

SOMETHING
RICH AND
STRANGE

YU LITERARY MAGAZINE

*Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange*

The Tempest I, 2



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Feeder Fish

Eitan Novick

Forcing his head through the thick brush, Nate came upon a river. It was his river, as he imagined it had always been, even before he first heard its delicate babble. Nate felt the familiar breath of the strong circling winds that seemed to dwell in that enclave this time of year. It whipped about his head, down his back, licking sharply at his body, before curling up around his feet. He loved when the autumn began to turn to winter and the biting cold which made him so acutely aware of every part of his body. That remote spot, along with the thick foliage which defended it, belonged to the town park, but years of neglect had left it unkempt and excessively dirty. Weeds sprang up around the uneven clumps of dirt and rock, stretching their unwanted selves up toward the withered trees above. Candy wrappers and crumbled cans of soda dotted the landscape as if having sprouted there naturally. But through the center of this secluded wilderness, with a cool pristine quality which seemed foreign in that decayed place, ran his river. It flowed so smoothly, deep enough to avoid crashing over its floor, running easily above the rocks and debris. He called it Lethe, the River of Forgetfulness. Nate breathed deeply its dank aroma. It felt moist and refreshing in the back of his throat, slowly cooling his entire body. He removed his shoes, he always did, and felt the pebbles over and between his toes as he walked towards the river's steep banks. Along both sides, short cliffs jutted out, a mere three foot drop but enough for Nate to sit and dangle his bare feet. The river's soft murmur hummed like a lullaby, as if to put him to sleep.

Nate came often during his lunch break, bringing his smiling bag of food from his favorite diner. It was the same bag he had brought for the past six years. But on this day, a different bag sat lopsidedly beside him as he stared down at his river. The few rays of sun that pushed themselves through the trees descended on the translu-

cent plastic, rolling around on its surface, encasing the bag in a glow that seemed to come from within. The bag came from a small pet store near his apartment. Inside the glow, flits of silver swam endlessly by.

Nate worked as a salesman in a store selling bed frames. No mattresses, as he would often have to convince suspecting customers, just the frames. It was his father's store and he had persuaded Nate to start working for him almost six years ago, less than a year after Nate graduated college with a degree in philosophy. That was all the time it took for his father to decide that teaching was not the best choice for his only son. Nate always thought there must be something philosophical about a philosophy major working in a bed-frame store, although he was uncertain what it was. One day he would write about it, he often thought. Whether this job was his ideal choice or not is less relevant than the fact that he was good at what he did. And he did enjoy putting on his salesman face and smiling, talking, selling; being someone else. It pleased him to know he could so easily fool so many.

Nate always thought there must be something philosophical about a philosophy major working in a bed-frame store, although he was uncertain what it was.

The store was called Dan's Bed Frames. Nate had never heard his father go by anything other than Daniel but that didn't bother him. At least it was a genuine enough name for a store. They did sell bed frames, after all. He was just thankful his father hadn't chosen anything too cheesy, like Bed Frame King. The property was once a small performance center and artifacts of its former life were scattered throughout. Four of his father's top selling bed frames occupied what had been the stage. Some of the old studio lighting still hung sporadically from the discolored ceiling, unused. The strip of carpet, which must have once run down the aisle and had been firmly attached to the tile floor, now stretched between and under the bed frames. Parts of the deteriorated band were missing from the initial attempts to tear it up. Some-



times, after a big close, Nate would take an inconspicuous bow and imagine the applause.

That particular sales day began like all others as a few solitary customers slowly trickled into the single story store. Nate spoke with the faces which gradually presented themselves, distinguishable only by their differing perspectives on beds. The hefty man who liked to feel snug in a skinny bed, the lanky guy who swore length to be the end-all-be-all. He pretended to listen to a woman's story of her toddler's adorable bed-time mischief; something about chewing bedposts. Out of the corner of his eye, a little man tested the springs of a mattressless bed.

Staring down at his feet, Nate thought the brown and white tile floor looked cool despite its grime. Scuff marks tracked the short histories of all those who had wandered across it. They zigzagged to their undisclosed destinations, occasionally crossing paths with another or getting lost under a bed frame.

But at his river, where the soft voice of water over earth was all he heard, these thoughts were gone from Nate's mind. He sat there thinking of nothing. People often speak of how hard it is to think of nothing. Nate never understood the problem. His phone vibrated sharply in his coat pocket, rousing him suddenly. It was his girlfriend. She was terribly sweet and Nate often felt he should enjoy her more. But she hated not knowing

They zigzagged to their undisclosed destinations, occasionally crossing paths with another or getting lost under a bed frame.

something about him, not having complete access to his thoughts. She sought to possess his mental space just as everyone laid claim to him in some way. Just as his father controlled him, just like his customers dictated his actions. But he would never let her have his river. He would tell no one about it. It was his last stronghold against the world. True, it lay only feet from the bike path, a couple hundred feet upstream from the creek where children played in warmer months, but his idea of it, that would remain solely his own; a possession in knowledge alone.

Nate returned the phone to his pocket unanswered. The river's babble brought him back to its world. That was the only language he needed. He imagined jumping in, feeling its coolness around him, engulfing him. Another day, he thought. He always thought that to himself.

But today the void of Nate's lunchtime mind circled around one thought, a fixed point within the ever-flowing nothingness. It was almost break time at the store when her voice plucked him out of a particularly solitary day-dream. Nate recognized her as Janice, a girl who occasionally hung out with his friends in college. She was quiet and never drew much attention. He tried briefly to remember if she had dated someone he knew. Her hair, once short, was now long and straight and very faintly brown, as if it thought it might try being blonde. It ran straight down the side of her head and tucked neatly behind her ears. She had a healthy face with enough chubbiness to make her approachable without appearing unattractive. But even in her round face, there was something sharp about her. Maybe it was her narrow green eyes which made Nate feel so uncomfortably watched.

He felt suddenly and intensely aware of his nametag, awkwardly announcing his name as it hung from his shirt, slightly crooked. Its weight was overpowering...

"How you been, Nate?" She had asked with genuine excitement. Nate was halted only momentarily before answering with the typical generalities. He felt suddenly and intensely aware of his nametag, awkwardly announcing his name as it hung from his shirt, slightly crooked. Its weight was overpowering, pulling hard on his too-loose maroon polo. Nate's eyes moved up and down Janice's slimming pant-suit, which exuded confidence. She stood as if offering herself for display, proudly erect, her legs slightly apart, her arms resting comfortably on her hips. While she wouldn't say so herself, her manner and dress gave away her success. She seemed immensely powerful. Suddenly his smile seemed so perceptibly fake to him.

Those green eyes had followed him long after Janice

had walked out of his father's store. While he busied himself with customers, his paperwork, water breaks, they examined him, repeatedly and assertively asking how he was. He wanted so badly to give the right answer, to impress that green gaze. He felt them still as he sat by the banks of his river, his plastic bag resting unknowingly beside him. And he was acutely aware of them when he walked into Pet Palace Pet Shop during lunch, on the way to his river. The stop was on the way home from his father's store and on occasion he would stop inside and look at the creatures in their cages. He would put on a face and talk with the cashier, asking questions, testing her sales persona. But today he knew what he needed. A bell rang out announcing his entrance and the animals and cashier took notice. It was always the same nameless young woman who sat behind a short counter which made her look small. She wore wide librarian glasses which were too old for her face, and her hair pulled back tightly in a ponytail.

"I need a bag of feeder fish," he pronounced firmly.

"Well look who finally got himself a pet," the nameless cashier replied in a tone perkier than Nate had hoped.

No matter how much he tried to avoid them, the feeder fish at Pet Palace Pet Shop always drew his attention. He despised them for it. They always made him feel beaten. Those tiny fish swam endlessly in their eight by sixteen tank, oblivious to their fate, their sole purpose in the world as sustenance. Their sacrifice went wholly unappreciated.

"Sure," was Nate's only reply, accompanied with a typically insincere smile.

The wind of the clearing once more tossed Nate's hair, brushing it in and out of his eyes as he sat over his river, a hand resting gently on his clumsy plastic bag. Nate untied the knot at the bag's top, taking care not to tear anything. From above the opening, he looked down at the unsuspecting creatures in their plastic world. He wondered briefly how long their life-spans were. He held the bag in both hands over the river, raising it to eye level. Giving one final nod of recognition, he overturned their world, dropping them into the water below. "Let them eat cake," he proclaimed aloud to all the hungry domesticated fish of the world. The light plop they made was absorbed seamlessly into the river's unceasing song. Their indi-

vidual forms melted away and they were gone from sight, leaving no evidence of their existence. Nate imagined the fish forgetting themselves, morphing into piranha, or trout, or alligators. In his mind, the river teemed with new life, exploding and engulfing the surrounding landscape. His phone rang again. It was his girlfriend. Nate took it out of his pocket and placed it on a nearby rock, watching it squirm around itself as it vibrated persistently. He rose, standing on the cliff overlooking his river. Looking down, he saw the water flowing gently and invitingly underneath him, sparkling and shimmering in

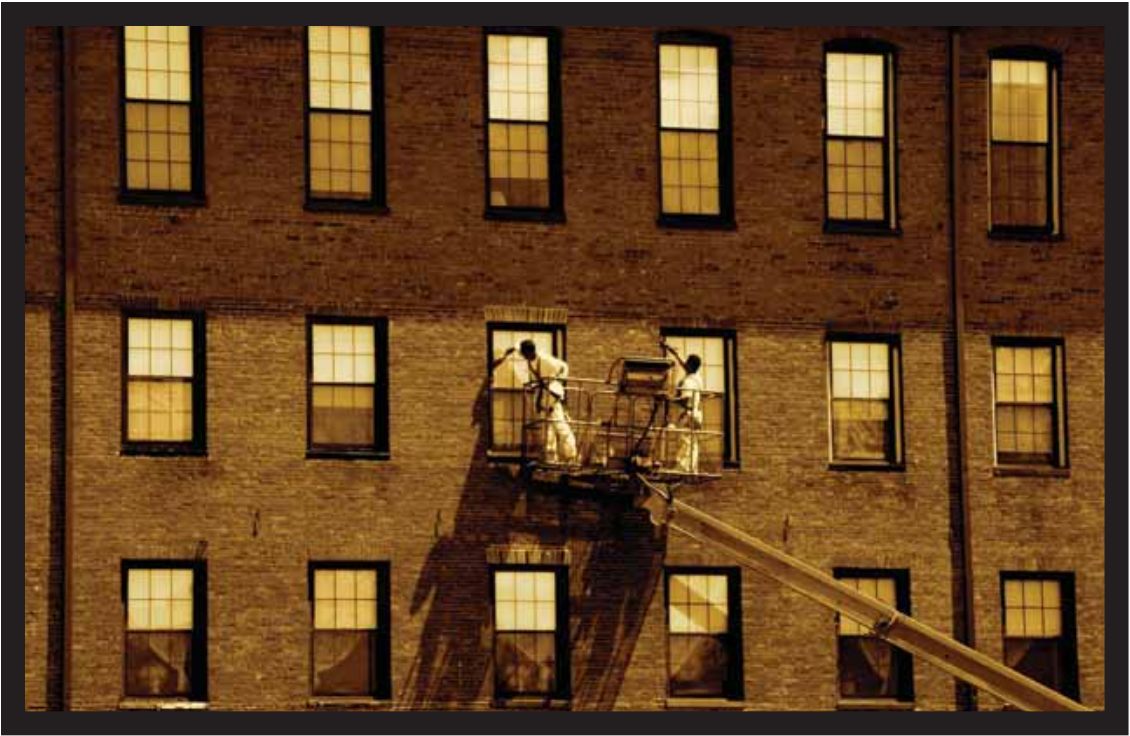
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the sunlight. He let the wind whip his unbound overcoat around him. He thought of Janice. She wouldn't wait for another day. Nate slowly turned his head to survey his world, and then, closing his eyes, he let his body fall forward. He was dimly aware of his explosive splash, of his heavy body displacing, making room for itself. But he felt the river grab him fiercely, felt the sharp icy waters close around him, the icy waters that made him so aware of every molecule as it bit sharply and painfully into his exposed skin. He wondered how long he could stay underwater before needing air. The sun's rays refracted through the rippling surface, dancing around Nate's submerged form. The light played games with the gravel floor, illuminating some spots before throwing them into shadow. Reeds waved to him slowly, as if to music. Nate held his eyes open wide, and smiled.

He Lives

Michael Tau

A smooth walled pit, six feet underground
I found myself, torn, beaten, buried alive.
Tossed into oblivion by the verdict of untrained fools
Where spectators gathered round, observed and reported
My nothingness
Strength wearied, darkness loomed,
Out came pearls of stars and luster of moon
Mocking my blindness, derisively dancing in the distance
I would have died. I almost died,
But I wore armor, and I fought for my escape. Otherwise,
I died
So while my sword was red and bloodied
And the wounds upon me still afresh
I screamed out, atop the lofty mountains
A thunderous yelp, to be heard
Beyond the cloudy palace of Olympus
Past the domain of Heaven
Beyond all; imaginable and unimaginable
I lived



Love Unfaltering

Jina Davidovich

Before years go by and have the time to crystallize into the/
past,

They remain a palpable reality.

My skin still recalls the warmth of your consuming embrace,

My ears remain full of your wise words,

And the inside of my eyelids are engraved with pictures of/
your life.

Your laugh, perpetual and honest, rings through my mind.

And my thin fingers tremble when retracting from the tele/
phone –

My mind telling them there will be no answer when I call to/
say “Shabbat Shalom.”

Amidst stories from a fictional place of hardship and love,
You hugged me, and told me, and loved me.
Love I cannot place in the past.
Though I thank God for granting life and forgive Him for/
bringing death before my eyes,
With the love of a grandmother, I remain a stubborn child –
Yelling “this is mine” at the top of adolescent lungs.
Although I placed your still hand back onto the white hospit-/
al sheets,
Said goodbye and thank you,
And followed my heart thousands of miles away from the/
home you built,
My hand remains forever in your hands.
Your hands that made a family and a reality that still exists-
Even in your absence.
So Babushka, I say to the picture on the wall,
Keep Smiling.
Though the doctors may protest,
The little girl who sat in your lap knows you are still here.
And now, refusing to forget and seeing your influence in every
crevice of my life,
I will repeat the last words your heard before half of your/
soul was taken –
“Thank you, Anya, go home now” –
While I sit far from my home,
And yours is occupied by strangers,
I am comforted by knowing that you –
Your essence, the piece that the doctors could not see,
Continues to love me from the home where you belong.
Where there is no time, space, or motion –
Where my Babushka and Dedushka remain eternally, mine.



Isaiah's Love Lament

Marlon Danilewitz

When we lie together your skin so white and soft
Melts like a tender snow flake when my powerful paws and
Unkempt mane weave around you and envelope you.
Can we take our leaps across this deep chasm in concert,
And let our bodies soar until we collide
and grasp helplessly for each other,
Until we strike a firm embrace
drawing comfort in the security of each other's arms.
Let me howl to the moon
And you hold to your white wool
Come to me my gentle lamb and let my wolfish
Tongue nip at your nape
And let us wrestle till we grow tired and old
To let lie in green pastures.

The Uncontrollable Twitch and the Beauty that Follows

Jeremy Lichtman

Imagine your body twisting and turning without your volition. Imagine it convulsing with tremors that are beyond your control. Imagine your fingers convoluted into shapes you would never choose to position them in; your arms waving about in every direction; while your back and shoulders spasm and seize.

Imagine you are sitting in a classroom. Suddenly the spasms and the twitching begin. You vocalize words you don't mean to say. Sounds pour out of your mouth like noxious smoke bellowing out of a factory tower—continuous and uncontrollable. Then the stares begin. No one looks too overtly; they just sneak glances from the corners of their eyes. Nonetheless, these skirted glances feel like the eyes of God, boring into your soul, judging and hating you. You feel naked, exposed by your own disobedient body. You can't take it anymore! You leave the room.

Imagine now that you are sitting in your own room. The twitching continues. So do the sounds. Your mind is consumed by a continuous plea: "stop! Stop! Please stop!" but your body refuses to obey. Suddenly you feel an anger escalating inside. This anger arrives unbidden, as if inserted by an external malevolent being. It is not anger in reaction to your predicament—you're too exhausted to have conjured this anger on your own. It is anger that is beyond you, as unruly and undesirable as your irrepressible twitches and sounds.

Imagine that this anger consumes you, filling your entire being with its vehement heat. You suddenly find yourself picking up your roommate's possessions, preparing to fling them across the room. It takes every remaining ounce of weary will power to return the items to his desk and flee your room. But now that your own room is closed to you, where can you go?

Imagine that you are huddled on a park bench hugging yourself tightly while the onslaught of twitches and unintelligible squeaks and gurgles continues. Does this

image terrify you? It terrifies me, and it's my life—a life marked by tourette's. But this is only a fraction—a small fraction—of my life. My story contains as much joy as sorrow; as much freedom as entrapment. And thus, my story continues...

Imagine a good day. You're awake in your bed and the sun is shining, sending slanting rays of beauty through your window—a kaleidoscope of color and light that renews you. You wake up with a smile on your face and take a walk outside. There's a slight breath that tickles your face and ruffles your hair. The day feels new and the opportunities endless.

Imagine you are sitting in class. The Professor asks a question and calls on you. You answer correctly and follow up with a joke. Everyone laughs. You're a part of the group, and these are your friends. They look at you with love in their eyes—there's no judgment there.

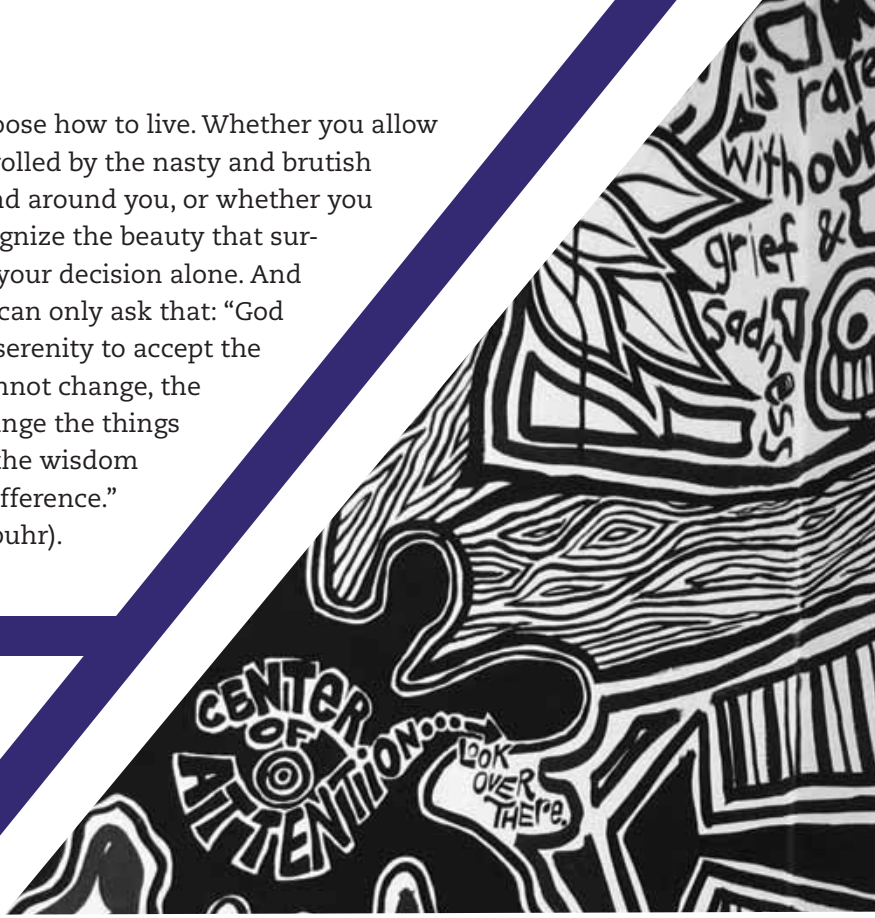
Imagine that you return to your room. Your roommate is there and you begin to talk. He shares his day with you, and you share yours with him. You lapse into the comfortable silence of camaraderie. Falling out of your reverie you look out your window. You watch the westering sun set, it's last rays a kiss goodbye and a promise of a new tomorrow.

Imagine that you are huddled on a park bench hugging yourself tightly while the onslaught of twitches and unintelligible squeaks and gurgles continues. Does this image terrify you?

Imagine the sun has finally set. You turn away from your window and begin to write. You write words both simple and sweet. You expose yourself in these words, putting a little bit of yourself into each sentence. The hour grows late and you decide to turn in for the night. But before you do, you pick up a book and start to read. Through the words of others you reach into both present and past, and feel yourself gliding along the edge of infinity. You drift off to sleep...

... This is life. You never choose how it begins or how it ends, or the unforeseen circumstances that will dominate.

But you do choose how to live. Whether you allow life to be controlled by the nasty and brutish both within and around you, or whether you choose to recognize the beauty that surrounds you is your decision alone. And in the end we can only ask that: "God grant [us] the serenity to accept the things [we] cannot change, the courage to change the things [we] can, and the wisdom to know the difference."
(Reinhold Niebuhr).





If snowmen had voices

Avigail Soloveichik

If snowmen had voices
and I could whisper something
slightly funny into their
finger-printed ears,
they'd wiggle carrot noses
and laugh with
sticks for mouths.
Chuckle and wave their branches
for arms, hop around in little circles,
until their sweet white
dripping voices fly away
with the cold in the sun.

Oshiro's Son

Renee Kestenbaum

The red light beams green.

I turn right for the fifth time, for the fifth time I drive down the block. I squeeze past empty school buses and loaded station wagons, pushing forward, scouting the sidewalks for a flare-up of tail-lights or a wide woman belting her kids into booster seats, or for the cop idling his car to drive off already, so I can double-park and just be done with it.

For the fifth time I drive past Papa's shop, hand-painted "Oshiro&Son" across the storefront. Mama's not in the doorway, which means she's preparing tea in the sitting room, which means we are late.

I turn right onto Bryant.

Jeanette – soft and blonde and dressed "business casual" – is still standing under the purple-and-green awning of Marks' Antiques, twenty minutes after I dropped her off, overstepped her objections and volunteered to park the car myself. She'd only objected weakly anyway. Heat of summer in an old un-air-conditioned car isn't, I suppose, the best time or place to maintain a woman's equal right to park independently. She looks even less pleased now, my fifth circuit. I wave and am almost glad she doesn't see me.

The spot that finally opens up is near the corner of Bryant and Smith, about as far from Oshiro's as possible. The gap looks a tad too short, but I fit the Chevelle in with barely an inch to spare. It's a 1969 model, the wrong size, shape, and color. Typical; I'm cool fifteen years too late.

I lock up, glance around. The neighborhood's changed. My sepia memories flood back, of when the girls held hopscotch tournaments and we boys played baseball at that corner, and we sold fruit punch to our sweaty mothers. Fire hydrants were gushing geysers then, each day melting like the ice pops we bought for a dime each. Oshiro&Son was the sole shop on the block.

Around me now is a city, bustling and grungy, whirring

and electric in a gentrified mood. Kids are escorted from car to house, no farther. There are cops, and their eyes sweep the streets like surveillance cameras. Papa's shop is now replicated in fifty drooping awnings, fifty gray windows, stale storefronts.

Marks' Antiques is having a sale.

"Isn't this cute?" Jeanette points to a three-legged wooden bar stool. It's not bad. But –

"I don't know where we'd put it." I'm thinking of stumbling over it in the kitchen of our compact loft each morning. It's blocking the coffee maker.

"But isn't it cute?"

"Yes. Sure."

She grips my sleeve with one hand and points to a cradle crafted from yellow wood, resting on a rounded base. Back in the old country, someone carved rosebuds into its headboard.

"Jeanette." If we don't have space for a bar stool, we certainly don't have space for –

"I'm kidding!"

She laughs tensely – she's not kidding. She wants a baby. She's said it often. On weekends in Atlantic City. At Coney Island. While we cook dinner. Last night, in front of a stream of reruns. "We're late," she says, and stalks off down the block.

I want to be back in front of the Brady Bunch, with or without popcorn. I want to be home, lazing in bed in a streak of sunlight with the toilet gurgling behind the dry-wall partition. I want to be at work, slogging through the mound of accounts I left there on Friday at five. I want to be on the A train. At midnight.

Anywhere but here.

Oshiro's is empty. We peer through the windows: there is no one inside, browsing the aisles for chocolate-dipped pretzel sticks, namagashi, and fried-pork-flavored drops. Papa's not behind the register. Mama's not out front, pretending to greet customers when in reality spot-checking for would-be shoplifters (they tend to be Caucasian and blond).

Hmm.

"It's closed." Jeanette's looking at the sign on the door. "They closed up for us."

Her pale blue eyes meet mine. "Should we knock?" she says, and raps on the glass three times, hard.

Mama comes to show us in.

Dust cascades off her smock as if she'd just today unpacked it from her steamer trunk. Every time, I forget how old she looks. Her hands are dyed with tea and ink, splotches like age spots. She shuffles to the door and unlocks it without smiling.

"Welcome," she says in English, and Jeanette says hello.

"So you want to be married."

We're upstairs in the sitting room, side-by-side on the faded couch with mugs of lukewarm tea. Papa's in the armchair across from us, arms uncomfortably folded across his saggy suit. "Yes, Papa." Jeanette strokes my elbow under the surreptitious cover of her own folded arms.

Papa sits. He rests his flowered teacup back onto its saucer. He removes his gold wire-rimmed glasses and polishes them with a blue cloth retrieved from somewhere deep within his pocket. Papa frowns. "For this we left Nihon."

Next to me, Jeanette crosses her ankles. "Papa, don't." My shoulders droop lower. "What do you remember of Japan anyway? You were nine years old when you left."

"I remember we respected our elders." Sharp disappointment – in his voice, in his frown lines. Dripping like tears into his tea.

Papa, don't.

In sepia memories, those words slap me harder than his hands ever could. They were shriveled from the nuclear attack that drove Grandfather-san from Japan, useless at menial labor but expertly able to manage a cash register, and to count hard-earned coins ten, twenty times, just to be certain of no mistakes.

"I remember rising at dawn when it snowed. I shoveled a pathway from our home for my Ojisan. Barefoot. That was respect."

"I do respect you," I insist. "That's why we came here today."

I see the scene as if from above, the two old Japs, their wayward son, and the WASP he brought home with a ring on her finger.

Mama stands by Papa and spoons sugar into his abandoned tea. His face is a hideous gargoyle. "This-" he points at Jeanette, who only sits up straighter in her seat,

“is respect?”

“Don’t talk about her as if she personally piloted a plane to Japan to spit on Grandmother’s shrine.”

“Her grandfathers beat up Ojisan when he went to find a job,” Papa spits, “sending him home bloody and broken. And her father, when I went to find a job, he did the same.”

“Papa, that’s not fair.”

He knows nothing. Jeanette’s family has a tradition of fighting intolerance. They were abolitionists, Freedom Riders, petitioners for safe working conditions in sweatshop factories and the right of every child to an education. Peace in Vietnam. Women in the workplace. Interracial marriages! Her mother hugged me when we told her. Jeanette grips my wrist, the only anchor that prevents me from lashing back right away. How is she so calm?

“She won’t treat you like a king, like a Japanese girl would.”

“Papa.”

“What did we come here for, ungrateful son who disregards the sacrifices that were made for him-”

“Papa! It doesn’t matter what you think!” Jeanette’s fingers on my arm are cold. “We didn’t come to ask for permission to be married.” She squeezes. “We already are married.”

Mama flinches. Papa’s eyes widen. “You what?”

“We’re already married.”

“You are engaged to be married.”

“No.”

Papa is silent. “How long?”

“Five months.”

His tea cup clatters to its saucer. Mama abruptly returns the kettle to the sideboard, her back to us. His lips press together for a very long time, looking like they’ve disappeared. “You want no part of us.”

“Mr. Oshiro-” I grab Jeanette’s hand and she never finishes her sentence.

“To take a bride and not tell your Papa and Mama.” His wrinkles unfurl, and dust unfolds from between them.

“Was it worth it to you, the wedding with an organ and flower girl and buffet? Did it work? Did it color your face white?”

No, Papa, stop, I try to say.

“Always you feel this way?” He looks for the first time

to Mama. “We thought you would grow up and stop playing with those Bobby and Bradley and Bill, the ones who stole from the shop-”

“-they never took anything-”

“-but you still want to be like the neighborhood, like the people you watched on television in their homes.”

“I didn’t invite my Papa and Mama because I didn’t want to,” I say, “but I came here to tell you about Jeanette because I want you to be ... to share in our joy.” That’s what we signed on the invitations in their names.

Papa stands. “To share in the joy of such a marriage ...” He shakes his head. “I think it’s time you go.”

“Yes,” I set down my saucer on the table, “we should leave.” Jeanette follows suit in an instant. I stand and take momentary pleasure in being taller than he is. His eyes are closed.

We don’t talk. Not as Jeanette and I stalk back through stacked aisles of sugared candies and chocolate-dipped pretzel sticks, not as we turn onto the sun-bright sidewalk, not as we pass the antique cradle at Marks’.

There’s dust floating in the air around her, cascading from above, but it must be a trick of the light, of the sun.

The Chevelle is baking, white like an egg on the sidewalk. We slide in. “I’m sorry.”

“Don’t worry about it.” Her eyes are wide and sincere. I smile.

“Do you want to drive?”

“No-” she leans back and cradles herself between the passenger seat and the car door. “You drive, and when we get home I’ll make dinner. Whatever you want.” She smiles. “Something American. Burgers?”

We both laugh.

The first light we hit is red. I glance right; Jeanette’s closed her eyes, like she’s going to sleep, and she looks perfect. There’s dust floating in the air around her, cascading from above, but it must be a trick of the light, of the sun.

Must be.

The red light beams green, and I drive into the sunset.

Girls

Faige Seligman

She smooths the lipstick on
Mouth rounded
Sensuously open
Dark crimson
She's naughty
Apple red
Feminine and sweet
Glittery pink
Wants to be young
Intense chocolate
Thinks she's old
Bright coral
Hot fuchsia
Just another girl, trying to have fun.

The Woman at Izzy's

Chaya Citrin

Izzy's is a small kosher deli, which opens early and closes at ten, except on Friday afternoons when it closes two hours before sundown. It occupies a storefront on 40th street, over on the East Side. At the cost of \$4.00 plus tax, a customer can eat a hot dog complete with trimmings and enjoy a cold can of Dr. Brown's Black Cherry soda. The old-time clientele—business-people, Murray Hill locals, and Jerry Seinfeld, or so rumor says—favor the deli's pastrami on rye with coleslaw. Customers may not be familiar with owner, founder, and namesake Izzy Schwartz, but frequent patrons are acquainted with the cashier, an Ecuadorian woman named Solana.

Solana stands behind the cash register, usually while rapidly speaking Spanish into a telephone wedged between her right ear and shoulder. Experienced customers wait patiently for Solana to take notice of them, preferring not to interrupt her phone conversation. Doing so could elicit her trademark roll-of-the-eye. Not surprisingly, many customers fear "the woman at Izzy's," as Solana is colloquially known. One such customer, Sari Greenberg, a 20 year-old college student who eats at Izzy's quite often, notes, "Her attitude problem can't be very good for business."

Solana came to the United States seven years ago and has worked behind the counter at Izzy's for the past two. She lives with friends in Queens, near the subway she takes to work six days a week. While snapping a piece of orange gum, which is her favorite flavor, she explains that she came to this country because she "wanted to know something new." She adds in her slow English, "I like this country, because it opens great opportunities. I never ate glatt kosher in Ecuador. It's very good."

Perhaps it's the political turbulence back home in Ecuador that is the cause of Solana's perpetually sour mood. Or it could be that the fumes at Chic Nails where she





often gets a manicure—white lacquer with French tips, “because they’re elegant”—have gotten to her head. Or maybe the elderly woman, who messes up the candy display at the front of the store, contemplating halva versus barbecue potato chips like she’s choosing between Obama and McCain, annoys Solana. The most plausible explanation, however, is that Solana is simply bored. Making change and bagging chef’s salads is not particularly stimulating for the brain, especially for Solana’s, seeing as she’s a college graduate who holds a degree in journalism.

But despite evidence to the contrary, Solana claims to enjoy her job. Her favorite time of day at work is lunchtime, or anytime it’s busy at the store. She explains, “I talk with the customers. Time goes faster when it’s busy.” Since she is the restaurant’s sole cashier, she rings up every order and knows which menu items are most popular—basically anything containing grilled chicken. Although the restaurant has a strict \$10 minimum credit card policy, Solana permissively allows customers who are short on cash, or college students who prefer to use the family credit card, to pay with plastic. Her work day ends at 10 P.M. when she changes out of her work uniform—a beige polo shirt and newsboy cap, both emblazoned in orange with the Izzy’s logo—and catches the F train or a ride home with friends.

Home is an apartment in Queens. While she has a cousin and an uncle who live in Hackensack, NJ, and other family who reside on Long Island, Solana prefers to share an apartment with friends in Queens, which conveniently is home to the largest Ecuadorian immigrant community in the United States. The first year away from her close family was especially hard, Solana says, “It’s hard to be far from family, but real friends help.” On Saturday, her only day off from work, Solana, who is young (in her late twenties or so), blond (her shoulder-length hair is dyed caramel-colored), and pretty (her mauve lipstick complements her skin tone) goes dancing or out to the movies with her friends. Hip-hop and reggae, or as she pronounces it “reh-gay,” are her favorite types of music, since they are “good for dance.” Often, when business is slow, Solana puts on headphones and listens to Spanish hip-hop on her handheld CD player, which she keeps behind the deli counter.

Rent, food, gas, electric, and telephone are typical expenses, and for Solana, insulin is as well. Solana is

healthy, but her mother, who remains in Ecuador, is not. She explains, “My mom depends on me. She has diabetes. I pay for her medicine. My brother and sister help, too.” According to Solana, supporting family back home while living off of an Izzy’s salary, which is little better than minimum wage, supplemented by a meager \$20 to \$30 worth of tips a week split four ways between the deli counter workers, “is hard, but I don’t have no choice.” To supplement the income that she earns from her fulltime job, Solana moonlights as a journalist in her spare time on the weekends. She works as a reporter for *Noticia Hispanoamericana*, a Spanish-language weekly that is read by about 28,000 people in the New York metro area.

Behind the gruff exterior, Solana is a surprisingly pleasant individual. Complimenting her on her H&M faux crystal earrings or on her sparkly pink airbrushed nails (sometimes she gets them done funky) helps melt her icy guise. She warmly greets customers whom she knows and likes, even wishing them a “chag sameach,”

Perhaps if customers would spend less time wondering to themselves whether Solana is an illegal alien and more time wishing her a “good afternoon,” her demeanor might improve.

Hebrew for “happy holiday,” before Passover. But why is she so surly towards everyone else who enters the restaurant? Perhaps, her demeanor is due to the fact that her job is practically the kosher equivalent of flipping cheeseburgers at McDonalds. Despite her college education and marketable skills, Solana works in a deli, answering phones and ringing up turkey sandwiches. Additionally, her irritability is probably aggravated by some customers’ tendency to be impatient and rude. Perhaps if customers would spend less time wondering to themselves whether Solana is an illegal alien and more time wishing her a “good afternoon,” her demeanor might improve. But then again, if Solana stopped ignoring customers and refusing their unchallenging requests—“No! I can’t get you a lemon slice”—people might like her more.

Or would they notice her at all? It is precisely her

grating personality that makes her so infamous, so unforgettable. Just imagine if her disposition weren't so deplorable: Solana would probably just be another one of the thousands of nameless, faceless cashiers manning the counters of the Starbucks and Duane Reades (New York's #1 Drug Store!) that monopolize every New York street corner, quietly living a semi-remarkable life, unbeknownst to the world. Sure, she can be annoying, but, heck, she's got personality.

Orgo Lab

Avigail Soleveitchik

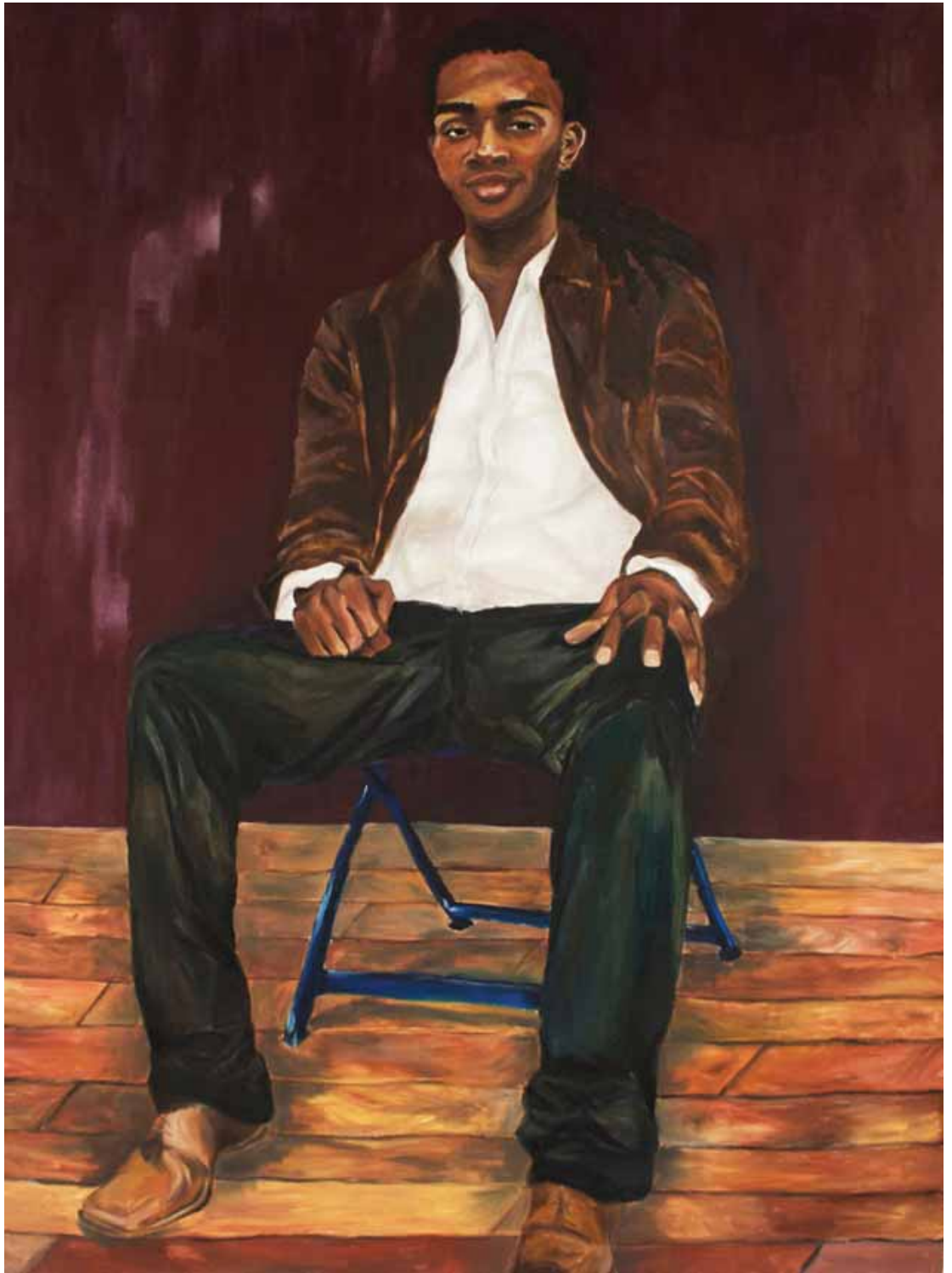
That conquering matter is to understand it, and understanding matter is necessary to understanding the universe and ourselves...

--- Primo Levi, from *The Periodic Table*, p. 41-42

...Friday not only worked very willingly and very hard, but did it very cheerfully...

-- Daniel Defoe, from *Robinson Crusoe*, p. 282

Friday Orgo Lab. It is Friday, 26 September 2008, at 1:30 p.m. Orgo Lab has come to a close: the toluene has distilled, the condensers and flasks are washed and put away. It has been a long night of preparation followed by a strangely exhilarating morning. As I leave the school building now, all of my exhaustion seems to come rushing at me, the seven hours of sleep from two days combined not enough to hold me up. I try to sort through that and the way the sun tilts over the buildings, and I try to keep moving and not fall asleep in it. I do not know whether I am sad or happy, because it is always slightly disheartening to finish a rushing kind of work. When everyone leaves Orgo Lab, I walk out slowly, because I do not yet have anywhere to run to; and, as painful and difficult as it is to dash from place to place for many days straight, on little sleep, I do not really know how to do it any other way.



There is something about it that I want to keep. Something about the spurting water and the yellow sun outside that gently touches the sidewalk. Walking in the warm sun back to my room, I think about thermodynamic equations and why I am so tired. Since the first law of thermodynamics states that the energy of the universe is a constant, I wonder where my energy went to, because it must have gone somewhere; and I want to know when it will return to me, and where from. Atoms swim all over the place, so many little bits and pieces. I look for them and want to write down all the questions, so that I will remember what they were if I ever happen upon the answers, or so that I maybe have a chance of that happening.

This is my Friday. Friday, to me, is about Orgo and sleepiness and sun. It is the rising action—which is, I believe, so much the climax, such that the real climax is anticlimactic. It has no sense of disappointment, of disillusioned freedom, after the rush and pull of pre-dawn chemistry lab work and waking at 8:00 a.m. to eight alarm clocks. Friday has only a certain strangeness in the air. Something about riding home on the Q64, where perhaps I am sitting and falling pleasantly asleep, while also holding onto a suitcase that threatens to fall on someone's foot and cause an unnecessary inconvenience. Or perhaps I am standing and trying to hold onto a bus pole with two hands, while still somehow having one hand free to grasp the handle of my suitcase, as I bump up and down, and outside the window trees are rushing by.

Friday is about getting off the bus at the last stop and waiting at the corner of 164th Street for the light to change; and being so full of something, and trying to figure out what that is. Something in the bright red color of the t-shirt that the man riding a bike is wearing, something in the air that smells of summer relinquishing herself to autumn, something in the way the large van parked in a driveway juts out onto the sidewalk, something in the way the road curves.

I feel in those moments everything that I was and will be, and whatever I am floats somewhere not in the middle, exactly, but rather caught up in all of it. I remember being fourteen, almost fifteen, and sitting outside on the

front steps of my Chicago house at 5:15 a.m. on an August morning, with the sun low-rising in the pale blue sky, the leaves preening and greening, the houses peaceful, and the noise, I believed, just beyond the hearing barrier. I sitting there, waiting reluctantly to be fifteen, and waiting for the newspaper, and thinking that, if there were not so many trees and houses, then perhaps I would be able to see a big ball of rising color instead of just some streaks flitting outward on a whim. The whole day open for anything, potentially, and I considering whether to go on a walk or go to sleep or wait a few hours first; and wondering when my parents and siblings would be getting up, and what it must be like to get up then like a normal person, because after a month of vacation I had forgotten; and wondering if today would be different than the day before it, if any miracles would happen.

I see, also, the fifteen-year-old tenth grader who worries that she is halfway to thirty, which is halfway to sixty. And the seventeen-year-old wondering if she is any different, and wondering why she is. And the eighteen-year-old walking through security at the airport to go to school abroad for a year, almost walking backward so to look

And I find myself missing these people... because somehow, in some way, they are inside me, even though I am not sure in what way I mean.

over her shoulder at her family members, until the crowds obscure them. Then laughing that her backpack filled with books and good-bye gifts does not fit under her seat on the airplane; and, for some reason, that reminds her of when she was twelve and visiting her grandmother in the hospital. And then there is the twenty-year-old who sometimes forgets that she is no longer nineteen, and the twenty-one-year-old who does not yet have a face.

I think of these people as I stand there outside, in the warmth today in a sweatshirt, and on later Fridays in the cold in sandals and without a coat—wanting to open my arms to them, and wishing they could tell me if I am different or the same, and what that even means. And thinking how people have laughingly said, “You haven’t



changed,” and wondering if that is really true, and, if it is, what to do about it. Thinking all this, with birds sitting on a telephone wire, and the sky a summer blue, and the air an almost winter air. And I find myself missing these people, even though at the time I never thought I would—but missing them, on the simplest level, because I once was them and am not anymore; and because somehow, in some way, they are inside me, even though I am not sure in what way I mean.

And always I want to record it all. I do not know why, exactly, but maybe so that I will be able to understand it—whatever it is that makes the wild, still wind stick in my throat.

And always I want to record it all. I do not know why, exactly, but maybe so that I will be able to understand it—whatever it is that makes the wild, still wind stick in my

throat. Or, if not that, at least I will be able to keep it. But I do not write it down—or, at least, I have not—because it always seems to me that—although I will already be writing it in my head—still, to fish around in my backpack for some scrap of paper and a pen, and to plunk myself down on the sidewalk or grass and write—it always seems to me that somehow, then, the opposite of what I want will happen; somehow, then, I will lose it, and I will not even be able to find it again. For some reason, the words in my head, at that time, do not have enough form, enough shape, to make it onto paper and survive. And, so, writing about it now, I can still see it, remember it, sense it; but it is different. I cannot help that, and I do not think I want to.

Every week, though, passes away to Friday, and then there it is again. Sometimes different, sometimes the same, but unfailingly present. And Orgo Lab moseys along at the center with a grace to it that I cannot exactly pinpoint. Perhaps it is like Ms. Frizzle says, in *The Magic School Bus*: “Take chances! Make mistakes!” There is always that. But there is also the simple act of watching the chemicals boil; Primo Levi calls distilling “beautiful”—“because it is a slow, philosophic, and silent occupation,” and because the change from liquid to vapor aims for “purity...an ambiguous and fascinating condition, which starts with chemistry and goes very far.”¹ It is hard to forget something like that.

As I tell it all now, then, I wish you could see it as I did. I want you to know the mystery of the chemical waste bottle, to wonder what its contents taste like and what would happen if you drank it; to look in a mirror and see your eyes scrunched up tiredly small; and to laugh inside yourself without knowing why. To smell the water that does not have an odor but which still smells like Orgo and Friday and lack of sleep. To watch the toluene boil and try to understand why it does that; and to come upon more questions than answers, to ask *Why?* a thousand times—to know that it is very much like listening to the wind climb the trees, the lullabies of birds, and the voices of people far away.

Stale Femininity

Jesse Lempel

Like many overripe and still handsome lady artists, she seemed to be quite unaware that a big bust, a wrinkled neck, and the smell of stale femininity on an eau de Cologne base might repel a nervous male.

– Vladimir Nabokov, “Transparent Things”

The exploits of a busy pirate,
exciting though they surely seem,
impress little and less frighten
But in a thousand eye-balls gleam
the lashes of a future queen,
the Tyrant.
Eve thinks Youth is problematic,
paraplegic. While still undressed:
“It’s not the twist that’s acrobatic
but the fall after.” The empress
notices her kneeling breasts
and panics.
Eyes that would hold for ransom
Love, and clutch it, wanting more;
need the Knight, find the Phantom.
“But we will keep each other warm.”
Then she: “How can this abstract form
be handsome?”
The tenderness of legs unshaved
wrapped around the sleeping pillow
case: she looks so fine concave.
“A lady’s crease must never show”
save for the queen’s, who – God knows –
must be saved.
On the bed with sideways eyes
I can’t decide how to proceed.
“Is now time to philosophize?”
I ask. Her razor slips, she bleeds.
“Consider what was ours,” she pleads,
“Paradise.”



broken windows

Avigail Soloveichik

i don't think normal people stare out windows

and imagine what it'd be like to fall

all the way to the bottom

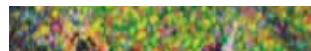
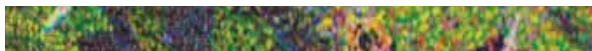
like a broken-wing eagle searching for home

but we learned today the world

can't exist without the crazy people

that's why i don't lean out too far;

See, the world needs me, they say



We Who See the Sea

Shani Paley

We who see the sea, we seek to glean
From playful sunlight stomping in the surf
And weaving nets that penetrate the green
We seek the secrets hidden from dry earth
The cryptic land where dolphins go to play
The story of an octopus's lair
The seabed's scalp of sandy grit; the way
The seaweed flows and sways like mermaids' hair
Far, far into the great aquamarine
Below the furthest fingers of the sun
Where weirder fish flex tentacles, unseen
The ocean shares her riddles with no one
We, who see the sea, we tried our best
But She, who is the sea, foiled our quest





If I Should Wake Before I Die

Gabrielle Wasserman

If I should wake before I die, I might smile.
My smile would be warm
My smile would be white
My heart might miss a note
And my body might take flight.

If I should wake before I die, I might open into a dream.
The dream of breathing easy
Where my mind can finally see
The dream of being wide-awake --
When my soul is flying free.

If should wake before I die, the trees might burst into song
Their branches would shake and shudder
And sprinkle new seeds onto the ground
Leaves, turning color after color --
Shedding rainbows from town to town
The revelation of grasping the day
The sunshine the birds and the trees
What you have before you is a gift
One as special as jumping in the leaves.

Celestial Focus

Daniel Kaiserman

My spinning around you
Prays softly for your health.
A lonely planet floats through empty space
Suspended forever in twisting time
And brightened by the haunting starlight grace.
Or maybe Earth's the middle point, the prime
Heavenly body focus comes upon:
The sun and moon and globes all bow to us.
My turning around you
Hopes that it lends great strength.
Displaced by sun, the glory now is gone,
The third in line – why bother make a fuss?
We're simply one among a greater nine.
Another step reduces further still –
We're barely spots against the cosmos' spine,
That blackest hole causes us to be nil.
My circle around you
Tries hard to be a shield.
We are, each person, world unto our own,
With special centre set with precious stone.
My orbit around you
Is fuelled by constant love.

The Introduction to Roland Hayworth, Enthusiast of Education

Matthew Aldis, Editor

The passing of great men is often heralded by a volume of equally distinct eulogistic memorials: front pages that pair the information with a recapitulation of a life, news clips that recycle the achievements by vapidly focusing on one aspect practical to viewers that relates in some way, and philanthropic and academic endeavors that aim to capture the ideals of the departed. Roland Hayworth's recent passing, though, provoked mainly surprise from a general public that assumed his demise almost two decades ago, because of his almost-nil large scale presence since he disbanded his controversial institution then. Contrary to those opinions though of an earlier death for the notable Mr. Hayworth, he actually spent the better part of the past twenty years quietly residing in his Connecticut home. Recently, illness and old age (just fourteen months ago, he celebrated his eighty-seventh birthday) added to his purposeful shying away from the spotlight and completed the Gaussian distribution of publicity in his life versus age, rendering him unknown to all but the fewest of ardent admirers and loyal supporters. This present volume, whose weaknesses are only attributable to the expedience at which it was assembled, aims to collect a variety of vistas on the unique personage, in the hope that at least somewhere, Hayworth will receive the laudatory reverence his great memory deserves.

Some of the younger readers may not even recognize the name of Hayworth – neither the man nor the establishment – once on the front pages daily but now reconciled mostly to historic-academic discourse on educational philosophy, large textbooks on business models, and inspirational rags-to-riches narratives. With the exception of the laudatory and simply titled Hayworth by Herb Roscommon– a 600-page tome now out of print and difficult to find, although I own one myself – none of the eleven published “biographies” of the great man does any



sort of justice to capturing the span of his life and breadth of his accomplishments. And in addition to the gaping holes in the largely dross literary recreations of Hayworth's life, the premature shrugging off of Roland Hayworth's philosophical and cultural contributions further disappoints those seeking to understand the impact of one man on the course of modern society. Most egregious among the many are the two profiles which appeared simultaneously at the height of Roland Hayworth's wealth that judged him nothing more than an exceptionally lucky man. Since it does not pay to waste time and space disparaging the multitude of errors (factual, stylistic, and moral) predicating those two works, I will simply leave the commentary on them at my already sardonic circumlocutions and not mention either the titles or their "authors" by name – though some readers, I am sure, will know very well to what and whom I refer.

As is often the case, it is the abstract, indirect look at a topic (in this case, the life of a man through the lens of not his accomplishments but the outgrowth of his efforts) that offers the most clarity

Not surprisingly, the histories of his institution offer a far more responsible and interesting look at his person, not only offering a greater range of opinions as to his singular importance, but also exhibiting more research on the parts of their respective authors. As is often the case, it is the abstract, indirect look at a topic (in this case, the life of a man through the lens of not his accomplishments but the outgrowth of his efforts) that offers the most clarity, and this postmodern truth is in fact, as readers will see, a guiding principle of this book, which offers, as I said, a plenitude of angles. In fact, the volume's title itself speaks to the multifariousness of perspectives: Roland Hayworth was much much more than simply an "enthusiast," but it was the broadest appellative and thus the only one that truly fit. Do not be fooled either by the title of the third essay: there is no one "Singular Importance" of Hayworth (neither the man nor the institution).

Hayworth (the man) first came to tremendous popularity at the age of twenty-four, glossily plastered on the type of finance magazines that feature a new “wunderkind” every two months, although, contrary to most of those quick-rising and quick-falling faces, Hayworth never lost the fortune he so brilliantly accrued. In fact, his continued level of success probably contributed to his subsequent and lasting obscurity outside the business world—readers of mainstream media clamor for the stories of financial implosions and meltdowns, instead of wanting to hear about uninterruptedly growing wealth. Insecure people – and this label describes most of today’s society – cannot stand watching only the success of others. They would rather maintain the illusion that greatness, in both wealth and power, is inherently flawed and not for the possession of mortals. Thus the disintegration of empires – and the more apocalyptic the downfall the better – encourages these hoi polloi who ascribe their own failures not to lacks in talent or drive but essential human imperfections.

It was a cruel twist of fate, though, that the man whose name was borne seems to have been relegated to history’s dustbin.

But Hayworth’s exceptionality did not lie in his feats as a tycoon or financier – his great contributions to the fields of education, academics, and research bear much greater import, even though the world sadly no longer associates those ideas he sparked with his name. Having truly mastered the accumulation and manipulation of material wealth, Hayworth turned in his mid-life years to a more idealistic goal: reshaping the entire field, process, and approach to education. With his veritable kingdom of companies and investments behind him, Hayworth turned his creative energies and significant resources toward founding “the world’s center for education” (this phrase appears on page 273 of one of those aforementionedly inferior accounts, though I sincerely doubt Hayworth himself ever envisioned or expressed his Institute’s goals as such). Great achievements – and make no mistake, Hayworth’s were some of the greatest and most

lasting of the past epoch – are by dint of their greatness never born solely of one father, and it was so with Hayworth (both the man and the institution) as well. It was a cruel twist of fate, though, that the man whose name was borne seems to have been relegated to history's dustbin.

The Hayworth Institute, now long-gone, once stood as a testament to its benefactor's tremendous genius, foresight, and largesse. His original vision, which he acted upon swiftly, was to create a single institution through which students could proceed for the entire duration of their schooling and which would provide them with every tool they needed to succeed in the outside world. An entire generation of citizens, not just intrinsically talented and motivated, but also given the very best that education could possibly give, would lead the country into a new era of grand ideas. Ironically, the man himself embodied "success" – at least in perception – in a very strictly material real but had a very broad definition of this word, wanting only for his students the ability to live life pursuing their own interests. For Hayworth (the man), the institution would have been succeeding if it eliminated from the lives of its students apathy. Hayworth's unique new center, which would pave the way for new models of pedagogy and learning, operated on this one central principle: that the interests of the students were not only the foremost concern of the institution, but also its *raison d'être*.

A question widespread among the peasant masses of biographies is Hayworth's specific motivation to work on the field of education. Rather than accept that question as an enigma and admiring the man's eccentricities as rather human – and thus, pleasant – idiosyncrasies, other authors don their amateur deerstalkers to puzzle out this mystery and thus besmirch both a man and his legacy. Roscommon's Hayworth, in an uncharacteristically poor-tasting move for a book of that rare quality, ascribes Hayworth's uncommon devotion to inspirational experiences during Hayworth's own education at Premerly High School. Roscommon's explanatory endnote 5 details the "painstaking poring" through several boxes of personal academic history provided for his biography, and he

notes an eleventh-grade assignment in which Hayworth wrote his dream was “to make a school where everyone could learn like I [sic].” Disregarding the inappropriate [sic], Roscommon’s analysis casts Hayworth as wanting to replicate his own experience, an analysis that – again, uncommonly for this often-circumspect biography – leaves two great questions unanswered: what did Hayworth find so great about his own education, and why did he not just donate to the school where he received it?

A more simplistic – though problematic – answer is found in Mond’s far-inferior *Hayworth: Life of a Luxuriant* (the grave error of not just inventing a word for one’s title but inventing one that gives a sense opposite the one intended should suggest this work’s humble rank). Mond’s answer avoids the pitfalls endangering Roscommon’s: on page 213, Hayworth, having made his first million, calls his high school teacher who “always believed in him” to ask advice. The teacher, Mond says, “told Hayworth that the best return in the world on any investment was the education of youth.” Mond’s is a sweet account, at first glance almost too overwrought with cliché but in the end just nearly inside the realm of believability, but problems abound: Mond dates this anecdote shortly before Hayworth’s twenty-third birthday, a full year before Hayworth had signed a single legal contract or bought any stock. Also, the teacher he supposedly spoke to – a Mr. Chonton – not only never had Hayworth as a student but never taught at Pemberly. Most glaringly, Mond states that Hayworth immediately opened a separate account for his institution following this supposed conversation even though the institution’s account – the same one it used for its entire lifetime – is known to be Hayworth’s first personal checking account, opened by himself the day he turned eighteen.

Perhaps the most shocking aspect of the debate surrounding Hayworth’s reasoning is that no one, apparently, thought to ask the man himself. Almost as if the bevy of biographers would rather invent the details of Hayworth for themselves, none of them seems to have inquired of the man or his family what the institution’s personal purpose or meaning was to its founder. Even McDaniel and Robinson, whose volume contains 44 pages of actual interviews with Hayworth, do not ask that simple question, the closest thing being, “At the institution’s famed

ten-year anniversary, what vision did you have for the next ten years?" Hayworth's answer, which for those familiar with his speeches, impressively and cleverly references his own inception speech, reiterates the party line: the importance of engaging and providing for students' interests. The frustration of asking why Robinson and McDaniel did not ask for the vision ten years before the ten year anniversary is enough to exhaust even the most hardy of Hayworth's followers, so I will at this point leave the bemoaning of my literary forebears' ineptitude aside in favor of imparting what should be this volume's goal: a too-long-lacking proper panegyric on the profuse importances of the man and his institution.

Hayworth (the Institute) began as a K-MA program founded on his famous principle, a powerhouse of academics and pedagogues that boasted an impressive 1:1 faculty-to-student ratio. Having plucked C. Arnold Hesbolt right out of the deanship of the prestigious Merrymount College to head the Institute, Hayworth provided the school an almost-unlimited budget, letting Hesbolt ransack the world's best schools and collect the greatest minds under one roof (or twenty-one, to which the Institute's sprawling Westchester campus quickly grew). The best students were ruthlessly identified from all backgrounds, relentlessly recruited, and tenaciously educated, with unprecedented levels of financial aid and choices of study. The press surrounding the school's opening and

The press surrounding the school's opening and the tremendous success of its first few classes provided ample fodder for excitement nation-wide.

the tremendous success of its first few classes provided ample fodder for excitement nation-wide. Leaving the ivy strands of other institutions to choke in the dust, Hayworth (the Institute) almost immediately become the golden standard in America, attracting even more students and faculty alike with the only contrivance that besides money cannot be bought but must be earned: prestige. The illustriousness of the institution was on display as Hayworth's students proudly displayed their superior

bearing, excelling in all the fields to which they dispersed following matriculation. And Hesbolt was, according to the descriptions of those involved in the institution (many quoted in Guedella's punctilious-if-almost-grossly-adoring *C. Arnold Hesbolt: Lifelong Academic*) a kind of octupussian administrator, responsible for dozens of aspects of the school all at once through his own office.

Thus the school ran merrily on for the aforementioned ten years, although few may now remember that for a decade, Hayworth (the Institution) was simply the best in a wide field of competitors. And every year, it got better, as students who spent longer and longer ascending the school's grades displayed ever-greater competency and skills. Hayworth (the Institute) became not just large in the public's mind, though; with ever more students, it began to open additional graduate schools, allowing its students to receive higher and greater educations and yearly expanding its body of cultivated minds. The first signs of conflict came during these openings of graduate programs: when two budding literary studies students, Everett Dewitt and Anthony Dunphy petitioned Hesbolt for a Ph.D. track in Neo-Evanescent Paired Literature (essentially planning to divide their time between writing and analyzing the other's work as it emerged), Hesbolt turned down their requests, refusing to allow the Institution's finances to fund such an "obviously unnecessary and irresponsible venture." But this was only a small bump in the development: with projections for enormous alumni donations (the Institute boasted alumni who were at once numerous, marvelously successful, and extraordinarily grateful), Hesbolt pushed Hayworth to underwrite an aggressive plan of growth for the school, increasing its student body (and thus, its equal number of faculty) drastically.

Hayworth, though, had been fostering a growing dislike for Hesbolt's hijacking of his educational hub. When he envisioned the Hayworth Institute, Hayworth (the man) wanted something not just financially and academically better than its contemporaries, but also different. Dewitt and Dunphy's incredible project was, in Hayworth's eyes, exactly the sort of venture worth funding. And theirs was only one example – readers should know that developments and changes in almost every field of study at the Institute were parallel, even if this author's knowledge is

confined to literary history studies (a perusal of this volume's contributor's degree will confirm the wide array of affected disciplines). So, on the ten-year anniversary of the institution's opening, the legend goes, Hayworth walked into Hebsolt's office and informed the academic that he was free to leave the institution. According to a certain "Ms. Palmer" quoted by Guedella, Hayworth told Hesbolt that there would no longer be any head of the institution, as the job would be filled by a committee of all involved: faculty and students alike. Convinced that Hayworth (the man) had lost his mind and Hayworth (the institution) would fail marvelously, Hesbolt argued, for the sake of the students, that Hayworth restore to him his job. Hayworth quietly reassured him that his handsome compensation would continue while he sought another occupation, and that his services were no longer needed by the school.

Hayworth's idea at the time of course seemed immeasurably foolish; longstanding knowledge and hundreds of years of educational praxis dictated that any institution needed a head, and that more so, students

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could not be directly involved in the decision-making processes, as they knew by far the least about their education. Hayworth argued the reverse – that students were the most informed and responsible about their own education, an opinion rejected at the time mostly on the grounds that it simply could not be that easy. Obviously, we now know that Hayworth's idea was an insight past generations of wrong-headed thinking along the lines of the brilliant ones that debunked sickness being caused by demons and the sun orbiting the earth, but we cannot blame society for not coming up with the evident answer sooner: we see comfort in our accepted ways, even if we know, whether subconsciously or not-so-subconsciously, that they are simply ineffective processes. Hayworth's novel idea, which garnered national attention for the school, worked (to



the surprise of everyone but Hayworth, apparently) very well – by all measures of success, the school increased in every category over the next six years under this new model of leadership.

Had Hayworth stopped there, history would have proceeded quite differently. Hayworth (the institution) would have forever been hailed as the origin of modern education, the central and initial New School, instead of being perceived – by a generation of Americans – as a crackpot establishment that regularly flaunted common sense just for the sake of it. But Hayworth could not be satisfied with the institution that ran on committee, that every year reformulated its own decision-making process and governing bodies by complicated voting systems developed the year before. Instead, Hayworth urged even more radicality: declaiming as false all ideas about the educational process, it would now be up to each individual student what they wanted to study, when, and how. The faculty of the school overnight went from their unique equal-class status to being an unprecedented servant caste for students. Administration and faculty alike labored at the feet of the new masters: students, who wielded absolute power with a frightening sense of unbalance. Mainly out of fear for their jobs—as flighty students flocked toward areas of knowledge that they did not know and forced the hiring of new professors—the faculty urged Hayworth to increase their power in the institution. Hayworth, of course, failed to recognize the impossibility of his dream – that to work properly, the school would need more than extensive resources; it would need unlimited ones. The ideal vision was an infinity, only he could not see it. His attempts at conciliatory gestures transformed the Institute into something of a refugee camp for academics whose specialties bore short-term interest: in response to faculty concerns, he agreed that qualified faculty who simply could not find students to concentrate in their fields would be sheltered in the growing enclave of Westchester, and he simultaneously granted the student bodies the power to hire new faculty for previously uncovered fields of interest (provided that ample evidence could be produced of the faculty being used in a teaching capacity, at least for the first two years). And that was when the institution's downward spiral began. Contrary to Balet's opinion in Hayworth:

Rise and Fall, the writing on the wall came nearly a decade before the publishing of *The Beggar's House* and the lawsuit that surrounded it, when these measures, taken in an attempt to better the institution, instead began turning it into less and less an educational edifice and more and more a monument to the Holy Grail of "varied interests." The school's direction for disaster because of these new measures, though, was not a connection drawn by many of the contemporary commenters on the institution, critics and champions alike. The detractors continued their discourse of disparagement toward the whole endeavor, and the defenders ardently endorsed Hayworth's (the man's) every undertaking. Two years after Hayworth put the new operating guidelines in place, new trends were observable for those who looked carefully enough: all of the departments had displayed a freakish growth and an authentic explosion of research through the new collaborations forged, but the embrace of pseudo-historico-literary theories had attracted by far the most students (a trend further qualifying yours truly to comment on these matters). The natural sciences, for many years the exemplar of the productive value of an educational institutional for single-minded and misguided publics, fell in popularity, though those students who did remain interested in them were still privileged to have the finest tools at their

The natural sciences, for many years the exemplar of the productive value of an educational institutional for single-minded and misguided publics

disposal. Of all the new attractions to students, though, it was especially the work of the eminent Hayworth (the school) faculty Messrs. Menard et al. that came to symbolize the school's new direction, as their questioning the viabilities of contemporary literature's success in past times became the most popular discussion on campus.

The public remained largely unknowledgeable of that work being done in Hayworth which inside the institution burgeoned readily and quickly. By the end of five years, Menard's students counted in the hundreds, and his published works began to catch the communal eye.

The shocking quality of Menard's (and, increasingly, his students') work gathered a massive wave of fury against academics. Sadly, questioning his entire purpose apparently never occurred to those who railed against the evil of his studies: the matchless niveau of scholarship he attained went unheeded as the focus instead became on his topics of choice. In his unparalleled and illogical *History of the Texts*, Menard put aside all fact in favor of rigorous literary analysis: in the book, Socrates was influenced by Shakespeare; Milton prefigured the Eden story of the Bible; Eliot tutored Wordsworth; and Borges drew from Menard, who was himself the double of an earlier (and, simultaneously, later) Franco-Prussian thinker. Influence as a genre of literary analysis had never been so deeply and so contradictorily examined, but Menard's picadoring of the academic bull seemed to result in the metaphorical goring. His obviously absurd claims, it should be noted, were backed up by some of the strongest arguments ever seen in any meta-literary work, which lends credence to modern scholarship's opinion of Menard as (like our ill-famed and -fated subject) a consummate experimenter. Menard, though, was only the beginning of the end: Stuart was the next on the list of infamous academic appellations now dismally known more widely than Hayworth.

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Stuart was himself a student of Menard, but, according to the third volume of *History of the Texts*, they never knew each other; and according to the fourth, the younger Stuart first wrote *History*, which Menard later adopted under his name. Stuart, extending Menard's rewritten history, suggested that no one "real" person or author indeed existed and, as the dean of publishing, began deleting the names of authors for every printed work from the faculty of Hayworth (the institution), instead including "by Roland Hayworth" under the titles, rendering my parenthetical noun-clarifying notations even more confusing. Stuart's famed antagonist, Scholes, wrote in reaction *The Scholes*, a work that consisted ultimately of eleven pages of thoughts that Scholes wrote in one sitting, expanded into an extensive 475-page work with the inclusion of

1,284 footnotes explaining the source and influence of every idea represented in the text.

The schism between those that came to be known as Stuart-Hayworthians and those bearing the name Scholastics took place largely inside the institution; they argued, in essence, over which was the primacy of academic research: the author or the idea. Contrary to the ideas of an intellectual and open community that Hayworth had in mind, this fight turned bitter and threatened to tear the institution apart, the second essential flaw in Hayworth's design: large-but-limited resources ultimately constrained just how far the Institute could go, and strong personalities among the university's faculty, even when removed from political power, still clashed. Hayworth tried to step in and save his dream by first providing the warring factions with two separate campuses and then with two dissonant institutions. But it was too late: with too much freedom, faculty and students alike continuously spent their time arguing against their enemies. Or perhaps it was too early: it is difficult to say whether the ensuing quarrels were due to unprecedented levels of freedom, as the faculty and students were also intrinsically prone to destructive tendencies, or the freedoms given were too many too quickly and the habits of a different model were not given ample time to adjust to what should have been a golden age of education, removed from the bureaucratic processes of guidance and tenure.

Either way, within five years, Hayworth (the Institute) fell from grace as the premier place of education and was rejected as a radically academic place, a failed ivory tower whose citizens had lost touch with reality. With his "child" in ruins, Hayworth publicly and shamefully bowed out, relieving the self-destructing eight (by this time, reflecting a sort of mutant multiplication) schools of their large budgets. With financial sources dried up, those academies fell apart one after the other, but not before spending their dying gasps slinging mud (in the form of various types of published works) at each other. That huge flameout behind them as a warning, universities across the country dug in and reinforced their proceedings, demanding an exacting level of production and quality from themselves and completely opening up these results to the public. Hayworth's attempt to separate higher education from the whims of a society that

knew very little about it as a community thus failed, and the pendulum swung in the reverse direction, dooming an entire generation of students to the unequal laws of a savage race.

Hayworth's ultimate achievement, then, was to influence education toward the models it follows today – models that have, it seems, run their course and are now giving way, slowly but surely, to those Hayworth himself would approve of – and to serve as the example for what cannot be done, at least for a time. For a while he attempted to regain favor by donating to almost every American school, hedging his endowments instead of trying to create his own. But the public, influenced by the higher intellectuals of the universities, shunned Hayworth, not casting him as a villain but largely ignoring him as the example of a confused and lost generation to whom the backs of the present needed to be turned. Hayworth, for his part, remembered after this brief experiment in crowd-pleasing that the very notion was anathema to him and that his distinguishing mark was going against that hateful human tendency.

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Thus Hayworth bowed out to his twenty years of silence, living quite comfortably before his recent sicknesses. With the concurrent release of his will along with this book, as requested one year from the date of his death, the public is likely to start searching for him and remembering his contributions, as the shocking contents require some explanation. Hopefully this new and incomparable volume will shed some new light on a man all too forgotten. The perspectives in this volume vary from accounts by students, faculty, and even those who, like myself, never met the man but whose lives were shaped by his choices. Readers should keep in mind, though, that no matter the perspective or conclusion of a story of Hayworth's life, they all end the same, with the fateful line, the single stipulation of his will: "that his entire twelve billion dollar fortune be donated to the building of gyms, field, and parks for America's children."