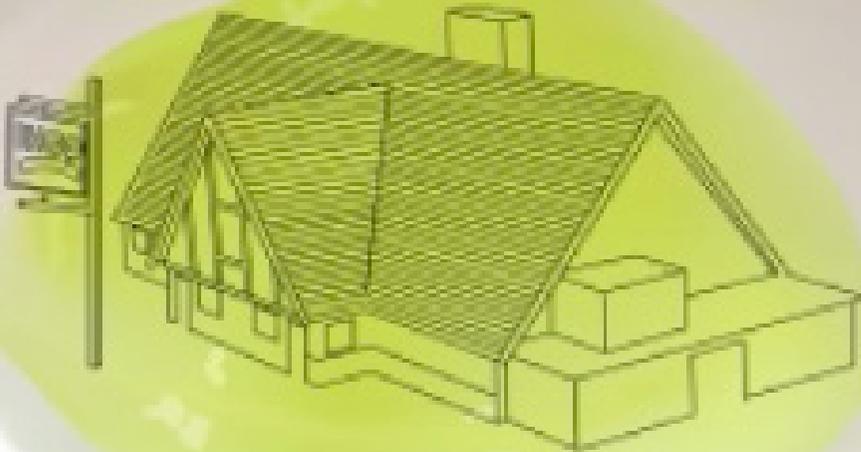


# WESTWIND



Winter '17



# **WESTWIND**

**UCLA's Journal of the Arts**

**Winter '17**

# Westwind

Los Angeles is a crazy collision of intersections, and *Westwind*, UCLA's student-run journal of the arts, strives to capture this spirit.

We seek to provide a platform for the weird and wonderful voices found all over the greater Los Angeles area in whatever form they arise.

For over fifty years, *Westwind* has been printing poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, art, music, and everything in between. Help us attempt to define the undefinable that is Los Angeles. Anything goes.

*Westwind* is made possible with the support of UCLA's English Department. Print journals are currently available in the English Departmental Office.

Designed by Natalie Green, Dylan Karlsson, and Pauline Pechakjian.

# Staff

**Faculty Advisor** Reed Wilson

**Managing Editor** Natalie Green

**Fiction Senior Editors**

Nahal Amouzadeh

Sophie Mirzaian

**Poetry Senior Editor**

Dylan Karlsson

**Fiction Staff**

Nathan Bang

Julia Bare

Winston Bribach

Micaela Harris

Grace Li

Audrey Miano

Theodora Ng

Emily Parsons

Kalyce Rogers

Erika Salazar

Rachel Sweetnam

Amara Trabosh

Nick Versaci

Melissa Villalon

Anne Youngdahl

**Poetry Staff**

Zach Conner

Naiomi Desai

Julia Eberhardt

Shannen McKee

Pauline Pechakjian

Maya Richardson

Eunice Shin

**Blog Editor**

Erika Salazar

# Editors' Notes

The current state of arts, education, and arts in education terrifies me. Simultaneously, it has made me realize how fortunate I am to write an editor's note for an undergraduate arts journal.

This past winter, I've realized the power *Westwind* can possess if we challenge ourselves—and my staff challenges me—to do better. We hosted a reading with LA poet Ashaki Jackson and student Annakai Geshlider. We co-programmed an introductory creative writing workshop with UCLA's Writing Success Program, and brainstormed an inauguration-themed zine. We also continued to read, contemplate, and discuss the words and art of our submitters, without whom we wouldn't have this journal, or any journal.

When the Trump administration proposed eliminating the budgets of the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, nonprofits, organizations, and educators cried out for support.

For *Westwind* readers, contributors, and staff, you're supporting the arts by reading this far. If you have time or means beyond that, please continue advocating for the arts—and all of its forms, faces, and voices—in whatever way you can.

*Natalie Green*

*Managing Editor, 2017*

# Fiction

One full year and a half ago, I walked into a *Westwind* meeting and signed my Tuesday evenings off for the rest of my undergraduate career.

Fiction staff has been home for me—sitting around multiple tables pushed together, discussing, listening, and laughing among peers. Every week, I look forward to meeting in a windowless room. I look forward to listening to updates from our ever-witty managing editor, Natalie Green. I look forward to hearing the insightful things the fiction staff has to say about our submissions. I especially look forward to bothering the poetry staff by the fiction staff's volume (sorry, Dylan).

*Westwind* is my safe haven. And I wouldn't have it without the writers who put their hearts on the line by submitting.

So here's to you, avid reader and secret writer.

Thank you for trusting *Westwind* with your 2 a.m. scribbles. The poem you wrote in class or at work. The short film that came to you in a dream, that you've been editing and editing for months on end. The hundredth drawing you did, that you finally liked. The tune you composed that you can't stop humming. The piece of fiction you typed up in a fit of escapism.

Thank you for your bravery. Without it, UCLA wouldn't be the same.

*Nahal Amouzadeh*

*Senior Fiction Editor, 2017*

# Fiction

If there is any one war that affects us all, it is that against the arts. In America our public arts programs are on their way to being reduced or cut. The cultures of Iraq, Syria, and Libya have been partly wiped away through an eradication of art objects; lamassu have been destroyed. Iranian filmmakers and photographers refuse to attend and participate in American events as a combination of worry and rebellion over new restrictions. We live in a time when art making is difficult, contentious, even. Artists feel the need to stand up for other artists because artists, by nature, see and reveal the things that others still do not. We think of art as long-lasting but should never forget that every artwork was made within a moment. This moment engages a global population.

The arts are writing, music, painting, photography, enjoyment, fulfillment, culture, politics, prestige, ideology, philosophy. The fact that there are people who can and do buy art and yet do not have the capacity to appreciate it is astonishing.

What can we do in the face of this battle? Read. Write. Listen and look. Engage with the art that people make and use art as a vehicle for our own expression. That is, keep doing what you're doing right now, and don't stop.

*Sophie Mirzaian*

*Senior Fiction Editor, 2017*

# Poetry

This winter, the poetry staff renewed and refocused our mission to provide a platform for a personal and political poetics. We intend for this journal to be a space where poets of every age could voice that which can be uncomfortable and urgent.

The selection the poetry staff has gathered in this journal display the subtle, vital, and sometimes rude intimacies that enter our skin via the poem. There is depth and precision in the work these poems do, they show how points of contact are built and eroded, cherished and thrown away. Sometimes the site of this contact is between bodies, or between bodies of land. The scope of these poems is continually mutating. What they offer us is a vision that can contain connection on its most intimate scale, growing to connections that span oceans.

As always, working with a community of poets has been a delight and a privilege. We're glad to share and showcase their work here, and hope our engagement can lead to more voices to be shared in the future.

*Dylan Karlsson*

*Senior Poetry Editor, 2017*

# Table of Contents

<b>june 13</b>	<b>13</b>
gabriel brenner	
<b>Arrhythmia (18)</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>queery</b>	<b>15</b>
Nina Soleil Crosby	
<b>After the Bath, Woman Drying Herself</b>	<b>16</b>
Gayane Hovsepyan	
<b>The Angel</b>	<b>18</b>
Nico Gist and Kalle Noble	
<b>secular</b>	<b>24</b>
Esther Lu	
<b>SPIRITUALITY ATTEMPTS</b>	<b>25</b>
Luke Van Lant	
<b>Songs that sang</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Join Venture</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>aba nee bee</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>boobyloo</b>	<b>29</b>
Orr Swissa Amran	

<b>Text Messages</b>	<b>30</b>
Mallika Singh	
<b>Killer Bee</b>	<b>32</b>
Dorothy Yim	
<b>untitled</b>	<b>33</b>
Tulika Varma	
<b>To Brownie, My Loyal Rabbit</b>	<b>36</b>
Yuri Nishiyama	
<b>The Oasis</b>	<b>38</b>
Reed Rowan Buck	
<b>Periodontal Surgery</b>	<b>62</b>
Sean Lee	
<b>The Dream</b>	<b>63</b>
Anna Ter-Yegishyan	
<b>Contributors' Notes</b>	<b>64</b>



# June 13

By gabriel brenner

sand particles  
scratch my  
ankles rock bumpy

waves roar you barely hear me yell  
i'm still a target  
they put bullets in

us

y'know  
waves recede

it's dark you laugh  
you put your arm  
around  
stop shivering how warm

they told me  
you only date girls

but

you don't feel shame  
when you touch

me

# Arrhythmia (18)

By Nina Soleil Crosby

Maps on my wrists,  
Criminally discrete markings  
Of streets and crossroads.  
Past those train tracks we  
Entered a blood pact under the moon.  
I think her tears misted  
The air as my heart beat wildly  
In that tar blanket.  
Protected under night and  
Spurred by chattering teeth,  
I saw you through the night:  
Eyes closed and mouths broken.  
Fading streetlights direct me  
To an unknown future; though our  
Wounds will never weep again,  
That night is branded into me  
As a delicate scar.  
Bleeding hearts found willing chests while  
Mucus sobs rang out in concerto.  
That moment will always be.  
Our bundle of limbs writhed on  
Trampoline cum altar and  
I accepted your love for the first time,  
Quasi-virgins doused in red.

We dreamed it.

# queery

By Nina Soleil Crosby

Dirty – sullen thoughts; sullied Vans leave by door.

Grab a seat man.

Pink lip, brown nipple in dorm don't stare.

Come in. You're the best, ya know.

Accidental arm brush and my throat closes. The attention in your hand:

strong and dirtied, long fingers with creased face run ragged, beautifully masculine in grip tight white knuckle-thrash of rushed intimacy. Bitten nails in filth grub chastise, so typical. Cocksure and large, palm up and my friction sweats, how Divine! Riverbed of lust traced as lullabies carved into flesh, savoring salt of human skin like tongue caress index.

I love your hands. I want to taste them, to hold them, to know them.

But I could never...I'm the worst at goodbyes.

Woah dude, at least take me to dinner first.

My bad bro, didn't mean to.

No worries.

Shut up.

# After the Bath, Woman Drying Herself

By Gayane Hovsepyan

Having just washed  
four letter words  
and the day's residue  
from her hair  
which clung  
to her scalp  
like oil and sweat,  
but were lathered, rinsed  
and repeated  
to the surface of the bathwater,  
she leans forward  
in her yellow armchair  
draped in white towels  
patting her hair  
from wet to damp.

A silhouette in a keyhole,  
Her flesh drenched  
in an everyday kind of light,  
but never reduced to ordinary,  
A Bathsheba after the bath,  
christening us all Davids,  
Man is most vulnerable  
at prayer and undress.  
She knows this well.

Made for her surroundings,  
her back contours to her furniture

parallel lines drag  
from her spine to the curtains,  
but she is movement magnified,  
despite being designated  
to an ornate frame  
hanging above a couch  
in a dingy Parisian art studio,  
and eventually a museum  
in London behind a pane of glass  
which only serves  
to trap the steam.

# The Angel

By Nico Gist and Kalle Noble

FADE IN:

INT. MAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A MAN kneels next to his bed in prayer. Behind him sits a small bedside table with a lamp and digital clock resting on top. The lamp is lit, and the clock reads 11:11 p.m.

MAN (earnestly)

Look... I know this isn't something I do often. But I really need this now, more than ever. She needs this. So... if there's anything you can do, I'm not sure there will be a better time.

Man bows his head then gets under his covers, turns off his bedside lamp, and closes his eyes.

INT. MAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The clock reads 3:14 a.m. Man is asleep, but restless. There is a silent flash of light near the foot of Man's bed, where an ANGEL appears. Angel is dressed in all white and surrounded by a gentle glow. Its hands are folded as if in prayer and a faint halo hovers above its head. A chorus of heavenly voices softly echoes

throughout the room. A second after Angel's appearance, Man opens his eyes, then jolts awake upon seeing Angel.

MAN

Ahhh! Wha—

He scrambles back against the headboard of his bed and jumps to his feet in the bed, holding his arms up defensively between him and Angel.

MAN (voice shaking)

Who—

Man gulps and then continues, more confidently.

MAN (in a deeper voice)

Who on earth are you?

Angel doesn't respond. Man blinks several times, then looks Angel up and down. Realization dawns on his face and he lowers his arms.

MAN (hopeful)

Have you come to help me?

ANGEL

אַרְיֵת-לֹא<sup>1</sup>

Man raises his eyebrows.

MAN

Pardon?

---

1 "Do not be afraid."

ANGEL

2 ךַּתוא עמוש ךַּיהולא' ה תא .דחפת לא ,יתרמא

MAN

What? What the hell is this?

Angel drops its hands to its sides.

ANGEL (angrily)

3 ךַּנושל הפצ ,יתוא עמשת

MAN (exasperated)

Is that fucking Hebrew? God  
damn it.

Angel turns quickly towards the man's bedside table and emits a sharp shriek and a bright beam of light from its orifices. Man's digital clock bursts into flame, reduced to a small pile of ash.

ANGEL (yelling)

4 אושל ךַּיהולא' ה לש ומש תא חקול אל התא

MAN (cowering)

Why did you do that? Jesu—uhhh crap...  
Okay, okay. I'm sorry!

Angel hovers silently with its arms crossed.

---

2 "I said, do not be afraid. The LORD your God hears you."

3 "Hear me, watch your tongue."

4 "You do not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

MAN (resignedly)

I'll just get a new clock.

Man shakes his head and lets out a long sigh. He directs his attention to Angel.

MAN

Just... please. If you did come here to help my daughter... she's been sick for too long, and the doctors, they say the worst is yet to come. I—

He pauses and starts to tear up.

MAN

I can't lose her too, not after her mother...

Man continues to talk in the background, but his words are unintelligible. An orange tabby cat wanders into the room. Neither Man nor Angel turn to see the cat until the bell on its collar jingles. Angel spins toward the cat, opens its mouth, and shrieks. Light spills out, engulfing the cat and leaving a pile of ash where it once stood.

MAN (in shock)

What the fuck!

Angel glances between Man and the pile of ash, then turns its body back to face Man. It looks unsettled.

## ANGEL

סיחטבואמ תעכ סיאצמנ ונא. רבח, עגריִת <sup>5</sup>

Angel closes its eyes and returns its hands to their original positions. The glow surrounding it gets brighter and the chorus of heavenly voices returns, louder than before. Man is visibly upset and attempts to speak to Angel but the sound is drowned out by the choir. Angel ascends into the air and hovers for a few seconds, then slowly returns back to the ground. The glow and voices fade. Man watches in awe, only a slight twinge of anger remaining on his face. Transfixed, he slowly lifts his arm, and Angel reaches out to Man and touches his outstretched hand. Meanwhile, a rustling sound and a faint creak can be heard from outside the room.

## ANGEL

וישכע אפרנ אוה ןתב <sup>6</sup>

Man looks upon Angel with wonder and confusion. Man opens his mouth to speak. Suddenly, Man's DAUGHTER bursts into the room.

## DAUGHTER

Papa, what's happe—

Angel spins toward the sound and lets out a quick shriek. Light envelops Daughter's figure for a brief moment before she vanishes into a large pile of ash.

---

5 "Relax, friend. We are now secure."

6 "Your daughter is now cured."

Man lets out a pained yell and springs toward the ash. As he kneels before the remains of his daughter, Angel vanishes in a flash of light. Man is left on his own. Amid his quiet sobs is a deep rumbling sound coming from outside. The man walks to his window and looks to see his crops have grown several feet.

# secular

By Esther Lu

When I was seven,  
I helped my mother kill a goose for the first time.  
I held its downy white form,  
alive and writhing under my soft, unblemished hands,  
down on the wooden cutting board.  
We placed a steel bowl under its neck,  
and, as it quivered, neck spasming,  
black eye rolling in its socket to stare at me  
till I looked away,  
my mother took her sharpest knife  
and slit its throat.  
The red nectar of its blood spilled, flooded  
into the bowl and the warm iron stench  
filled my nose as the goose  
gave its last few kicks and shuddered  
to stillness.  
Later, I watched as my mother boiled and plucked it  
until it was a glistening pink carcass,  
the smooth curve of its ribcage  
like the swell of a tumor, a wet and foreign  
presence gracing our table every few months.  
In the evening,  
I sank my teeth into greased goose leg, had its  
warm blood, salted and boiled, slip down my throat,  
fought with my brother over its savory tongue,  
and I forgot  
it ever had feathers at all.

# SPIRITUALITY ATTEMPTS

By Luke Van Lant

It's hard to sleep now without the  
stop start movement of the train between wire & rails  
the reflection of your face outside the window lurches  
on top of narrow evening lights and houses  
as you tear through the universe at the city's pace  
Chopped soul beats throb through your ears and light up  
your personhood  
insert "insider" condensed  
    city map w/ blue arguably, veins  
Backyard shows at the apartments  
the whole patio starts glowing rushing receding  
superimposed heavy layer on layer  
your broken mind shakes like an alarm  
in the morning They drop an envelope through the mailslot  
& it's full of anthrax and earthquakes  
full cups  
red faces turning broke under the spotlight



# Songs that sang

By Orr Swissa Amran



# Join Venture

By Orr Swissa Amran



# aba nee bee

By Orr Swissa Amran



# boobyloo

By Orr Swissa Amran

# Text Messages

By Mallika Singh

Think of emails as fireflies, sparking through invisible tunnels  
*SO FAB SWIGGITY SWAG IN A BAG*

My shimmer pink nails play a 4 by 4 beat on QWERTY keyboard and *It has potential to be aamaaaazing* just like the *Rager en mi casa!*

Come by! for Keystone light and small talk with strangers; absentmindedly grind on some *cute guy right behind you*. I do not look at him

Look down at too tight dress with flowy sleeves like wings  
If I had wings, I would do what I want and fly *have a snack down in that there cabin* and *Okie. I'll text you when I get there.*

I straighten my hair, the Indian wave, combing through *I didn't even know he was trying to wing me* and *Do you want sushi tonight?*

It takes so long I wish I'd worn waterproof mascara  
Waterproof black words run along dotted lines *Hi this is your cousin just wanted to say hi* I always hated my handwriting and *You and he dude!!!*

So I drew: dolls hanging by a noose, city skylines and clocks stuck at 2

Salvador painted elephants with bamboo long legs walking across red sand deserts *Idk wtf is going on* but *thanks so much chica*

I wish I had long legs and a flat stomach: look in the mirror; hold breath *Tell me is it cute or super cute?!*

Thirsty *Do you want to talk to mr. cantcommittoshit?*

*hey bae what r u upto* cuts into the back of my forearm *by the time our turn came around I was too drunk to play* no one saw the scars, no one thought to look *no problem*

My mother cooked mushroom and bacon pasta, the apartment smells like *I love u so much and i miss u so much love dadi*

*Should I Make some cOnNeCtIoNs?*

Books on shelves and I am *So sorry. Trapped at this horrible intersection* between fluorescent futures and candlelit past

# Killer Bee

By Dorothy Yim

You told me to stay still when the bee came near,  
said it wouldn't sting me if I pretended to be the earth.

I thought about the first time we kissed and how  
you danced around me dizzy—I stood like Antarctica

but you stung my spine anyway. Look, I forgave you  
because my heart was pelting stones at my chest

so I may have swayed an inch or two but  
around you there isn't a part of me that is still;

And you always find a virgin spot—  
sometimes you sting the same place twice,

yet I haven't learned that love is not a  
bumblebee band-aid I stick on after a bicycle fall.

There are only so many wounds that can be forgotten  
but bee stings leave red scars you mistake for birthmarks.

# untitled

By Tulika Varma

the mynahs were the arbiters of your fate—  
one for sorrow, two for joy, ten

for death. every time you saw one mynah, you promised yourself there was another just  
lurking in the closest bush. once, in bangalore, you saw fourteen mynahs in a field.  
you decided,  
i will feel happiness twice, and then,  
i will die.

once, in bangalore, six years later, you listened to a train hum over your head and  
watched a clock tick  
towards midnight, each tick grating you until your ashes were scattered on the  
street. four mynahs came to pick you up,  
your two moments of joy.

~  
the crows were your teachers. they taught you  
to usurp the duties of god, turn black  
to experience the night that has been held from you, but still make enough noise to  
ripple darkness that cannot pretend  
to be empty.  
hollywood fears both  
crows and bloody women, so to be either—  
or both—is admirable.

~  
you wrote once: i want to cling to the tails of migrating pelicans to see where they go, to  
see what strange fish they carry in their beaks.

in winter they came in hundreds and settled on the lake, a froth of white feathers  
and water, sometimes erupting from within you, beaks tearing their way through  
your own insufficient mouth. you watched

as the winter pelicans left you, leaving you with a shredded oesophagus  
incapable of swallowing food; they were replaced  
by inert marsh plants that sometimes flowered,  
but of which there were too many.  
concrete had devoured the wetness  
from which you had all emerged.

~

the koels were gentle.  
they fed you when the hunger was crippling, soothed you to sleep after. they followed  
you to lucknow and delhi, reassuring among too-fast dialects of hindi, red-eyed from  
maternal tiredness.

but when you flew to america, they would only fly with you  
till the immigration line—then  
they joined the pigeons in the airport rafters.

birds do not belong in america, they said.  
in that place, birds are hunted and sold, wrapped in plastic,  
to celebrate a genocide.

~

the crows nodded. they said,  
do not be afraid of thresholds.  
shit on people's heads frequently: if you do it with enough confidence, they will convince  
themselves it's good luck.

~

you told your mother, i am tired of learning  
from the crows, travelling

with the pelicans, i want a beak  
of my own.

your mother, an expert seamstress, made you a skin that fit better than your own,  
settling well into the space between your fingers. with this,  
you could fly as close to the sun  
as you wanted.

~

after months in america, you asked the sun:

birds are real, right?  
birds are real?

all you got was the smell of melting plastic. you were turning the charcoal black  
of a crow. on land,  
you do not perch with both feet  
on separate wires;

you fear quick electrocution, but not  
the slow fire.

# To Brownie, My Loyal Rabbit

By Yuri Nishiyama

Black eyebrows  
joined together  
on your small forehead—  
you are  
my loyal rabbit  
who lived  
to see  
two springs.

Your amber fur was  
soft and smooth  
until I stopped cleaning  
your house—  
flies laid eggs in  
the toilet,  
and I breathed in  
your stained fur.

In my dream  
you are alive,  
rattling the cage  
for water, and I

fail again  
to change your bottle...  
I wake up  
with a burning throat.

I carry your patience  
with me, for  
you never  
raised your voice  
against my abuse,  
not even  
frowning  
your brow.

May you rest under  
the orange tree where  
wildflowers bloom...  
O Brownie,  
my loyal rabbit  
who died  
on the day  
I left for America.

# The Oasis

By Reed Rowan Buck

The sun was lengthening in the sky when Terjjen found himself standing in the shade of the northeastern portcullis of Trastor, patting his mare Celtoer in a wholly unnecessary attempt to calm her. She was not the one who was upset.

The parting crowd announced the arrival of a carriage. It rolled to a stop on steel wheels—a rarity in Trastor—led by a team of four sleek black geldings who eyed Celtoer with regal contempt. A manservant, vested in ghastly purples, leapt from the front of the carriage and tucked a stepstool under the door, which he opened in a flourish.

“Announcing Her Grandeur, the Contessa Aurevieu, Lady of the Seventh Court of Trastor and—”

“You’re late.”

Terjjen offered his greeting to the heels of the woman just now stepping from the carriage. After a suitably gratifying moment of stunned silence, the manservant finished:

“...and Heir to the Duchy of Southern Trast.”

The Contessa descended from the carriage in a flood of coats and skirts which stirred up dust on the path. Her eyes, a piercing silver, found their way to Terjjen’s in due time.

“I presume you are our Waymaker?” she said.

“Aye,” Terjjen said, stalking up to her. “And you’re late.”

“I am aware of the time of my arrival,” the Contessa said, her one hand resting on the carriage door. “I am also aware of the time it takes for a woman of my stature to make preparations for travel; and here I am, not a moment later than I needed to be, nor a moment earlier than I could.”

Terjjen spat to the side in answer.

“We shall require a few moments to transfer our essential belongings to your mount,” the Contessa said. Behind her, the manservant hustled to obey.

“That’s just fine,” Terjjen replied. “I’ll be over here.”

“I was rather hoping you could take that time to introduce yourself to our last companion.” The Contessa rapped upon the carriage door with one hand. “Olienna?”

A woman leapt out as if her entire purpose had just been realized. Perhaps ten years Terjjen’s junior, her face bespoke an innocence Terjjen could only faintly remember having at some point in his life. Her eyes a soft blue like calm waters, she regarded him with a balmy smile and a curtsy.

Blue eyes meant she was not a relative of the Contessa Aurevieu. Perhaps a bastress, but unlikely given her traveler’s clothing. The Baron had previously implied that she was not a traveler, but she did not have the bearing of a personal servant. The only conclusion, impossible as it seemed, was that she was a...

“Waymaker,” the woman said, offering her hand and an even brighter smile. Terjjen was surprised to find himself taking it.

“Waymaker,” he replied. Then, to the Contessa, “One guide not enough for you?”

“Olienna is a friend’s relative,” the older woman replied. “She has only just begun her career and asked to be taken along.”

“What?” Terjjen glanced back and forth between the Contessa and the Waymaker, but neither seemed to signal an impending joke. “You think this is some kind of joy-trip?”

“Of course not. The exact opposite, in fact.” The Contessa stepped aside to let the manservant struggle by under the weight of a large crate, which she tapped meaningfully. “We carry precious cargo on this journey, and as such need as many of your kind for protection as can be afforded.”

“As many of my—” Terjjen gritted his teeth and exhaled. “This is highly inappropriate, Your Grandeur. Waymakers don’t work in pairs, as this girl well knows; or if she doesn’t, she has even less experience than you claim.”

“This occasion, for this price, they do.” The Contessa patted Olienna on the arm and offered her a warm smile. When she turned back to Terjjen, the smile had disappeared. “I believe the two of you will... quite enjoy each other’s company. Now, may I get acquainted with your mount?”

## §

By and by, the three companions made their way into the Torn Forest on a vaguely northeastern bearing. Terjjen led, followed by the young waymaker Olienna, and then by the Contessa on Celtoer’s back. The rich fool had tied the crate over

the mare's rump, secured with thick lengths of twine around her belly. Terjjen could sense her simmering distaste with each clopping step.

They wove in between wraithlike trees twisted into bizarre and disturbing positions. They were the products of a world torn apart, their tortured frames bowing and crying out without a sound.

"My Lord, how horrifying," the Contessa Aurevieu at one point muttered.

"This is what happens outside the cities when the quakes come," Terjjen replied, picking his way through a dense patch of creepers. "Out here, there's no shockstone to absorb all that wrath. The land takes the brunt of it."

They made good time, despite the frequent stops for Terjjen to hack through foliage for Celtoer. Only two quakes hit by the time the sun dipped below the horizon, and they were as children's tantrums—loud and ineffectual.

Before setting up camp, Terjjen took one last moment to secure the position of Helzevejn on the horizon. He closed his eyes, blocking out as much of the sunset as possible, and let the petals of his mind bloom. Upon the plains of his consciousness, many bright lights appeared, each shimmering with a different twinkle and hue. Helzevejn gave a steady burnt orange glow, situated directly on their course, some several dozens of miles away. He noted its barely perceptible movement northward before opening his eyes once more.

"We make camp here for the night," he said.

“And what of Helzevejn?” the Contessa said, collapsing to the ground and massaging her saddle-sore legs.

“Heading northward, not quickly. I think we should reach it in an eighth’s time at most.”

“Check again for me, if you would.”

“There’s no need to—”

“Check again.”

Terjjen glowered at the Contessa; she held his stare without flinching.

He sighed and closed his eyes, letting the locations come back to him. “Yeah, just like I said. Moving north.”

The muscles around the Contessa’s mouth tightened as she frowned. “Well. I suppose that will have to do.”

## §

Dinner was a simple affair of the kind Terjjen preferred: a wholesome stew of goat meat and thick mushroom broth, filling his stomach with a pleasant warmth.

As he ate, he regarded Olienna. “So,” he said.

“So,” she said, turning to him with a smile.

“From where do you hail?”

“Vetyn,” she said, her eyes clouding with memories. “It has been my home for as long as I’ve known.”

Vetyn... “Isn’t that the trackless district?”

“Aye.”

“Yes,” the Contessa Aurevieu corrected from where she sat upon a down blanket.

“Yes,” Olienna repeated, her smile faltering for a moment.

“They’re the ones who killed all their Waymakers fifty-some-odd years ago, right?”

Olienna shook her head. “Nothing nearly so cruel. There was a forced exodus, though. The Vetynae...well, they’re strange folk. They believe the answer to the world’s major problems can be found in technologies.”

“Technologies...what, like metalworking?”

“In a way.” Olienna paused. “They think everything can be done with the right sort of device. Travel, energy, home comforts...all within reach if someone cunning enough can develop a perfect machine.”

“And how did Waymakers get in the way of that?”

Olienna shrugged. “They didn’t. Vetynae just don’t like what they can’t explain, and Waymakers’ abilities lie in that realm. So they banished them. We have these guides instead—they act as pseudo-Waymakers, but without any real skill. We use them for short-range travel.”

A bunch of scientists, lost in the woods, insisting they didn’t need a Waymaker’s guidance. The thought made Terjjen chuckle.

“Okay, so then how did you manage to live there for—what, twenty years? Without being noticed as a Waymaker?”

She laughed. “I had the good fortune of not being aware of my gift until just recently.”

Terjjen sat up. “Beg pardon?”

“Not all districts outside the Empire encourage the awakening process. In Vetyn, I was too busy stretching the capacity of my mind with mathematics to stretch it in other ways.”

Terjjen nodded, draining his bowl. “So what happened?”

“Well, I became a mathematician—one of the district’s best. They wished to move me to the capital city, but without Waymakers, we quickly became lost en route. Our guide—well, you can imagine. Apparently starvation is enough of an incentive for awakening.

“Suddenly I could see all the districts in mind. I led my group out of the mires and was promptly exiled from my home as reward. I made my way to Trastor, where I knew my father had friends. And here we all are now.”

Terjjen nodded and returned to his stew.

“Wait just a moment,” she said, beckoning with a finger. “You think I share my story without expecting recompense?”

“What do you want to know?”

“Let’s start with where you’re from.”

A half-grimace curled on his face. “Kval.”

“Oh.” Olienna bit her lip. “Were you...born in Kval? Or... taken there?”

“You mean abducted?” Terjjen sighed. “No, I was born there. I never knew anything else for my first twenty years.”

“Is it as bad as they say?”

“Worse.”

“Oh.” And then: “How?”

He swiped one finger around the edge of his bowl, scooping up the last of the stew. “How do you mean, how?”

“What can be worse than torture?”

He sighed. “Olienna, you seem sweet enough. I don’t want to ruin your conceptions of the glamorous life of a Waymaker.”

“You shouldn’t patronize someone you barely know,” she said, folding her arms across her chest.

He smiled without mirth. “Fine. What can be worse than torture? Torture implies interest. To torture someone, you must have an investment in their pain, develop a bond with them. I had my share of torture when I was in Kval, and I learned to prefer it.”

“To what?”

“Neglect.”

His attempt at vehemence failed him, and the word came from his throat like the cry of a wounded animal.

“I—” Olienna began.

“Have you ever starved because your master had so forgotten of your existence that she couldn’t be bothered to remind a servant to bring you food?” He turned, affixing her with a stare that finally made her avert her gaze. “Have you ever been hitched to the front of a wagon with the horses and ran alongside them? Been whipped with them? Ate where they did? Have you ever had to cross the endless stone wasteland with no sleep for an eighth, running barefoot on blistered heels, because your master didn’t see you as a creature that needed rest?”

His tears glimmered in the firelight. He didn’t reach up

to wipe them away. “When you cease to be even a resource, Olienna,” he said, “when you are regarded as a fact of existence and nothing more, you will know what is worse than torture. And when the rest of the world turns its back on your plight, then you will know hell.”

He stood and moved to Celtoer, unpacking his sleeping roll.

“But you got out,” Olienna called.

He turned. “Sorry?”

“You got out, didn’t you? You’re in Trastor now, under the protection of the Empire. The Contessa told me you lived in a mansion! You have a future to look forward to.”

He tried to grimace, but eventually settled on a rueful smile. “You really aren’t a Waymaker, are you?”

“And what do you mean by that?”

“If you were one of our kind...” He shook his head. “You wouldn’t be talking about futures.”

“Oh, ignore him, dear,” the Contessa called from her perch on the blanket. “It is always a good thing to mind one’s future; that is how one rises to greatness, despite one’s birthright.”

“And you would know about birthrights, wouldn’t you?” Terjjen muttered. Celtoer nickered.

“For your information, Waymaker,” the Contessa said, “I have dealt with and risen above more than my share of adversity and issue.”

“What, the silver spoon made your food taste strange?”

“The only difference between you and I,” she continued, “is

that I face my problems, and learn to turn them to my advantage. Did you know I was not born a Contessa? I only ascended to this office on the wings of my own cunning and vision. And should I continue to move upward, I believe it will be for much the same reason.”

Terjjen barked with laughter, to push the tears back. “Right. Well, while you move upward, I’ll be getting some sleep for the night. Olienna, I suggest you do the same.”

## §

That night, Terjjen surfaced from tumultuous dreams to find a new light in his mind. A deep, shimmering azure shade, the color of clarity. The color of an oasis in a desert.

He sat up, eyes still closed, observing the light soundlessly. There was something different about it—other than the fact that it was new. He watched it for some time, trying to determine what it was. It was only when Irridia crossed it that he finally realized—

It was not moving.

He waited several long moments, his posture rigid, breathing slow and calm. The oasis refused to move, even slightly, from where it lay.

A powerful sensation of tranquility washed over Terjjen, accompanied by several thoughts. Whatever this city was, it contained human life, else he would not be able to sense it. Its recent appearance suggested it had just been constructed. And the shameless grace with which it stood still amidst the drifting

of the other districts told him something else.

This oasis had almost assuredly been built by Waymakers.

A sudden vision coursed through his mind: all the Waymakers, every single one in the Empire and the outer districts, leaving in the night, stealing away to this oasis. He imagined his people finally coming to a place where they felt safe—a place where, without knowledge of the location, the rest of the world could never find them.

We could be at peace.

His mind was set. The oasis called to him; he needed to move to it immediately.

Terjjen opened his eyes to sudden dim firelight. Olienna sat at the fire, heedless to his gaze, bent over some kind of notebook. Her pen scribbled furiously across the page, filling it with symbols. She startled slightly when he tapped her on the shoulder.

“What are you doing up?” she whispered, her eyes sliding to where the Contessa lay prone in the throes of slumber.

“Same as you,” he said. “You felt it, didn’t you?”

“Felt what?”

He frowned, feeling the errant threads of the past few days weaving together into something resembling an unpleasant truth.

“Where is Weijrne?” he asked, his voice devoid of emotion.

Olienna’s brow furled. “I’m sorry?”

“Right now. What bearing is it on?”

She half-shrugged. “I don’t—why does that matter?”

“Just tell me. Close your eyes and see it.”

She bit her lip, hesitated. Her eyes flicked for the merest moment toward the notebook still clutched in her hand.

It was over in a flash. Terjjen held the notebook, dangling it in close proximity to an astonished Olienna’s face. She reached out but hesitated when he wiggled it over the fire.

“What are you?” he asked.

“I—”

“You are no Waymaker.”

She gave a jerk of a nod.

“So what are you?”

“I’m...a mathematician.”

Terjjen scanned the book from his periphery. It did appear filled with numbers, not that he knew them particularly well. Teaching himself to read had been difficult enough. “What is the meaning of this?” he asked, brandishing the book at arm’s length.

“It’s formulae,” she said, her voice pitchy. “They predict the movement of the districts.”

Predict the...“What does that mean?”

“It’s what a Waymaker does with their gift, only with math. I can use it to predict where the districts and cities will be located in the future.”

“That’s not possible.” Terjjen took an unconscious half-step back.

“It is,” she said.

A deafening whirlwind of thoughts howled in Terjjen’s

mind, and all that came to mind was the oasis. He could still feel it on the verge of his consciousness, a tide pulling him inexorably toward the light.

He shook his head slowly, spat sideways into the flames. Sizzling filled the air as he tossed the notebook back to Olienna.

“Doesn’t matter to me. You can lead the noble pain-in-the-ass to Helzevejn on your own with your formulae.”

He turned back toward his crumpled sleeping roll.

“Wait, you’re leaving us? Just because of...this?”

He snorted. “You couldn’t make me leave a job. I just... need to go. There’s a calling. Your kind wouldn’t understand it.”

She exhaled a bark of sardonic laughter. “Why don’t you try me, Waymaker?”

He knelt by his roll, listening to the padding of her footsteps as she advanced on him. “There’s an oasis,” he said. “I need to—”

“What did you just say?”

Her tone gave him pause to swing back about and face her. Her whole body had gone still, her white-knuckled fingers clutching the notebook to her chest.

“I said there’s an oasis,” he said.

“Why do you use that exact word?”

He shrugged, turning back to his sleeping roll.

“Terjjen, listen to me.”

Olienna sighed when he did not turn. “Despite what most think, the movements of the districts aren’t random. They’re tectonic patterns—they have to do with the surface of the

earth shifting around. Those patterns can be deduced through mathematics. In Vetyn, I was the leader of the team attempting to make those deductions.”

Terjjen turned, ignoring a rising feeling of unease.

“One night I was working late and I stumbled upon something—an overlooked variable that fit into the equation and solved it.” Her eyes glimmered in the firelight. “I was so excited, I had to talk to somebody. So I went wandering throughout the Vetyn research center, looking for anyone who was still working, and I stumbled into a room for a project coded Oasis.”

She inhaled deeply. “Terjjen, Oasis is a trap for Waymakers. The Vetyna government created it with the goal of attracting all the Waymakers to one location. They planned to reveal it contingent upon my team’s discovery of a mathematical alternative to Waymakers...so they could then massacre them.”

It took a moment for the full meaning to sink in.

“You wanted to destroy us and replace us with formulae.” Terjjen’s voice emerged hoarse from his throat.

“You have to understand how they think in Vetyn,” Olienna said. “They loathe what they cannot explain with science. For the longest time, the only thing that stood between them and complete progress was a dependence on your people.”

“You were going to kill us all. You were going to slaughter us just because—because what? Because we can see where the districts move?” Terjjen clawed at the skin of his forehead, scoring gouges above his eye. “I would give anything to be normal. And you were going to kill us?!”

His scream fell upon the wretched trees.

“Not me,” Olienna said in a small voice. “As soon as I found out what they were doing, I left, and I took my formulae with me.” She gazed at him through eyes laced with tears. “But don’t you see, Terjjen? We can do something to stop it! We can—”

“No,” he said, his voice trembling with rage.

“But we—”

“No. Do not speak. Just leave me, please.”

The tears finally fell from her eyes, drawing trails down her cheeks.

“As you wish.”

She withdrew, her footsteps beating a steady path back to her own sleeping space. Terjjen crawled into his sleeping roll and lay still until the soft sounds of sleep filled the clearing.

Then he sat up.

Crept over to where Olienna lay snoring, facing away from him.

Extricated the notebook from where it lived in her satchel.

Returned to the fire and fed the pages to the coals.

On a whim, he moved to where the Contessa’s crate of precious cargo lay near Celtoer and pried it open. Inside, a hollow black emptiness greeted him.

He felt gorge rise in his throat. Nothing they say is true.

Terjjen secured his belongings atop Celtoer and left. Behind him, the fire finished devouring Olienna’s notebook and collapsed into smoldering ashes.

The next day, as the sun reached its zenith, the outer wall of the oasis appeared on the horizon. The Torn Forest had given way to a prairie of waist-high grass, through which it became obvious that Olienna was tracking him.

He stopped until she caught up, out of breath and out of her usual grin.

“You track well,” he said.

She panted for several seconds before answering. “I thought you were going to ride your horse, but you walked instead.”

“The Contessa will be dead because of you,” Terjjen said.

Olienna shook her head. “It was... odd. I told the Contessa Aurevieu you’d left, and she just smiled and said she knew it was going to happen. Then she told me to follow you.”

Terjjen shrugged.

“Where are you going?” Olienna asked.

“I’m going to enter the oasis and see whether you’re telling the truth.”

“You know I am.”

He sighed. “I guess I do.”

“You’ll be throwing your life away for nothing.”

He watched her, noting the care with which she watched him back. “Olienna, I have never had a life,” he said.

They were silent for a moment.

“Look,” she finally said. “I know how you feel.”

He snorted.

“I do. You may think no one else can know suffering, but I have. I left everything I knew behind—my family and friends, everyone I loved—because I couldn’t be a part of the Vetynae’s plans for your people. And those loved ones? They sold me out in an instant to the Vetyn military. I almost didn’t make it out. I suffered, same as you, but I also did what you’ve forgotten to do.”

“And what’s that?”

“Fight.” She grabbed him by the wrist, formed his hand into a fist under hers. “You don’t have to just accept the status quo. You can enlist the Emperor’s help against the Vetynae, or against Kval. You can change things, Terjjen.”

He pulled his hand away. “Things don’t change, Olienna. The Kvallians have enslaved their Waymakers for the last five hundred years. You said yourself the Vetynae exiled their Waymakers half a century ago. Our leaders haven’t lifted a finger against that kind of treatment, just because those districts are outside their precious Empire.”

“Fine,” she said. “Then do it yourself.”

He sighed. “Do what myself?”

“Fight back.”

“It’s not—”

“That thing, the—the Oasis—is anchored in place by steel cables as thick as a man’s trunk,” Olienna said. “I saw them in the schematics. They’re driven hundreds of feet into the earth, perfectly balanced to prevent the city from moving. But if even one of them were shut down or released, the whole city would

face a massive pressure imbalance. It would tear itself apart, and then the Waymakers wouldn't be heading straight into a trap anymore. Terjjen, you could save your people and deal a blow to the Vetynae all at once."

"Olienna, please. Just stop."

"No." Olienna stopped walking, folding her arms across her chest. "You know what else the Contessa Aurevieu said before I left? She told me that you were her precious cargo. Terjjen, I think she believes in you. I think she wants you to do this."

Terjjen's eyes narrowed. "Wait. What makes you say that?"

"I don't know, just the way she talked. She wants to help us, I know it."

"How would she even know about the Oasis?"

Olienna fell silent.

"Those were secret projects, right?" Terjjen continued, rounding on her. "Your people shared them with no one. How did she know about the Oasis?"

"I—well..." Olienna shrugged. "She was close with my father; maybe he told her. She's had dealings in Vetyn before. I don't know!"

"She has friends in Vetyn," Terjjen said, feeling an uncomfortable prickling in the nape of his neck. "Close enough to trust her with the knowledge of the Oasis. But she's willing to betray them and send us to sabotage it. Why?"

"Like I said, to help Waymakers."

"Oh, no," he said, stalking away from her. A groan of laughter filtered up from within him. "Oh, no. No, you can't

really believe that, can you? Could you really be that stupid?!”  
He clutched his scalp with both hands, fighting back tears.

“What, then?” Olienna said quietly.

He thought, his eyes scanning back and forth as he thought.

“If we destroy the Oasis, the Vetynae will seek revenge. The Contessa could easily spread lies that you were a spy from the Empire. It’ll start a war.”

Olienna’s eyes widened. “You think she wants a war?”

Terjjen shook his head. “Not the war itself—what the war can bring. There are ways for smart people to profit. She’s... looking for something.”

He rose, feeling the realization sinking into his chest. “The Emperor is old. Placid. He’s maintained peace for over thirty years. There’s no way he would start a war with the Vetyn. The Contessa will force a conflict and then depose the Emperor when he refuses to fight a war. If she does it right, most of the Empire will be behind her.”

Olienna lifted an eyebrow. “Isn’t that a touch preposterous?”

“Preposterous?” Terjjen shut his eyes against the sun. “Olienna, I opened her ‘precious cargo’ last night. The damned crate was empty. She told you I was her precious cargo? What does that sound like to you?”

“Like—”

“Like she orchestrated this whole thing,” he said. “Like she knew that if she put us together—you, the one who knew about the Oasis, and me, the one unstable enough to destroy it—then we would swing the sword for her.”

Olienna was silent for some time.

“This is bad,” she finally said. “What if she actually seeks war against Vetyn? She could use the opportunity to crush the Empire’s most powerful opposition.”

“So?” Terjjen folded his arms across his chest.

“So then there’s nothing to keep her from imposing a dictatorship. Do you see? She could enslave the whole of the continent under a military state.”

“So?” Terjjen repeated.

Olienna stared at him. “You don’t actually want that. You pretend you don’t care, but you do.”

He raised an eyebrow and said nothing.

“Terjjen,” she said, a note of desperation creeping into her voice.

He turned away and continued through the field.

## §

They approached the oasis together, the outer wall rising from the ground in front of them like a monument to the sun. As they drew closer, Terjjen began to pick out a portcullis, several windows, and a lowered drawbridge. The tension in his gut refused to abate, and though he knew better, he still found himself hoping that this might be a haven for Waymakers.

How pathetic was that? He knew it could not be the case; yet his heart could not let go of the idea of a place where he could finally live free.

They drew closer to the entryway, close enough to see a

figure or two atop the walls, pacing back and forth. The tension spread and grew until it felt as though Terjjen's chest was imploding.

"Terjjen," Olienna whispered.

He didn't turn. "Don't try to dissuade me."

She sighed. "I was just going to say that, when we enter, don't tell them that you're a Waymaker."

He nodded, mouth dry. They entered the shadow of the portcullis, and it was now that Terjjen could clearly see the thick steel chains snaking from the outer wall into the ground at regular intervals, like the stakes and ropes of a massive tent.

"Halt!"

The voice belonged to a bearded man standing inside the threshold of the oasis, who held a strange machine—the length of an arm, it looked to be a metallic tube with an open hollow at one end. Apparently a frightening weapon, because Olienna shrank back from it.

"How did you find this place?" the man said. The moment the words left his mouth, Terjjen knew his hopes were lost—the man had a thick Vetyan accent and was clearly not a Waymaker.

"Our guide, he—" Olienna began.

Terjjen moved faster than she could finish her sentence. His broadstaff came down upon the man's skull with a sickening crack. Before his body had fallen, Olienna was dashing to the left, tugging Terjjen by the hand. Several angry yells came from behind them, along with thunderous booms and zipping noises and rocks that pelted at their feet and past their heads. The

Vetynae carried some sort of super-slingshots.

A last boom rang out and Olienna pitched forward, her hand catching on the door of a small shack. She thrust it open and beckoned Terjjen inside.

The moment the door was shut, Terjjen grabbed the nearest heavy object—a half-full bookcase—and pushed it over the threshold. A moment later, a furious rattle sounded from outside as at least five Vetynae tried to shove the door open. Terjjen put his whole weight against the bookcase.

“Olienna, help,” he said, glancing to the side. And then again, this time taking in the whole scene.

The bloody streak across her hand. The pale, clammy quality of her face and skin. The weak smile she offered him as she slumped down to the floor.

“Have you decided yet?” she said in a halting whisper.

The world shrank to just the two of them. Even the curses of the Vetynae outside faded.

“What?” he said.

She spoke slowly, each breath a labor. “We’re in...the control room...for one of the cables.” She pointed with a shaky hand to a desk upon which several buttons and levers stood in neat order. “The western piton, I think.”

“I don’t...” He fell silent, staring at her wounds. How could a slingshot have done so much damage to Olienna? She was bleeding so liberally.

“The others...don’t have any record of my breakthrough,” she said. “And you burned my notes. When I’m dead...they

won't be able to figure it out, maybe for years. That's as much of a head start as you'll get."

"Olienna..."

"Shut up, Terjjen," she wheezed. "All you have to do...is go over to that panel...and find a button marked emergency release. You press it, and this city will rip itself limb...from limb. You'll save your people...and damn the rest of us."

Terjjen felt his breath coming in short gasps. He opened his mouth to speak, but no words came out.

"And when it's all over, and you've—you've paid for your freedom in blood...you'd better look back and ask yourself something."

She was quiet for a long moment, so quiet that Terjjen thought she might be dead. Then, in a raspy gurgle, she said:

"What happens when the tortured become the torturers?"

## §

"General Terjjen, born a slave with no name, has lived to incite the Waymaker rebellion, the consequences of which have given birth a new age for the Empire. He is unequivocally the most selfless man I have ever met, and I fully expect his success in putting down the Irridian dissidents in the West."

—Grand Empress Aureview, Commendation Speech to General Terjjen of the Waymaker Corps

# Periodontal Surgery

By Sean Lee

Lingual cusp action evades the festering hands  
of Malofaxial Maoists. Their whirring drills  
bore into my bone, and the sucking of the suction pig  
eats at the teat of my life blood.

Yet another mistake means another seeming lifetime of endurance but  
My father taught me one thing:  
“Keep your mouth shut unless told otherwise”  
and I instinctively wince to close but told to keep open.

Masked mother becomes machine, with a  
maniacal search for ivory and each high pitched squeal  
Steals and sells my bones. A rusty hue of red  
stains the curette’s carving

Incisions into my inciting mind prison;  
They salivate knowing what lies beyond my pulp.  
The hope of a paycheck can drive even the  
Richest into depravity.

But alas I cannot take it anymore  
Anesthetize me, please God, anesthetize me.

# The Dream

By Anna Ter-Yegishyan

an orange  
the color of a siren  
nicely splayed behind the trees  
like a mess on a dinner plate  
like the mess you made of my heart.

then a blue  
the color of angels  
the aftermath of the orange  
surrounding the trees  
like the flame on the stove that she forgot to turn off  
like the flame that is in my breath  
like the flame beating and making waves between our eyes

this is a different angle of sex.

then a plane  
and we are both in it  
we are so close to the sun  
that your skin starts to look orange.  
you feel concerned but I am reassuring you  
this is good  
this is a good thing.

# Contributors' Notes

**Orr Swissa Amran** is an artist working primarily in video. Her work explores structures—interiors and constructed environments—often with relation to female affect. Using housing as an armature for her work, she mobilizes these properties to create quasi-narratives, ones that read the structure's physical space and the people that embody them.

**gabriel brenner** is an L.A.-based artist engaging with video, photo, text, and sound. His work explores constructions of the self, histories of trauma, and the poetics of loss. Drawing heavily from personal narratives and their relation to normalized legacies of erasure, he contemplatively communicates the phenomenology of inhabiting a queer(ed) body in the present. He is currently attending the University of California, Los Angeles and will graduate in 2017 with a BA in Art.

**Reed Rowan Buck** has been writing since he was twelve, and wishes he was better at it. He recently graduated from UCLA with a degree in neuroscience and hopes to transition from tinkering on experiments to tinkering on writing projects. He would probably die if he met Christopher Nolan or Hans Zimmer (but he has met Tommy Wiseau).

**Nina Soleil Crosby** studies English and the History of Science and Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. Crosby's work is inspired by the various intersections of her identity, including sexuality, gender, mental health, and race.

**Nico Gist** is a second-year political science major at UCLA. He's involved in student government and loves Pokémon. This is his first published piece.

**Gayane Hovsepyan** moved to the U.S. from Armenia at the age of seven. She is currently a senior studying biology at UCLA.

**Sean Lee** is a third-year English major at UCLA. He enjoys the simpler things in life like breakfast, cool jazz, and Dylan Thomas' poetry.

**Esther Lu** is a nocturnal second-year political science and English double major at UCLA. She enjoys drawing, visiting Japan, stalking fashion trends, sleeping and eating, arguing about politics, and, occasionally, barfing out words. She loves reading things that makes you feel queasy and nervous, but hungry for more.

**Yuri Nishiyama** is an international student from Japan studying political science at UCLA. She is fluent in English, Chinese, and Japanese, but uses only English for creative writing. She suffers

from tuition discrimination and the financial aid barrier against international students in U.S. colleges, and has further lost faith in American institutions after the 2016 election. She plans to pursue a master's degree in contemporary Chinese literature at Beijing Normal University upon graduation this year.

**Kalle Noble** is a second-year communications major and business minor. His Pokémon may or may not have turned on each other due to negligence.

**Mallika Singh** strives as a writer to continuously update and refine the structure and style of her work. Her influences include Allen Ginsberg, Sylvia Plath, and Lang Leav. Other than writing, she is passionate about food, travel, and Liverpool F.C. Since graduating from UCLA in 2016 with a degree in English and concentration in creative writing, Singh has opted to explore a variety of life paths and places. After a stint in India's fashion industry, she is now pursuing a job as an English teacher in Thailand.

**Anna Ter-Yegishyan** studies English at UCLA. She is all about redirecting and translating her feelings, thoughts, and love into sentences since there is no longer any space for it in her head. She has recently self-published a collection of short poems and essays called *Eye Drops*, which you can check out [here](#).

**Tulika Varma** is a third-year double major in English and Gender Studies. She is an international student from Chennai, India.

**Luke Van Lant** was born in Long Beach, CA, and is currently studying English at USC. When not writing, he loves playing saxophone and piano, painting, reading anything published by Semiotext(e), and traveling back and forth between Long Beach and L.A. He is currently working on a book, *Mus Excape*, which will be released under Alley Cat Publishing.

**Dorothy Yim** graduated UCLA last year with a degree in physiological sciences and is currently working in the neurosurgery department at UCLA. When she's not being a science nerd, she tries to read every book she can get her hands on and geeks out about all things literature and writing. Writing is one of the most wonderful and fulfilling things in her life, and she hopes to publish the novel she's been working on for years. She owes a huge part of her passion to her favorite writing professor, Dr. Reed Wilson, for inspiring her to find the art in everything.

# *Westwind*

UCLA's Journal of the Arts

*Westwind* accepts rolling submissions year-round of unpublished original works of fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, art, music, and more by UCLA students, alumni, and members of the greater Los Angeles community.

*Westwind* currently publishes two online journals in Fall and Winter and one annual print publication in Spring.

We're extremely open-minded, so send us your best work.

For more information, visit us at [\*\*westwind.ucla.edu\*\*](http://westwind.ucla.edu).

Copyright © 2017 by *Westwind*, UCLA's Journal of the Arts