

VOX
XXI



VOX XXI

An imprint of the Lorenzo Society

Edited by Keila Gallardo Cubas

Cover Art by Wolfgang Düchtel

VOX XXI
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear reader, I hope this compilation of art pieces by the students of UNB Saint John reaches you when you need inspiration, in a moment of need, or in a simple time when you want to appreciate the artistic voices of multiple people.

I was delegated to continue VOX's legacy by being the editor of its twenty-first, and although it has not been an easy task, it has been a huge pleasure and honour to do so. Art is a great comfort not only for me but so many people, and the moment the position of editor was given to me I made my best to encourage students to write, paint, create, etc. anything they wanted to express. Most of the prompts posted on Vox's social media pages were there to motivate students to experiment with their creativity and talent.

I am proud to present these pieces from different students who had the courage to share their creativity. Each piece in VOX XXI has meaning and a story; each poem, prose, photograph, etc. All submitters put their heart onto their pieces, and I could not be gladder to show them to you in this little booklet. This edition would not have been possible without them.

As with all journeys, I was not able to take on the journey of VOX XXI alone. I want to thank Dr. Sandra Bell for trusting me with this edition and being my second pair of eyes when editing, I want to thank Andrea Kikuchi for guiding me through the year and always being up for my ideas, I want to thank Jenna Dobbelsteyn for her help with the events, I want to thank my friend Cloud who was motivating me at 1 a.m. while deciding a piece for the cover, I want to thank the past editors, specially Theresa Daigle, for preparing me for this task, I want to thank the professors who let me talk in their classes about Vox and those so passionately encouraged students to submit to it; and at last but not least I want to thank everyone who submitted a piece for this edition. They make VOX the unique journal it is with their artistic voices.

Thank you everyone for letting me be part of the VOX team and bringing the twenty-first edition to life.

Sincerely,
Keila Gallardo Cubas

i am

By Kennedy Grace Chamberlain

i am the bedsheets
holding dreams between my creases
and you are the sunlight
peeking through the curtains
to warm my skin.
woven in my soft threads are memories
of thoughtless touches
and whispered sentiments
and finally,
the warmth you left behind.
every night when you leave me,
when you dip below the horizon
to sleep the night away,
i wanted you to know
that instead i talk to the moon—
all about you,
only about you.
the morning always comes again
and there you are
slipping your hands through the curtains
and tracing your fingertips
along my skin,
so light,
so meaningless—
you spread your colors over me
just to make me feel something
more than alone.
you are the sunlight
peeking through the curtains,
you are the warmth
grazing my skin in the morning,
you are who i talk about
with the moon and the stars
and anyone who will listen.
and i am the bedsheets
holding dreams between my creases,
dreams endlessly filled with you.
i am everything you shine for.

Muses of Poetry

By Willow Mathenson

I call upon the muses of an ancient art:
Euterpe, Polyhymnia, and Thalia.
Lovely Calliope- most respected of all.
To sing tales of which you inspire
That read like songs.
Oh wonderful, gracious muses!
I will be your humblest vessel;
Let me share your divine words.

Euterpe's sweet words are like melodies,
Innermost passions and sorrows turned to harmonies.
Anger, fear, and joy control the stage
Expressing themselves through the page.

Polyhymnia's language: songs of praise
Devoted to divine ways.
Lines and phrase, a sacrifice,
For Gods and Goddesses to entice.

And Thalia speaks of growing green hills;
Of the fertile farmland and farmer that tills.
Blooming flowers; bright fluttering petals in the wind,

In Idyllic landscapes free of sin.

Last great Calliope teller of a courageous tale!
Heroes and heroines that always prevail,

On quests as long as a book
She sings of the adventures they undertook.

Dawn

By Taylor Fennelly

Nearly breaking, colours filling the sky, painting scenes of fuchsia, indigo, saffron and golden
dancing in light as I'm delighted by the sweet serenade of the swallow next to our feeder.

A portrait, a picture, a canvas flooding with art,

A few songbirds, co-singing melodies of love, anger, hunger, or delight

While sitting in a tree full of green

Leaves are tussling in the wind

Chirping again begins as the air fills with warmth, the damp morning mist gone in the
wave of
dry heat.

Summer,

Beckoning on a new day,

Welcoming the hustle and bustle of morning.

But not before the tranquility,

Not before the colours,

In a sense, true morning may be unbeknownst to most.

Natural Causes

By Keila Gallardo Cubas

And Decembers shall come and go as they please
for I will continue to dance with you
while you despoil me bit by bit
until I become less than dust



Sentinel
By Wolfgang Düchtel

Containment Breach

By Casie Turrell

Kat, the 21-year-old intern at KarTech Laboratories, ducked for cover inside the storage closet. They cracked open the door and stared down the dark hallway in terror. The single overhead lamp flickered. The air burned their lungs but they inhaled like a drowning man. It was -20 °C in the lab at all times. It had to be to keep it alive.

It was a creature that Kat's research team had plucked from its natural habitat, the barren wastelands of Antarctica, in order to study its hyper-regenerative body to further medical science. Kat had been so excited to be part of this elite, classified, research team. They had been studying the creature for months. As far as they knew it was one of a kind. It appeared to be blind with a superb sense of hearing, and when it lost a limb it would grow it back within minutes like a starfish on steroids. It was powerful, strong, and mindlessly violent. The violence could have had something to do with the painful experiments it was put through day in and day out. It had just killed Dr. Fisher, Kat's superior. Kat had just barely escaped, latching the lab doors behind them. 60 kilograms of steel wouldn't do much to slow it down, though.

Kat peered through the empty hallway. For one perfect moment, the only sound was their laboured breath over the fans that refrigerated the floor. Then, that moment ended.

Four tentacles burst from the lab door on the side of the corridor. The metal door flew off its hinges and exploded on the wall. Bits of metal and cement went everywhere. After those four tentacles came four more. They were slimy and pale pink in colour, with blue and red veins all through them. They thrashed around as if they were searching for something. Three of them dropped to the ground and started dragging the creature forward.

Kat watched with bated breath as the creature hauled its hulking body out of the destroyed laboratory. Its fleshy pink form poured into the hallway. Its beady white eyes didn't move but its huge mouth opened wide. It let out a gargled battle cry as shards of glass from the door impaled it. It did not slow, however. It was determined to escape. Its tentacles slapped furiously on the cement floor and walls, a deafening pop! sounding each time they released.

As it reached the end of the hallway it began slamming its body against the set of double doors barricading the refrigerated lab from the rest of the facility. The lab was a new addition. It had previously been a portable, insulated, metal box. The creature had been trapped inside back in Antarctica and flown to the lab by helicopter. The box had been welded onto the facility and a set of doors had been cut in the wall of the hallway. Those doors were the only way in or out of the frozen labs. Kat would be a prisoner until this thing made its escape, powerless to stop it. But the temperature wasn't regulated in the rest of the building. The creature would almost certainly die halfway out the door when it experienced room temperature for the first time.

Kat couldn't let that happen. It had just murdered their fellow scientist but he had known the risks when he signed onto the project. Kat knew them too. They would not let his sacrifice be in vain. They would not let this creature kill itself blindly. They would not let those months of research go to waste.

Kat burst through the door and shouted at the top of their lungs, "Hey! Hey, over here!"

As the creature turned slowly toward Kat their courage vanished just as quickly as it had appeared. They shrunk back and slammed shut the door once more. Unfortunately, the creature seemed very interested in meeting them. It started toward them, its tentacles rattling the closet door on its hinges. Kat was sure they were done for. That's when they heard shouting from the other side of the corridor. Someone had opened the main doors and was trying to coax the creature toward them. Kat peeked up just enough to see Mac, the security guard from the front desk, standing in the doorway. He had his gun trained between the creature's sightless eyes.

"No no no no no you idiot!" This time, Kat fully leapt from the closet into the hallway. "You can't kill it, Mac!"

"Like hell, I can't!" he called back. "Your experiment isn't more important than your life, Kat!"

"This is bigger than me!" Kat called back. "Bigger than all of us!" Kat made a mad dash across the hall to the laboratory. "If you help me herd it in here we can get it under control!"

"I'm gonna take the shot!" said Mac.

“No, Mac!” begged Kat. “You can’t kill it! If you do, this will all have been for nothing. Now, help me!” They snatched debris from the ruined lab off the floor and started using it to make as much noise as possible. They hucked bits of steel and shards of glass at the walls, ignoring the cuts that burned their hands and the lifeless body of Dr. Fisher lying meters away on the floor.

It was working. The creature began to follow the only noise it could sense and it dragged itself unwittingly back toward its enclosure. Suddenly, and purely by accident, it laid a tentacle on Kat. They gasped and it screeched. It wrapped the mass of muscle around Kat, lifted them up, and threw them out the doors. They crashed against the wall on the other side of the hallway and fell to the ground like a rag doll, unconscious. It started for them again, aiming to finish the job.

Mac saw his chance. He took the shot.

A Requiem for Delirium

By Taylor Fennelly

Do you crave that reality escape?

That moment when your mind and body go into a splendid, vacant, intrinsic reflection of the deception for protection you feel when everything,

Just,

Breaks,

Loose.

Your body is numb, and your mind is blank, and you think

You think

You think nothing.

You think nothing because suddenly you're orbiting in a world of empty pages and vacant thoughts, and you don't know how or why, but you just can't come back to earth yet because it is just, so, peaceful

quiet

meaningless

The severity of the moment takes over you, and you bask it in.

Serenity allows you to stop and breathe.

The pounding in your head takes a look around and smiles.

Your thoughts and your fears stop clawing at you for that one moment, just long enough to stop and smell the roses.

You wish for eternity in that second, the ocean of anxiety a mere placid lake now.

You know you must think and feel, but sometimes you wish to relish times when blackness is your only thought and grayscale your only feeling.

And so, for that moment, you escape into nothingness and just rest.

chimera

By Kennedy Grace Chamberlain

though it's been not long
your scent is engraved in my skin
and my life is laden with a little bit of you
like a blanket of fresh snow
sparkling under a winter sun.

i am made of every word you've ever spoken
and every touch you've ever laid upon me.
were i to forget your voice or the way you hold me
i wouldn't be long for this world
as what am i
if not entirely born from memories?
what am i
if not the object of your affections?

to be apart from you
is to be apart from my soul.
do you believe in that?
that there is one person for everyone?
a lovely thought
but one of fiction.
i always felt that way
until i met you
and realized how much i'd been missing.
truly a fairytale
come to life.

because of you
i am doomed to be perpetually desirous
of that smile you have
when you fall into my gaze.
i am thinking of you always
in your entirety,
and that is how i'll always want you.

Devoted Resolution

By Keila Gallardo Cubas

I get out of my bed in the middle of the night, once I'm sure everyone is asleep, and get out of my tiny and simple bedroom. After doing this routine for two months, I know how to move in the dark, how to walk so the wood doesn't creek under my barefoot steps.

Once I get to the library, my excitement begs me to run for it, but I remind myself to be careful. I've already gotten into trouble with the bishop, and tonight I can't mess anything up. The memory of him taking the book away from me burned in my memory and hurt my lungs, as if the bishop had taken my ability to breathe. I walk a few more steps in the dark through the bookshelves and thanks to the moonlight coming from a window I see what I'm looking for. The book is almost falling apart, the lines on the leather cover are deep and are all over it, so I do my best to pull it out carefully. I sat with my back against the wall where the window is, and I read. There are words that confuse me and words that I can't pronounce no matter how hard I try, but that's not a problem for a scribe. What matters is that I'm still able to make out what is it about.

The book is about a man who asked God for his help. The man's lover was being tortured for a misunderstanding and had tried to help him on his own but failed. God admired their love so much that he agreed but when he went to save the lover, he was already dead. The man cried his heart out so strongly his eyes became completely black, and blood ran down his cheeks. God was kind enough to reunite the lovers in Heaven, where the two men could keep loving each other dearly.

I found the book almost two months ago but just yesterday I had the courage to put my feelings into words. My heart pounded terribly hard against my chest as I asked the bishop to help me transcribe such beautiful tale, and it stopped the moment the bishop said the book was never meant to be transcribed and he would examine it for important segments before burning it.

The moment I feel the sunrise coming up I close the so-called unholy book and stand up, hugging the book tightly. I sneak out of the library as carefully as before until I reach the door. Outside, I let myself go and run with all my strength. I don't know what I will do with myself, but my resolve is absolute.

Because their love is so profound they deserve to be saved.

Noise Cancelling

By Jenna Dobbelsteyn

Noise Cancelling - JD

Why do we only listen to what they
play us?

I want you to tell me what you want
to tell me

I want to see your face

Hear your voice

Touch you

Smell you

Taste the air around you

Experience the story you're telling me
with every sense
all at the same time

Was this uncommon before?

Do we really see when we look
or do we ignore the people we pass?

Do we hear the sounds around us
or do we ignore the pleas for help?

Do I offer my hand
or does it shake too much already?



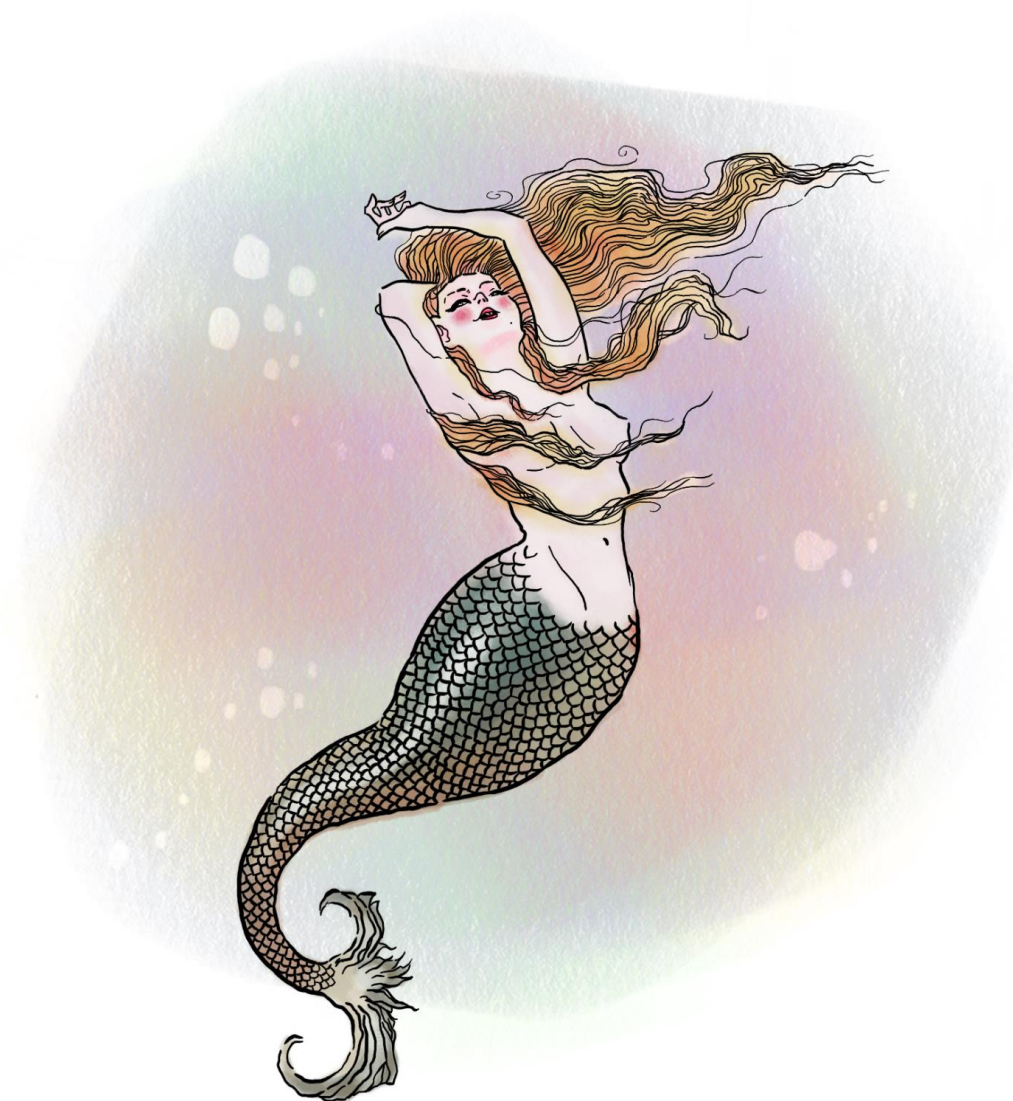
Murder

By Koshy Amal

Silence used to terrify me,
Until one day I found my voice.
Like a bright red sun, on a black canvas,
I stood tall, loud and irreverent.
The thorns around me caressed my skin gently,
shedding thick blood across the canvas.
The darkness that hovered over the spot
Suddenly broke through the edges and drowned my voice.
When all was done, they called it art;
but I whispered to my soul,
Murder!



Seeing the Upside
By Wolfgang Düchtel



Whimsical Mermaid
By Sungmok Lee

Edith

By Gage Kenneth Losier

Today I took myself a different way across the park. One where the trees sat farther apart. Here the wind felt like icicles, and sounded as though it came from far off places. Treading further, I held my warm layers ever-closer. On this path, much of what laid in front of me was a thin layer of snow, and a set of yellowed reeds in the distance that caught my eye. As I made my way towards the pond, I saw someone beneath the surface. A girl. On the other side of the frozen glass she clung to, her blonde hair moved like winter seagrass, and her piercing blue eyes seemed to fade quickly to grey among the forever dark.

In sad confusion I tilted my head. She did not bang her fists, she did not scream in silence, she did not fight. It was as though, in her white flowing dress and pale skin, she had already succumb to the cold fate welcoming her with loving arms. In that solidarity, limbs were moved more by the current of the wind, brought under through the corners of the ice, than by will alone. No rabbit, no bird, no squirrel was there to witness her glory, her secret death, her profound spell.

It's like when I first found her on her birthday, floating lifeless. The death of my sister happened in a pool of water just as it always does: with no one watching.



Swallowtail in July
By Taylor Fennelly

Self Love

By Kylie Mackenzie

The man studied the snowflakes as they lazily drifted downwards. They were each uniquely beautiful. He inhaled the crisp winter air and exhaled to see his breath condense into tiny water droplets in midair. He repeated this for a while, breathing in and out. He enjoyed the simplicity of unambiguously existing. The man lived his life in solitude. Seclusion, in theory, was ideal but complications began to arise once the man realized he detested the person he saw when he looked in the mirror. Each day was a repeated schedule of self-loathing and gazing at the snow. He would breathe in the cold air hoping to cleanse himself of this debilitating state of hatred, hoping the elegant snow would share its beauty when it encountered his skin. Each day, with each breath, he knew this was not an issue he could solve without help.

The man sought help from the village's alchemist. He had heard rumors of a love potion so powerful it could compel any man to fall in love. Surely this was the solution to the man's troubles. It was quarter to midnight and the man left his house cloaked with a dull lantern guiding him along the cobblestone path. He arrived at an old wooden cabin that exuded the fragrance of pine and lavender. The large door was bolted shut and had a metal peephole.

Underneath the peephole was a large metal door knocker. The man took the hinge and knocked three times. There was no response, so the man picked up the hinge again only for the peephole to burst open with a loud clang.

"State your business." Demanded the alchemist. The man cleared his throat and removed his cloak.

"I am interested in purchasing a love potion." The man's voice quivered with fear of rejection. The alchemist's bright blue eye squinted and looked the man up and down. He grunted then with four loud bangs the door swung open. The alchemist was a short old man. His hair had gone completely grey, and his beard was draping along the floor. He was dressed in a purple robe which looked far too large but the most notable feature of his was his piercing blue eyes that stared at the man as if he knew his darkest and most secretive thoughts. The alchemist welcomed the man into his home with a few grunts. The house was small. There were many candles aflame, and the shelves were stocked full of herbs and supplies. In the center of the house, there was a large black cauldron with bubbling liquid inside.

“You are in luck my boy, I have just finished brewing a fresh batch of a love potion.” The alchemist scurried around the back of the cauldron and reached up a shelf to grab a pink rose. He plucked off each petal one by one and placed it into the foaming liquid. Each petal sizzled and disappeared into the potion. “Who is the lucky lady if you do not mind my asking?” the alchemist questioned. The man began to blush and stumbled over his words.

“The potion is not for any lady. I intend to drink it myself.” The man attempted to avoid eye contact with the alchemist, but it felt impossible. The alchemist stared into the man’s eyes for a while without saying a word.

“You are certain this is what you want?” the alchemist inquired in a low whisper. The man nodded and forced himself to break the intense shared gaze. The alchemist grabbed a clear glass bottle and scooped up the ominous purple liquid. He handed the bottle to the man and said, “Best to drink it all in one go, it has a bitter taste.” The man extended his shaking hand and wrapped it slowly around the bottle. He looked into the alchemist’s eyes for reassurance but was met with a neutral glance. The man knew this was what he needed. This was the solution to his troubles. This potion was going to finally end his suffering.

In one swift motion, the man drank the whole bottle. As he swallowed the last gulp of purple liquid, he felt queasy. His head began to spin, and his heart began to race.

“It’s working!” the man exclaimed to the alchemist. A sense of euphoria took hold of his body, but it came to a sudden end. The man regained his senses and ran to the closest mirror. He gazed at his reflection and was met with the same self-loathing as before. The potion had failed. He turned to the alchemist furious, “Why did it not work? You said it would work!” he shouted. The alchemist sat in a chair and closed his eyes.

“I never said it would work. This potion is meant to make someone fall in love.” The alchemist explained calmly. The man shook his head enraged.

“That is exactly what was meant to happen. Why do I still not love who I am?” the man began to feel hot tears pour out of his eyes in fury. This was when the alchemist opened his eyes and stared deep into the man’s eyes.

“My dear boy, this potion is meant to make someone fall in love. You cannot fall in love, even with yourself, until you understand and accept who you are.” The alchemist spoke in a soft and lulled tone. The man began to relax. His tears ceased.

The man collected himself and opened the door to leave. He looked over his shoulder to see the alchemist staring back at him. This was when he truly saw him for who he was. He was not an all-knowing magical being, he was a tired old man who was simply wise beyond the man's comprehension. The man stepped back out to the cobblestone path and closed the large door behind him. It began to snow. The man watched how the snow fell and hit the ground only to melt. He breathed in the crisp winter air but this time instead of hoping to exhale and cleanse himself, the man exhaled and cleared his mind. He allowed himself to listen to his heart for the very first time.



Aislamiento
By Keila Gallardo Cubas

Your Sculpture

By Luc Wolfe

I always wanted to meet you

You formed me with clay

You cut me out of nothing

Yet—

You left me that day

Were my edges not sharp enough?

Or did I dry too fast?

Were my small details not fetching?

Or maybe—

My radiance was not to last

I thought I could be your masterpiece

Oh the long months you spent on me

It is ironic though

How—

In my reflection, it is your face I see



BYStANDeR

By Bré-Lynn Daigle

The Bumblebee

By Kylie Mackenzie

I stare at the bumblebee. Watch it fly around the plotted flower directly in front of me. Circling round and round until it lands on its chosen flower. It collects the pollen dutifully, instinctually. That's the life of the bee. So simple yet so sad. But somehow it is easy to envy. Human beings are never that simple. We feel the need to prove ourselves and find ourselves in an unforgiving world that wants to see us fail. Oblivion is daunting and terrifying, so we feel the need to leave a mark on the world that lets everybody know we were here, we accomplished something meaningful with our life. There is so much pressure to discover what you are meant to do and who you are meant to be. Wouldn't life be easier if we were all just bees collecting pollen without a second thought? Or is it the struggle and diversity of life that makes it worth living? Or perhaps I am just a girl searching for meaning in things as insignificant as bumblebees.



Morning Glaze
By Taylor Fennelly

Dublin Nights

By Taylor Fennelly

The bus smells different today. As if I have been here long enough to know what downtown “usually smells like,” but today, the city bus lured me in with the promise of fresh fries and dim lights over warm booths at my destination. My stomach was eager to get back and devour salt and carbohydrates in the form of any available greasy food.

I was hoping to take the city train back home, but we got so caught up in planned museum visits, gallery tours, comedy shows, and way too many bars we ‘had to check out’ that time slipped away as easily as the coins from my hand into the token box next to the driver. My core tingled with the bit of anxiety not dulled away by the whiskey the comedy club served, and we laughed as we stumbled to the back of the bus, eager to take advantage of the panoramic windows and indulge in new sights. The adrenaline in my veins started to dwindle, and I processed the last few hours.

A nauseating early morning glow was upon the city streets, lit by the moon, and it seemed to cast a spotlight on even the darkest places in the night. Street signs were hard to read as we rushed along; traffic lights glisten and cast rays of colour onto the façade of closed shop doors. We were trying to catch a train we knew we would miss. Still, there was a sort of beauty in the experience of walking arm and arm down sidewalks, hearing pieces of conversations drowned out by the strident club mixes all intermingling into one undecipherable cacophony as we walked on, following the dimmed GPS screen.

Our situation was wholly coincidental and unquestionably laughable. Perhaps one would think it an act of destiny, the four of us lost together in the busy streets following a dimmed screen of directions on the only functioning phone with a quickly depleting battery. At that moment, there was no care in the world. The distant reminder of the day fueled our joviality in the present, and our fortune was all that we knew. Not one of us wanted to think about what tomorrow would bring; we were all too painfully aware of the reality of our situation, but right now, there was only us. Dark skies spread out ahead as I closed my eyes and breathed deeply.

The earthy smell familiar to my senses was heightened by a marshy salt-based fragrance that, once received, stung my senses as markedly different from home. Yet, a sweet citrus and wheat odour buzzed around, softening the effects of the salt. I felt a tug at my heartstrings when the doors of the bus opened, and I was all too harshly reminded that all I would have of that moment was a memory. I traced back my thoughts, hoping to once again flee from my reality, and took comfort in the hazy outline of the Samuel Beckett bridge, lights on each side outlining the life still active in the beginnings of dusk. Flying seagulls scaled the river, gliding elegantly and ever so dangerously as they seamlessly plucked crabs from the river; as smooth as a child picking flowers, the gulls devoured their meal. My exclamation at the horrifying visual in front of me was interrupted as the bright yellow bus pulled to the curb; my trance is broken as I'm pulled from my seat in search of our next meal.



What it's like on Jupiter and Mars
By Wolfgang Düchtel

Dusk

By Kylie Mackenzie

The sun was nearly set
The trees were coated crimson
They swayed softly
Leaves rustling
Gusts of wind
Birdsong fading away
Leaving only the creaking of wood
And the chirp of crickets
As the day bled into night

