara, Ontario, she moved to Mississauga and never looked back. Besides writing, she is passionate about art, fashion, and trying new things. Her favourite genre has always been poetry, but she also loves to write fiction and screenplays. Her debut novel, *Heart For Brains*, is available for purchase on Amazon.ca.

Thomas Martins when asked to write a bio, he likes to reminisce on the little things in life: how he likes a cold ice tea sparing him from the unrelenting sun cooking the bleached shore below. He lives to avert his friends and family from the snares of a superficial existence; to make each chapter of life a chapter of a realist novel. Unfortunately, each word typed is at a premium, we'll leave it at that.

Victoria Filippo is an Italian-Canadian writer born and raised in Mississauga with a deep love for her roots, but also, all things strange and whimsical. She is a multi-genre writer, citing works for the stage and screen, but is a prose writer before anything else. *B222* is her first publication, and she is currently working on her first novel.

Victoria Lilley is currently in her third year at Sheridan College studying Creative Writing & Publishing. Residing in Burlington, Ontario, she's a strong advocate for bookstores, bookmarks, black tea, and alliteration. She is incredibly excited to share her work through this semester's *B222 Journal*!

Vivian Cheng is a Chinese Canadian illustrator. Her passion is telling stories and she aspires to one day be a graphic novelist. Currently, she can be found doing homework or sharing a meal with friends, but she would be happy to indulge in a conversation about animation, musicals, or original characters.

Acknowledgements

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A final thank you is also due to our contributors, whose work makes this publication worth reading. Thank you for submitting your work and most importantly, thank you for creating your work in the first place.

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Next Issue

For our third issue, we asked students to submit their work that follows the theme Visions of Home. We were so happy to see what everyone came up with and how they applied this theme to their work in such unique ways.

Without further ado, we are very excited to announce that the theme for the next issue is:

Heebie Jeebies!

What do you think lurks inside your walls and under your bed once you've tucked yourself in? What kind of creatures lurk in the bowels, intestinal or otherwise, in your fridge and in your person? Sink back into the familiar recesses of a child's nightmare-filled mind, or embrace new fears plaguing your adult life.

For our next issue, we want to experience the horrors that truly give you the heebie jeebies. We don't just want to see stories referencing All Hallows' Eve, we want your Christmas time visits from Krampus, everyday horrors—anything that makes the hair on your arms stand on end! Think creepy-crawlies, behemoth-like monsters, ghosts, ghouls, and all things downright horrifying!

Follow wherever your little black heart takes you!

Not looking to submit? You can still get involved by attending *B222* events, joining the *B222* team, or picking up an issue of the journal.

Visit us at:
www.b222journal.ca!







B222

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