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lumière

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lumière's editorial staff is the flashlight of the literary and artistic shenanigans at MassBay.

We floodlight the heck out of your creativity. If you've got some wonder, tantalize our eyes, oil up our brain gears...we'll showcase that super-duper, unique expression.

lumière is here to illuminate ALL the passion, ALL the authenticity and ALL the awesome.

Get LIT! Send us Stuff: *litmag@post.massbay.edu*

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Shadows

Excerpts from submissions worthy of recognition, but were not printed in full.

Full works may be found on our website: *lumierelitmag.wordpress.com*

“We are made of words.”

“Make amends, you of the unsung heart.”

“The day when I brought the Bird home, we were able to save it, but Michael wasn't able to save himself.”

“I never really thought of her having her own independent thoughts.”

“Time flew by / and I grew up as you grow old.”

“Wrinkles of leather / as my weight crumples and folds.”

“The echos of the past mix with the howls of the future.”

“We are such Kings and Queens! We must all remember what we aspire to be. Not what we have been diminished to.”

“We burn the valleys / and the castle?”

“It must have been a ridiculous sight, two children and a teenager running out of the woods, screaming, sticks swinging wildly through the air, but to us it was the realest thing in the world.”

“Inexorable endings sometimes burn.”

"Her lips a shining red / her heart a matching tone.”

"Longest driveways on longest days”

“What are we but warring poets?”

You Asked Us What Love Is

by Joseph Young

It’s pretending it is objective
not vaporous circumstance
It is an eclipse, scheduled but
irregular
A slippery coincidence of
pheromones, hormones,
ruminations
slippery fingers, tongues, slimy
organs.

Love is reading naked, eyes open
seeing the stretches, spots, bruises
The imperfections are arousing
The imperfections become the
magazine spread
and my lasting lust suffers without
them
Blemishes that turn into ornaments.

Love is exasperation, irritation
headaches, nausea, the flu
It is Fear. Panic. Doubt.
Her fingers that tickled my elbow
harassing my sleep in the night,
the sharp nails unearthing the
spotted back
(it hurts but she likes it so i let her)
the taste of food cart food on her
breath
and kissing her more.

Love is when the growls and snarls
become suffocated beneath the
pillows
on the pulsating mattress
The taunts exhale back into the other
and the kisses are warm and soft
They are bandages.

She loved different than how i loved
She gave me her hand
and i asked her for essays.
....i wrote She Was My Oxygen
and that is why she’s gone-
You can’t love your liability.
Sammy was Love, my dream
Those silk lips that smiled at me
Criss crossed bare legs in August
That sand box of grass.
When she said I love you
i licked my popsicle and said it back.
Professor, you asked us what love is...

It was Sammy
The way her eye left eye twitches
As she she chews her breakfast eggs.



by Olga Sydorenko

Tree of Life by Natalia Vicenti



Cover Art by Olga Sydorenko



by Mike Walsh

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Haiku Series

by Marley Shelton

i.	v.
I find spots of blood	will I love you so
on your sheets so romantic	well when my heart becomes still?
I might be a fool	asleep, open-eyed
ii.	vi.
far too many things,	for you, for you, I
to search, to say, to ask, and	come I cry I read I think
never the right time	I don't scream, not yet
iii.	vii.
dear friend, did you know,	brush, floss, excavate,
when you shared the blood you drew,	but keep inhaling slow death;
what you might inspire?	bad decisions kill
iv.	viii.
panic in bed, but	before and after,
you turn; your head on my chest	blood is thicker than water;
allows me to breathe	grandma still slips, "she"
	ix.
	the love of your life;
	constant, or changing like months?
	am I December?

x.
I don't remember
the last time these panties fit
I'm losing myself
xi.
I like it with you -
less technology, more time,
old-fashioned mistakes
xii.
opportunity:
to know you more and hurt? or
imagine it all?
xiii.
please, I pray, before
it gets dark, and I freeze with
the snow; just hear me
xiv.
I pray harder than
any Christian I know and
praying doesn't work

How the Heart Breaks

by Kathryn Sullivan-Trainor

The first time the heart is glass. Hollow, Translucent. Glistening. Boastful.
The first time its reflection is so bright, shooting out.
But it is most fragile.
It shatters into shards with the soft tap of a hammer.

The second time the heart is stone. It is a chilled charcoal gray. Smooth all around the surface. The stone is impenetrable, sturdy, durable. Cool to the touch
Yet it too will break. It will crack. Not shatter into a thousand pieces, but separate into stone fragments with a strong forceful penetration.

The third time the heart is wood. It splinters those who touch it. Like bark, moss grows on its surfaces. Wood is softer, yet still rigid. Wood can sway and bend. Wood has roots that grip, roots that will not let go. Yet wood deteriorates. Slowly it disintegrates.
And finally the heart is clay. Clay that can be molded, that can absorb. Clay does not break, it does not crack. Clay can form itself around the external pressure. Clay can be shaped.

Someone Else

by Branden LaCroix

A child stares back from my TV,
His face bloodied, black from dirt and ash,
His face vacant, frozen, numbed
And staring into nothingness, as
The world swirls around him,
A storm of panic and violence.
I just sit, and I stare, and
I change the channel.

I work, I put in my hours,
I go home, I drink, I fall asleep, only
To get up the next morning, again,
The motions familiar and automatic.
People keep talking of change, how
The walls are falling down, how
The world will crumble to dust.
I get up, I put in my hours.

A man came to my door today,
A preacher and salesman both,
The lines blurred and indistinguishable.
He spoke of the the others, how
‘They’ are to blame, how
‘They’ should be punished and tried
By gunfire and the Bomb, in
A place not here but there.

They knocked down my neighbor’s door
Last night, a bang and a crash,
Crying and screaming and yelling.
Who cares?
Just as long as it happens to someone else.

Matador

by Diego Rocha

Esteban woke up to the mourning echoes of the Ave Maria. It was about six in the morning, still dark and cold. Seven ladies, all veiled and dressed in black lace, surrounded his bed with the mission of commending the bullfighter’s soul to God. Just in case! They were crying, holding each other’s hands as if to make a fortress of love and protection on Esteban. Since the passing of both his parents at the age of four, he was raised by the seven women in the small village of Alcobendas, about 10km North of Madrid. They were all his tias, very attentive mid-aged, voluptuous women who earned their living by serving as maids and nannies to the traditional families of the Capital. They all made sure Esteban had absolutely everything.

As a teenager, his tendencies were very clear. He used to watch his uncle, Paco, teach aspiring young men every afternoon at the Royal School of Tauromachy. Paco would teach them not only the moves and routines a true bullfighter makes to seduce and elicit death, but also the connection made with the crowds that gathered every Sunday after church at the Arena.

One afternoon, at the age of fourteen, Esteban’s destiny was traced by Paco: he would be trained to be the biggest Matador of the Iberian Peninsula. It took him years and years of learning every single move and their meaning, every technique, breath and concentration exercise. It was true that the spectacle of the Bullfight all seemed like a beautiful dance between the man and his ferocious counterpart. However, any fault from the man’s part could dictate the end of a glorious career! Soon he went on to being the most iconic torero in Madrid. No bull had ever survived his final dagger, no woman could resist his exquisite charm. No other man in Spain could match Esteban’s excellence in the art of being a Matador.

Sundays in Madrid were rich in colors and flavors of Spain. Everyone was out in ferias enjoying the weather and delicious, mouth-watering tapas. People walked around, hoping that time would fly so that they could make an entrance into the iconic Plaza de Toros. Meanwhile, for Esteban, the early afternoon was a moment of deepest concentration and reconnection with God. This was his opportunity to make sure to thank Him for the lives of all around him, beg for the health of all his tias, and to ask for protection upon himself once again. After lunch in the comfortable comedores of the Plaza, Esteban would take a long, purifying bath and wait for the assistant to come in to help him dress into the fitted, imposing golden and yellow hand-embroidered suit. Only men were allowed into the chambers, for no torero was to be amused by any woman. In fact, they were not even allowed into the Plaza before the Grand spectacle. Paco was always around. After all, he was Esteban’s maestro. They would have lunch in a quiet ambience, whilst Esteban heard Paco’s timeless tales of all his feats as a bullfighter. After a two-hour siesta, it was time to get dressed. Paco went outside to call one of the assistants who would help Esteban prepare himself. After instructing the young man, of about 20, he went into his own room to change and do his own spiritual preparation for the event.

The wind was blowing through the white silky curtains, while Esteban contemplated the birds and the trees, perhaps for the last time. As a torero, he never knew whether that would be his last contact with Nature. He never knew if that afternoon marked his ultimate appearance before his public. Although the fight required skill, talent and bravery, it was mostly a matter of fate. Actually, on that Sunday, it was all a matter of luck!

For more of the story: lumierelitimag.wordpress.com

Please

by Marley Shelton

Please tell me why my heart beats.
I declare temperance in adaption,
productivity in malfunction.
I excel in solitude and platitude
but struggle with mere latitude,
a cruel joke that curls from your lips like winter fog.

Please tell me why my heart beats
but my eyes refuse to blink,
and the air wears me down as the stones from a peak,
mountainous and hardened as I slip through the cracks
again, again, again.

Please tell me why my heart beats
but I can’t move my feet.
Contradiction, predilection,
as I wander down your street,
in circles, in circles, in circles.

Please tell me why your heart beats
but your lungs stopped expanding,
gentle but tired and misunderstanding,
grazing the pieces of you that aren’t mine
again, again, again.

Please tell me why my heart stopped beating,
stopped pumping and twisting and screaming and bleeding,
the embers lie ashen, ignited by passion
but nothing inside doesn’t sleep.
You’re not mine to keep, to keep, to keep.
Nothing here is mine, tell me why.

Our Father

by Margaret I. R. MacLachlan

“Do you pray?”
“I, I try. Though ... dark shadows get in the way.”
“Those are the demons, the demons that have brought you here, the demons that lead you into sin! You must banish them!”
“I think the great demon has banished me already.”
“Well then, it is up to you to find your way back to our lord and savior Jesus Christ and away from the path of sin.”
“Yes, sister.”
“I hear you are quiet, not prone to gossip like some of the other girls.”
“My father always made us stay quiet. No matter....”
“A good man, then.”
“Many say so, sister.”
“And look at how you repay him. At least you are a hard worker. ou may yet find a better path.”
“Yes, sister.”
“Return to your duties. And remember. Confession. Contrition. And hard work. These are how we cleanse the soul.”
“Yes, sister.”
“And say your prayers. Use the rosary I gave you. Repeat the Our Father at every turn of temptation.”
“Yes sister.”

The stone hallway leading to the laundry seems colder than ever. I want to turn and run. Our Father, who art, artfully ... our father ... lead us not ... our father ... demons, cursed demons...

The stifling air of the laundry is a relief. The noise of water and girls drives the shadows away.
“What was it this time?” the small one with the coarse accent prods under her breath.
“Sister Jude-Magdalena asked me if I prayed.”
“Did she try to get you to say who it was?” the redhead with the squinty eyes chimes in.
“No.”
“Oh, they will. Believe me! They promise to let you go if you say,” the redhead continues.
“I told Sister Beatrice t’was Father O’Connor and she pushed me down the stairs. Like to’ve killed me. Still have the lump on me head,” the small one parts her awkwardly cropped dark hair to display the swelling. “Taught me, for sure. Don’t tell ‘em nothing. They’ll beat you for the truth as quick as a lie.”
“QUIET!” the voice of Sister Perpetua booms from across the busy laundry. “Focus on your work and be thankful that it restrains you from sin.” As the reverberation dies, the churning of water fills the void.
“Old windbag," whispers the tough little one with the lump on her head.
“You have names, I guess,” I mutter, largely to myself. They just stare. A tall haughty one behind them looks amused. Perhaps, I am mistaken. Perhaps they are automatons or characters of my own creation, maybe demons, though their faces do not loom over me in the darkness. Still, best not to speak.

For more of the story:
lumierelitimag.wordpress.com

I am American and I am Free

by Melissa Wyner
I am American
and
I am Free.

I can say what I want to say.
I can argue what I want to argue.
I can write what I want to write.

I am American
and
I am Free.

I can live where I want to live.
I can go where I want to go.
I can work where I want to work.

I am American
and
I am Free.

I can learn what I want to learn.
I can protect what I want to protect.
I can believe what I want to believe.

And I believe
I am American
and
I am Free.



by Tiffany Wallace



by Olga Sydorenko

A Lost Love

by Theresa Lasky
Her lips a shining red,
Her heart a matching tone,
She lies awake in bed,
Stares blankly at the phone.
Will he ever love her?
She cries herself to sleep.
Cat at the end of the bed purrs.
Her heart aches so deep.
Lantern in the hallway shines,
She gazes at the light with tear filled eyes,
Within her heart she’ll never find,
A love so deep with no goodbye.
Her lips a shining red,
Her heart a matching tone,
She lies awake in bed,
Stares blankly at the phone.

Churning Burning

by Christian A. Hardy

Churning wheels of ethereal fire flay my flesh and mind.

Every touch upon my skin, a kiss of sublime agony.

The will-o'-wisps dance before my eyes

Kaleidoscopic as the visions whirl past me.

I lose myself in time and in form.

I feel nothing but the lips of fire upon my body,
held fast in the carnal embrace.

I writhe in agony, having never felt so free.

All is aflame,

All is luminous,

All is ash.

Words char upon my tongue.

I scream and the roar carries my voice away.

Tears stream down my face, lifted by gentle hands

Leaving boils in their wake.

Sages sit still in this torrent of sensuous embrace

While I roil in tumult madness that bursts forth.

As I slip this mortal coil, I ascend.

Photo by Tiffany Wallace

Joy

by Christine Dufresne

My Joy, her name is Joy,

and how fitting a name that is,

it quite perfectly defines

the automatic emotion her presence invokes.

Yes, the first time I caught sight of her,

gliding gracefully around the bend,

attention captivated by the shade of sapphire she was in,

driving another distinction from the sea of monotony she was amongst.

Now, there was an interior grace displayed that spoke to her character,

as if I already knew she would have the most patience with me,

she would be fully reliable and dependable

but underneath there was a smirk of adventures to come.

Even I wondered if the chasm between our worlds was too vast,

for the relationship to work out well.

she was everything class, glamour and shine

where I was more dirt roads and dancing in the rain.

Well, from the very first day we spent together

it was as if she anticipated my innermost thoughts,

encouraged my dreams and even would bear patiently

when at times I neglected her most basic of needs.

Could it be possible that a year has gone by since that first meeting?

looking back my life seems miles away from the woman I was on that day,

on that cool Fall day, when the threats of snow had begun to surface

the fears of a winter like the one of the year gone by.

All the moments of disappointment and frustration that had built up,

all the anxiety of wondering if my quest was going to stall,

all difficulties losing the ability to steer me wrong,

all the showers of tears she intermittently wiped away

Really, my days now are only full of Joy,

no matter the weather, the time, the season,

or even where I am headed in life, for as far as I can see, Joy will be carrying me along this road.

Working Folks

by Paulo Schimmelpfennig

The loud gunfire shot him awake. Off in the distance, miles even, no need to worry about it now. Seems like it was an automatic, didn’t think this town had enough money in it to afford one still. He looks around, still in the passenger seat, sipping his forty, waiting for his partner to finish filling the tank. The gas station seemed to be the only source of light for miles, the store’s lights spotlighting the scene like a football stadium. Almost seemed like there was nothing outside of the light, just darkness.

Marcus drops onto the driver’s seat like an anchor in the sea, causing the car to jolt to one side quickly. He gets in so fast that it startles Nic, but he calms down when he tosses him his cigs from the store. Marcus shoots him a look after noticing the forty, but stays quiet and starts the car, leaving the light, and into the void.

After lighting one he asks, “How much longer till the spot?”

“I’d say around twenty minutes, up near Tremont Street,” Marcus answers dryly.

“It’s that old steel mill right?”

“Yeah that’s right, been closed for ‘bout ten, twenty years now, we meeting with the marks on the first floor,” barely showing interest in Nic. “It’s been closed for seventeen years, and you can get there faster if you take this left,” exhaling his last drag before throwing the butt out the window. He began to wonder how long has his voice sounded so gravely, or if it just started now. He hasn’t been around people for so long, he didn't have anyone to ask.

“The boss told me you were a local,” Marcus replied while he took the turn, just in time to see a fiend getting up from a squat, running away from their car while pulling his pants up, leaving his mess in the middle of the street.

“Yeah born and raised,” he said with mild disgust towards the scene, “although to be honest I haven’t been around much in the last, three years now I think. Had to leave for a little while, not long after the elections.”



by Tiffany Wallace

The car bounced around on the old beaten up roads. Pot holes half a foot deep were scattered around, showing the old cobblestones from centuries ago. There was a time when these roads were as smooth as a billiard. Now they were surrounded by vacant housing from both sides, old and decrepit, but some still showing the glowing life this neighborhood had. The only street lights were those at the intersections, almost highlighting the next mugging. They drove past the stop signs, knowing that there’s no one to stop for at this time of the night.

“Likewise here, left around twenty years ago now,” Marcus started to scratch his greying beard while getting into his story, “grew up on Richards Street, over by west side of town.”

For more of the story: lumierelitmag.wordpress.com

Broken City

by M. Roy

The rain pours down on the city.
The world is drowning in its own misery
No one can save it,
We did this
We burn the valleys
and the castle?
Where is it?

The king and queen gave up on us
We are no good
We left our home
into the depth of nothingness
We pursue our own dream
With no pity
We never look back once more

I waited so long
And I felt the need rushing in
But I lost hope on the way down.
The time was spent on useless actions.

We took too much time talking to ourselves and looking in the mirror
We let the town guide us to misery

My Love

by JayJay Conrad

my love
its gaping maw insatiable
crawls trembling toward
lurid sunlight.

it is a bottom feeder;
an aphorism for suppressed passion.

that amorphous wretch:
refusal to cease equating
suffering and nonsense
to love and the masquerade—

i shiver at the thought.



by Olga Sydorenko