A rushlight flickering and small,
is better than no light at all.

Rushlight Literary Magazine, Wheaton College, Norton, MA
# Table of Contents

1. **Trust Issues: A Congratulatory Letter**  
   Mazie Starratt

2. **Colonnade**  
   (Photograph)  
   Samantha O’Connor

3. **For What It’s Worth**  
   Francis Felix Rosa

6. **Untitled**  
   (Photograph)  
   Maia Hay

7. ** Atomic Tangerine**  
   Elixabeth Crowley

8. **Wraith**  
   Lily Goneau

9. **Getting Some Space**  
   (Oil on Canvas)  
   Allie Miller

10. **In My Mind**  
    (Print)  
    Aleza Epstein

11. **Where Does My Stuff Go After I Graduate?**  
    Angelia Powers

13. **Cabo Punta Banda, Baja CA, Mexico**  
    (Photograph)  
    Julia Horibe

14. **Earthworm Elegy**  
    Caleigh Grogan

15. **Abandoned**  
    (Photograph)  
    Lily Fiore
16  **Sea Shells** (Pencil)  
Maia Hay

17  **Girl Aquatic**  
Hannah McIssac

18  **Untitled**  
Megan Alyson Barnes

19  **Pavlov’s Dogs**  
Shannon Conolly

20  **the dim light is like wine**  
Allison Meyette

21  **Mountain Movement** (Oil on Canvas)  
Allie Miller

22  **Oz**  
Frances Rosa

24  **him and Him** (Photograph)  
Susie Almono

25  **Religiosity**  
Caleigh Grogan

27  **Sunday to Sunday**  
Rebecca Spadacenta

28  **Untitled** (Pen and Ink)  
Brendan Geiger

29  **When I Pray**  
Clara Mcgurren

30  **Thunderstorms**  
Elizabeth Crowley
31  **Gielgud Theatre** (Photograph)
Samantha O’Connor

32  **The Fairy Queen**
Shannon Connolly

36  **Dana, Massachusetts** (Photograph)
Mira Lockwood

37  **Milford Sound** (Photograph)
Aaron Portanova

38  **Breuer** (Photograph)
Arianna Dilios

39  **tabula rasa**
Sydney Evans

40  **Monochromatic**
Hannah McIssac

42  **Ethereal**
Lily Goneau

43  **Greenhouses: El Ejido, Spain** (Woodcut, Pochoir)
Emma Garcelon

44  **Abandoned** (Photograph)
Lily Fiore

45  **Why I’m Studying Music Instead of Orthopedics**
Angelia Powers
Trust Issues: A Congratulatory Letter
Mazie Starratt

Congratulations!

You’ve just been promoted to a Level 6 friend.

This means we talk to each other more regularly than we talk to our parents, I’m completely comfortable swearing in front of you, AND you’ve seen me cry.

This isn’t an achievement that many people earn, so you should be proud of yourself!

This also means that you now have exclusive access to highly secretive information about me, including:

-Who I have a crush on
-Where I got the scar on my right hand
-Which people I avoid (and what they did to deserve it)
-And much more!

Once again, congratulations on achieving this milestone. Enjoy your new status, and be sure to keep up the great work!

WARNING: any attempts to share any aforementioned secrets may result in the suspension, lowering, or removal of your friendship status.
Colonnade
Samantha O’Connor
For What It’s Worth
Francis Felix Rosa

A cluster of pilgrims are on a quest to get past the amber waves of grain scorched to kindling from tiki-torch marches: American Carnage. They are sifting through the alternative landscape of a fake country to locate the carcass of our reality.

I don’t remember holding a funeral for mine.

Amidst the smell, metallic rust of Counterfeit monuments, this is the new frontier they discover, hiking past rows of suburbia locked in paranoid palaces, icy and angular. Where every shadow is the death clutch of enemies, every voice is a conspiratorial curse, the hatred of the world is bubbling and churning in flat pots of light and audio, contemporary cauldrons casting a spell on us all. The pilgrims listen to it spout: War is peace, ignorance is strength, $2 + 2 = 5$ just ask for the crowd size.

I check my phone for updates.

The pilgrims hear a whisper shuffling through high-plain winds: We hold these untruths to be self-serving that all men are creating evil. That they are endowed by their Newscasters with uncertain unsolvable plights which among these are strife, bigotry, and the pursuit of angriness.

I turn the station.

They tunnel in these iron-bar barrens, lit with whirling blue-red glows, wagons into the American catacombs, barbed-wire thickets locking up those who dare to mumble in the dark.

I check my pockets for keys.
The pilgrims arrive on gasoline glazed boats to the new frontier because there are oceans of Exxon oil, globular surf to voyage across, pipelines, like murky new canals to ferry down, smelling like evening rot and petroleum dew on the tongue.

I am lighting my tap water on fire.

They paddle across this new hurricane-whipped frontier. This “calm before the storm”-scape of flooded wastelands, flotsam, infrastructural wreckage clumping into soggy nests of what once was. As the slime of a swamp seeps into the blood vessels, and rot eats away at sopping remains of alabaster cities.

My shoes are wet.

The pilgrims fly, jetting across this new frontier, the skies are pummeled with the invisible force of the bomb. Fire and fury of an Armageddon not yet here. But radioactivity is already crawling on the skin, uranium ready to enrich the countryside with mutated scents.

I am writing this under my desk.

They run through this new frontier, bullets whizzing through every rugged crevice, and purple mountain majesty, stained maroon, then red. They duck and find themselves in the shadow of the next great expanse: A wall, a concrete two dimensional wilderness to keep out this week’s manufactured boogeyman.

I touch the leather-bound safety of my American Passport.

The pilgrims go trudging through snow-capped carnivals where they’ve attempted to replace the masses by labeling them as snowflakes, but when you deride righteous anger you better expect a blizzard of protest, to make things cold and unforgiving.
I am approaching a picket line.

The Pilgrims, growing weary, silent, beaten, now wait for an end to this new frontier, something, someway, someone To be Walter Cronkite to these facts. To see like a bridge in this gap. To know the Spring through this Fall. To go Berlin on this wall.
Untitled
Maia Hay
Atomic Tangerine
Elizabeth Crowley

I knew I’d find you here,
perched on a power line like a bluebird,
with your toes curled around a live wire.
I enjoy most the quiet moments
between inhale and exhale.
We sit on the edge of the rooftop,
three sheets and shoes to the wind,
banging out drum beats with our heels.
Concrete grit scrapes my palms bloody
as I lean back and glance over.
You look awful pretty right now.
But I’m content to keep breathing,
I don’t want to break the silent truce
trapped between our fingertips.
There’s a hum of electricity
playing out our heartbeats.
We aren’t meant to be caged,
I feel most at home with both feet
hanging off the edge and you look best
with a little blood flushing your cheeks.
It’s difficult to remember we won’t fly.
You try to stand up, wobbling slightly,
as I wonder morbidly how hard I’d need to beg
to push us both over the edge,
our elbows scraping red brick
and our hair mixing with the grass.
It’s probably for the best
that I never said anything.
You just might have called my bluff.
Wraith
Lily Goneau

It has taken me years to realize that,
Someday, the ocean will be different.
These waves, these waters, this vast pool of time
As ancient as the ships that sail across it
Will one day disappear
Drift away like the morning tides
Leaving nothing but a garden of my bones
Dry and brittle as the sandy shores
Where life had once reigned supreme.
They’ll serve as a map of sights to remember.
Shimmering stars dancing in the mist,
Falling down into the water like the sea’s lost tears.
The moon, dipping below the horizon
Just a moment before dawn blossoms in the east.
And the waves, those dark unfolding heart beats,
Crashing white against the shores of the harbor
Will become death’s final call,
A bitter reminder that nothing lasts
Or remains the same
And that this ocean—this life
Surrounding me with its countless blessings,
Will someday pull me away in its current,
Send me down, past the sunken caverns and lava flows
Until I’m just the silhouette of a fish,
Dwelling deep below the surface
Where the light can no longer reach me
And in the dark, I can no longer see.
Nothing more than a specter, a wraith
Hollowed in death’s cold embrace
Longing for life’s warm touch
To bring me back to the land I knew
And the ocean that I had loved.
Getting Some Space
Allie Miller
In My Mind
Aleza Epstein
Where Does My Stuff Go After I Graduate?
Angelia Powers

Does it come home with me, or do I have a job stapling paper at a high-end business in somewhere like Boston or Chicago? It probably goes to my parents’ house. UGH. That statement. My parents’ house. Like I’m some housewife trying to convince my 1950’s husband we need to go to Thanksgiving at my parents’ house. As if I am no longer a resident—but am I? Probably not. Does it fly off the bed of dad’s truck—the Bat-truck™—and cause a car accident? Ruining my life as I know it because I will somehow be charged with vehicular manslaughter and won’t be able to afford a replacement Macbook Air. Does it obey the law of quantum physics and become lost among the far reaches of a parallel universe once its electrons touch my electrons? Will I sell it to some guy named Steve for the answer to this question: “What is the meaning of life”? Will Steve hand me a bag of mushrooms instead? Will I suddenly begin a passionate love affair with Steve in the woods of Massachusetts that feels like it lasts for ten years or so but was really just five hours of being high on shrooms in the woods? God, no I would never do shrooms, but would my stuff do shrooms? Just to get away from
me? Once I graduate, is my stuff even mine, or is it the bank’s? Is it—god forbid—Donald Trump’s? I bet he’d tweet something like, “This collection of books, while definitely containing words, mean nothing at all to me. The American education system is too advanced. TERRIBLE!” And then I’d have to move to Ireland because, come to think of it, I left my stuff there anyway.
Cabo Punta Banda, Baja California, Mexico
Julia Horibe
Earthworm Elegy
Caleigh Grogan

After it rains, when the sun comes out,
I think about the earthworms
who never make it home.
Their crushed or dried-up bodies
are scattered in front of my house,
as if the byproduct of some miniature war.
I wonder if the worms
were coming or going
or even knew the difference,
before the heat of the day
snuck up and left them shriveled,
and gasping, or whatever worms do
to respire. Their dead bodies
start to look like a sign
that reads “some things
do well in the dark”
And I don’t step on them
even though they’re already dead
because I don’t know
if worms think about heaven
and I don’t want to disrespect
the bodies.
Sea Shells
Maia Hay
Girl Aquatic
Hannah McIssac

In another life,
I might have been a marine biologist.
Dive deep, bury me in seaweed,
bring me back to the home I once knew,
among coral reefs and tide pools,
a crab in each hand, a starfish heart.
I can tell you the lifespan of the female octopus,
like me, she can’t live long without love,
let her wither in the caves and crags
to protect her young,
let this kindness suit her, since
the end is imminent.
Trust me, we are all just jellyfish
captured in the same current,
translucent, transcendent,
like them, you can kill me and
I’d still call you ethereal.
Drag me to your depths,
I swear I’ll still find a way to breathe,
I was made for a land without light,
sunken and shipwrecked in stolen glances.
Call me a shark, an angler fish, the electric eel,
because I always wanted to be predator
disguised as prey, loving me is
synonymous with drowning, I guess,
dangerous like creatures from the deep sea
we have never, or rarely, seen;
believe me, because once I could have been
a marine biologist.
Untitled
Megan Alyson Barnes

I heard you like girls, so I became a woman

I told you I’m not that attracted to men
I crossed my legs on your mattress
I got my boots back from your bedroom

I siphoned the gas out of your truck
I poured it into your ears
I watched it drain out of your nose

“Women’s pleasure is a mystery”
“Women’s pleasure is a sin”
“Women’s pleasure is constructed
by the men who want to fuck them”

I sucked your dick so I could feel the patriarchy between my teeth
I bit down to see it bleed
Pavlov’s Dogs
Shannon Connolly

You cut out the soft part of my blushing cheeks and put in glass tubes to catch my saliva as you tempted me with the things I desired. Gauging my reactions, you found what motivates me most in order to get you what you wanted. I’d gaze from afar as you’d bait me during your little experiments, keeping silver bowls of food just out of reach. I’d sit there in my cage salivating, my eyes shaking with desire under shaggy strands of unwashed, mangy fur, but you’d see it. You always saw what I wanted and when I wanted it. It gave you so much pride, your little doggy experiment. That’s all I—we—were to you. There were so many of us. Your little toys for bigger things. You treated us all the same, pulling us to the edge of our kennels by the collars every day to size up the liquid sloshing around in our face tubes. But every so often your eyes would soften and you’d reach through the metal gate to scratch us behind our ears, and under your mustache we’d see somewhat of a smile. You might’ve just been pleased with your findings, but we didn’t care. The only thing we—I—really cared about, was that you scratched the other dogs. That there were other dogs period. We only pretended it was okay that you scratched other dogs and that you treated us this way, just for the satisfaction of those little scratches. When we were good.
the dim light is like wine
Allison Meyette

the dim light is like wine:
pampelonne sparkling french 75
over the bruises long and lithe

in power outage pitch black
a lamp shrouds intimate sounds -
the dim light is like wine

laying soft on soft on strong bed
in the wary sunlit air
seeing the bruises, long and lithe

light filters in like a pilsner
strong and bright, cut by the bitter
dim light, like wine

the small curving forms fit
into the hard shallow hollows
under the bruises long and lithe

in the watery moonlight of deep night
gentle fingers find their way
the dim light is like wine
over the bruises, long and lithe
Mountain Movement

Allie Miller
Oz
Francis Felix Rosa

I took a boat to the Emerald Statue.
They had rewritten the words, edited them
until the whole bay smelled rancid with greed.
“Give me your hired, your credit score, your huddled assets yearning to
buy a limousine.”
Beside the Golden Door now is a security guard, fashionable,
stylish, keeping out all those who don’t have the money
to survive in a landscape of gems and jewels.

I am allowed in, yet all I can think about
is how many aren’t me.

I arrive, walking down this metropolis
bewitched, gilded all wrong.
Gold-paved roads and platinum studded
skylines encrusted in an emerald mold and sliver soot.
Electric lights are blinking diamonds. The clacking of feet
in the distant factories echo out from the wrong side of the tracks.
I feel it is the cha-ching sound of a rigged slot machine.
And I have to ask how some place so damn bright
can be so damn cold.

Is this a glitch or is this the price of our glitz?
This superficial kingdom of paper chasers
and expensive colognes condensing in the air?
The street vendors are shouting
all that glitters isn’t yet sold!

So go buy! Buy! Buy! Sell! Sell! Sell!
Sell your identity. Your soul. Whatever is left.

In the square I see a mass forming, a human tornado.
It swirls until everything is consumed by
consumerism. It is a whirlwind of limelights,
flashy objects, trying to dazzle the eye, but I can’t
open mine.
And I can’t wake up.

I’m strapped in a Rolls Royce, a Gucci chariot shrieking across the land, my life ticks by on the turn of a Rolex. Whipped into the air, I see a bronze bull glowing, followed by numbered screens, devotees bowing to extravagance. And in the wake of this cyclone, flat dull plains of the dying, silent, poverty-stricken. Where Leaves Of Grass are overturned by thieves of cash left searching in the jeweled wreckage for the American Dream.

And when I gaze toward the horizon, it runs red with rubies. Violent outbursts of glitter and glam as we occupy all streets in a crescendo of rustling noise like cash going through a bank or the sudden shattering of glass.

There are no scarecrows but there are leather bound, wallet-brained men. They aren’t made of tin, but they are plenty hollow and heartless. And cowardly liars? We’ve got plenty of those. With gold manes and boisterous, fake, Trumped up roars that end as whimpering chirps.

If you replace morals, God, love, with money, you better hope the exchange rate is damn good.

‘Cause as I was tossed through the counterfeit fringes of this country I heard them mumbling a prayer in the dark, “Our Dollar, whose carts are heavy, hallowed be thy fame, thy kingdom of corrupt funds, thy will be overrun, On Earth, a savage’s Heaven…”
him and Him

Susie Almono
Religiosity
Caleigh Grogan

At my grandmother’s church,
I don’t believe them
when they tell me
what Heaven is like.

When they talk about
the Kingdom of Heaven,
I picture Disney’s Magic Kingdom
but with more clouds.

Heaven is more of a roller rink
than a kingdom. God is the DJ
and there’s all the free Pepsi you can drink.

I don’t go to church anymore,
don’t spend my time admitting
to sins I can’t believe in.
God told me he likes to sleep in
on Sundays, anyway.

Sometimes God is that Pop Rock
in a mouth-full of Pop Rocks
that just doesn’t pop.

Something that didn’t happen.

Once I found God in the grocery store,
but when I got home
he was missing from my bags.

I don’t know if I’m blessed
or damned or still drunk
from last night,
but I don’t want to drink that wine
if you keep calling it blood.
Sometimes God is so overwhelming
he doesn’t fit in the overhead compartment
and I have to check him under the plane.

I like God the most in bed.
He said he liked me back
and I wiped off his tongue kisses
with my t-shirt.

God told me I don’t have to wear a bra
or shave my legs. He knows my schedule,
opens a beer for me
when I’ve had a long day.

I gave God 50 dollars once,
and we smile at each other in passing cars.

I didn’t recognize him on the crucifix,
on the rosary, my grandmother
tried to save me with. I only cried
for a dead man on a necklace
and then other men who killed him.
Sunday to Sunday
Rebecca Spadacenta

Mornings are for memories
That I wrap in fuzzy blankets to protect
But accidentally suffocate.
I apologize to them, but they are already blue-necked and red faced
And do nothing more than frown at me
As if they don’t understand why I am sorry.
Afternoons bring desires of blooming flowers
In gardens far away,
Sickly sweet and reaching toward the sun,
An unattainable desire, but close enough, they think,
To reach, close enough to feel
Its breath.
Evenings, the pressure of the sunset
Weighs on my shoulders. I
Unmake my bed, sip
From my vial of poisonous sleep.
I forgot to close my curtains.
Light filters through the window screen,
Slowly,
The sun finally hides itself from me, and
When the sky is less black than it is blue
I quietly say goodbye to everything I know
To keep it a secret that I’ll miss them.
I think they know, somehow.
Untitled
Brendan Geiger
When I Pray
Clara McGurren

When I pray,
my prayer knows no sense of time and
knows no God to speak of.
It relies on
soft assurances that there are better days to come.

In these better days,
each one will be less gray than the last.
Even when they still are gray,
the rain will not feel as cold,
and the clouds will look like less like monsters and
more like the fluff they use in fancy throw pillows.

In these better days,
I pray that I do not forget the bad days,
because they have named odd names
like “Perspective” and “Lessons” and “Gratitude”
and they seem like the kind I should remember.

When I pray,
I pray that these better days do not find only me—
that these better days are not built only in my size.
I pray that that they also find all the other hurting hearts
and give them these same
soft assurances that there are better days to come.
I pray that the poets of old knew what they were doing
when they became teachers, writers and sleep-deprived thinkers
who were sometimes wrong and always compassionate
and admitted mistakes.

The prayer that I pray is
quiet and brave and sometimes wavers, but
it is a faith spelled out in the ink on a page and
pressed close by the warm hand in mine.
It is a faith rooted in the sound of a heartbeat
when I press my face to a friend’s chest,
and it is a prayer that this heartbeat always syncs with mine.
Thunderstorm
Elizabeth Crowley

It starts with the confusion
there’s a fuzzy cloud in my mind
creeping tendrils of smoke
a swirling, pulsing, mess between my ears.
A soft brown crystallizing sheen
around the edges of my panicked eyes
twirling curtains circle down
spinning spirals around my vision.
The painted sky is washing down
colors stain the sidewalk.
The heavens growl, flashing teeth
their electric shocks crackling in my ears.
A rumbling wind sweeps me off my feet
inside me, a wild fire rages, burning off my nerves.
The world is shaking. Shaking.
And the sky is falling down.
THE FAIRY QUEEN
Shannon Connolly

CHARACTERS: ORIN and TAYLOR are hometown friends. They are both in their twenties.
TIME: 1933. Early morning
PLACE: Magpie Park.

SCENE: On a bench by a medium size body of water that turns into a bog. It’s foggy.
AT RISE: Both characters are sitting while TAYLOR tosses bread into the water. There are no birds in the water

ORIN:
Don’t do that, it’s not good for the birds.

TAYLOR:
I’m not feeding the birds. It’s for the fish.

ORIN:
Probably isn’t good for them either. You trying to kill the fish or something? What did they ever do to you?

TAYLOR:
No, nothing at all! I just—
(Sighing)
I just felt bad for them, that’s all.

ORIN:
What’s there to feel bad about? They’re just a bunch of fish. All covered in slimy scales with big fat lips and eyes that just stare at you. I’ve never understood fishing. My pops loves it though.
(Laughs)
Says it gives him time away from my mom.

TAYLOR:
I get that. Well, you’re dad’s side, I mean.
ORIN:
What is it about fish that makes you like them that much?

TAYLOR:
No, don’t get me wrong, I don’t like fish, they are gross, like you said. I just worry about them, I guess. Like, look at the water. All I see is one fish in the whole pond. Where are the rest? There have to be more. They don’t just sprout up in the spring when the water’s condition is better. More fish have to be in the water, but where are they, hiding? Are they eating, sleeping, swimming, and are they cold? I think about these things at night sometimes and worry,

ORIN:
About fish?

TAYLOR:
Yes!

ORIN:
Well then let me put your mind at ease.
(Taking TAYLOR by the shoulder, ORIN waves a slow hand out at the water)
Fish are exothermic creatures, which means they have two systems of blood flow in their body. One that flows around the body when it’s warm out, and one with trace amounts mercury in it that allows the body to work well while it’s less than freezing out. You following me? So when it’s cold out, the blood runs through the body at a faster pace, given that mercury is so light, everybody knows that, thus creating friction at high speeds in the bloodstream and heating up the fish. It’s not much heat, and to be honest it kinda stings in the body to have that much inner friction and have an opposite function than normal, but hey, it’s enough to keep them alive. Worth staying alive, I’d say. That make any sense?

TAYLOR:
I guess, but I wasn’t a Biology major. Though, say, didn’t you study engineering?

ORIN:
Radiators work the same way. Flows and liquids and mechanisms, or-
ganic or American made, they’re all the same.

TAYLOR:
(Pause. Then TAYLOR chuckles and turns to ORIN.)
You know, I just thought of something. Now don’t laugh at me, but when I was a kid I used to think that a winter fairy would come down and cast little spells on the fish to freeze them in a state until it was warmer. Then around February, the spring fairies appear to wake them up with all the new flowers and foliage.

ORIN:
Wait, is that what those little “ground houses” were you had hidden under your porch as a kid? I thought they were for playing soldiers with our army guys, little did I know they were for your fairy princesses, ha!

TAYLOR:
I asked you not to laugh! Though I shouldn’t be too cross with you. At least you had a better reaction than my pa. One winter he discovered them and kicked each one down. Then used them as kindling on Christmas.

ORIN:
Well that was straight out folly!

TAYLOR:
You have no idea. After that I’d hide them better from him until I finally gave up on believing that magic kept the fish alive. Now I know better.
(TAYLOR goes to throw in another piece of bread but pulls back and lets his arms slump in his lap.)

ORIN:
(ORIN takes a deep breath and takes the piece of bread out of his friend’s hand and tosses it into the water.)
Hey, maybe that year, since the fairies couldn’t stay at your rent-a-room hotels, maybe they flew all the fish down to Florida for warmer waters? A fish and fairy family migration.

TAYLOR:
What about all those mechanisms in their body? Who needs magic when
you have opposite flows of blood to keep you alive.

**ORIN:**

Ah to hell with it.
(Pause.)
Though I gotta say, now that I think of it, that bread can’t be good for them. All I’m hearing is that that bread’ll kill ‘em. My mother scolds my father all the time about it but he’s as stubborn as you.
(Pause.)
If you wanna keep those frozen fishes alive for the springtime fairies to wake up, you probably shouldn’t keep tossing in that bread.

**TAYLOR:**

(Shrugs, smirking.)
Can’t live forever, Orin. Might as well die fat and happy than skinny and carb free.
(TAYLOR tosses the rest of his bread into the water and the lights go down on everything but the floating bread.)

(END SCENE.)
Dana, Massachusetts
Mira Lockwood
Breuer
Arianna Dilios
tabula rasa
Syndey Evans

the sky is dusted
toasted orange and powder blue
soft, and dark
cradled in gentle claws made of clouds.
i wait for you like i wait for the stars.

with weak hands
i hold my head up, looking out at a constellation of time
pretending it is your fingers threading in my hair.

in the middle of the night, it is desolate and
i am a lonely soul.
certain and cemented for so long; but now
fear resonates so deeply that movement is impossible:
a frozen force, and somehow

i believe you can thaw me out.
are you as lost as i am? are your lungs iron
clean, silver slate, swept the paint away
hold my hand and lift me out of forever.
i mean it. hold me, whisper to me that
we will touch every corner of the world
and write books in the sky
leave footprints in the moondust
we will have it all, all because of

one rainy day.
Monochromatic
Hannah McIsaac

I say I have synesthesia,
you ask what color you are:

1. You were the color of the woods
   just before dark, a cold comfort
   and the inherent unknown
   that comes with wilderness.

2. You were the rough pink
   of chapped lips and scraped knuckles,
   eyes without much sleep and
   the softest type of anger.

3. You were a warm beige,
   the color of wet sand in twilight,
   there is something safe in your freckles
   and caring for someone so quiet.

4. You were red, so red,
   the color of lipstick stains on coffee mugs
   and sunsets burned into my retinas,
   I always assumed love felt that way.

5. You were the same shade as the sea,
   the blues of late summer, rainy days,
   sheets straight out of the dryer,
   but hues like you never last.

6. You were streetlights on dark nights
   and a jar full of honey or loose pennies,
   the warmth of a favorite song and
   confessions on the tip of my tongue.

7. You were gray, only gray,
   like storms and cigarette ash on pavement,
   the color of your eyes when you thought
lying would ease your lonely soul.  
I say I have synesthesia,  
you ask if you are my favorite color.  
I ask you instead, “am I yours?”
Ethereal
Lily Goneau

He came that night, hovering through the mist without a sound. The town watched from inside their little hovels, eyes shining like stars, as he walked by. An outsider, no doubt. Fog clung to his hood and tattered clothes, and the over-sized pack he wore clinked with treasures from far off lands. He set up shop at the end of the lane. A tent, spun from spider silk and threads of gold—the only beacon this place had seen in years. One by one, he removed each item from the pack. A crystal vial. A platinum coin. A feathered quill. There had to be dozens. Riches that the town had never seen before. Riches they knew they could never afford. Why had he come? What brought him here? What did he think he would get in exchange? The stars soon lost their gleam. Like clockwork, the town drew their shades and shut their doors. Perhaps tomorrow he would move on. Perhaps tomorrow he would realize…but the hooded figure stayed. He continued to work. He placed those exquisite items on a table wrought from rosewood and waited until dawn. When the town awoke, his tent was still there. A sign sat in front, gleaming in the grass that shimmered with dew. Free, it said. Free.
Greenhouses: El Ejido, Spain
Emma Garcelon
Abandoned
Lily Fiore
Why I’m Studying Music Instead of Orthopedics
Angelia Powers

wish I could crack
my hip open like
a lobster—all boiled
red—and rearrange the
joints, ligaments, muscles, bones,
until I hear them
rather than feel this:
a sonata no one
would want to analyze.
I want to pluck
my tendons like the
strings of a piano
to find out which
of them hurts more.
to hear the murky
dissonance and deviation from
the key each feels
internally. to assess diatonic
progressions that move from
joint to joint. I
want to rattle each
bone against bone until
they shrink and reform—
shaping younger me. I
wonder if the marrow
would exude from the
ivory of each bone,
or if the rules
of composition apply to
bone marrow. I must
make sure the cells
obey open spacing. I
want to stretch my
muscles out across a
hardwood floor and dance
on them with meat
tenderizer feet until ripe
with viscous blood. the
floor would be light
maple—or bamboo—so

that after I reassemble
myself, the shape of
my strength will be
stamped into the planks.
a map of my
aches after they no
longer exist. I always
wanted to be remembered.