

POEM: Emily Langston '19

Put It In a Jar

Quick
Bottle it up
Valuable four-leaf clovers
That damp dirt basement smell
Spare eyelashes.

Put it in a jar.
All the times you
Laughed with your soul
Felt the earth move
Locked hands.

Licked birthday candles
Friendship bracelets turned brown
Over summer
Over lakes

Save it forever
His voice
Her hair in the sun
All the personalities of all the dogs

Scraps of scraps
Of trash
Of memory

So that one day
You can die,
Jar tucked under your arms.

POEM: August Donovan '18

Plight of the Busboy

The busboy's heart grips at his lungs and squeezes.

In the diner, tables stand around him, unclean,

and he stares ahead, shocked, out of breath

like a man who nearly escaped his death just realizing the value of his life.

The busboy stands still, wet eyes, silent but for his short, full breaths.

Three meters in front of him, the seat in which she had sat loses heat by the second.

The bells above the door whine to announce her departure.

The busboy feels she will leave, knows she will leave,

and he can stop her,

but he does not.

When his head hits his pillow at night, he is alone.

He dreams that his bedroom roof disappears,

and the stars above greet his eyes

and warm his body

and converse with his soul,

but the temporal howl of his morning alarm announces their departure.

Dress,

drive,

work,

die,

never say hello.

Travel Journal (EXCERPT): Angela Wang '20

2017/6/17 [National Park of Iceland]

[...]

I inhaled some fresh air and kept listening. Stumbling through moss had a different sound from walking on fern. Tripping over branches had a different sound from breaking a tiny stick. Stepping on a sturdy rock had a different sound from slipping off a wobbly cobblestone. Rubbing my shoes over grass had a different sound from stamping on dirt. Hiking in rocky areas had a different sound from rambling across sandy areas.

POEM: Mira Anderson '19

An Unadulterated Admiration

You are intrigued by the way she raises
the ends of her sentences
as if trying to suppress a laugh yet
not quite succeeding.
It is an endearing trait because it fits her,
Complementing
the pair of hoop earrings she wears each day
and the perfect set of white teeth she manages to flash
without seeming flashy
and the brown, untamed curls that bounce freely from her head and
make her an image of continuous movement and vibrancy.
Her voice unapologetically steals your focus
like the click of her magnificently high pair of heels,
distracting you from your own doubts and discomforts,
drawing from you an admiration
unadulterated by envy.

SHORT STORY (excerpt): Kristin Santana '20

Under the popcorn ceiling of Paula's studio in Spanish Harlem, the four old sisters stiffly sit on the plastic covered sofa. The notorious sofa Maria and Yana watched Papi make with his bare cracked hands when they were just six months old. Of course, Maria and Yana have no vivid account of watching the program because they were too busy engaging in the commercial break that was tapping their wide feet and stubbed toes on the concrete and pebbles to the sweet sound of melodious maracas and fluctuating flutes playing from the large antenna-powered radio in the back yard. Those girls learned how to sway their hips before they could walk properly.

Still, when they were old enough to listen, Mami prided herself in telling the muchachas that their Papi made the sofa all by himself. “Yes, just like that” she would repeat holiday after holiday. Brushing off the hours spent creating the wood structure alone as if it was nothing. The same hands that picked and harvested bananas for Chiquita Bananas, a billion dollar “banana empire,” still earned the minimum wage and carved swirls along the edges of their sofa to add an elegant touch. Not out of a desire to add to his qualifications for his imaginary resume, but out of necessity.

EPIC POEM (EXCERPT): Jet Elbualy '18

all the better.

he's a wolf, and i am his red riding hood.

send me a picture of you at the beach,

he says, and i gasp.

my heart beats in my throat, not out of fear, but excitement.

okay,

i say, and smile uncontrollably.

i have no way of seeing past his sheep's costume.

hurry up,

he says, and i wonder why.

i guess i thought that this was love,

when really it's lust,

his drooling jaws snapping up my red riding hood cloak.

EPISTOLARY: Erin Levine '18

Dear Ryan,

[...]

When I was one and you were four, you fed me peas. The green mush has faded to grey in the picture of that moment, the immortal image gathering dust on my desk. Every few months, I'll gently wipe the aging picture with a cloth, smile at your smile, grin at my grin. Bask in the purity and easiness of what life was back then. Simple. As simple as feeding me peas. And the peas that were once bright green have faded to grey, but only in the picture.

When I was three and you were six, we dressed up together. For you, a plain white t-shirt with two stains on the collar where your spaghetti sauce splattered, and a pair of underwear decorated with little Batmans. For me, blue denim overalls and a light pink tank top, with frills on the straps. And of course, sunglasses for both of us. Yours tinted navy blue, with thin, circular frames that would have been small on dad's face, but were huge on yours. Mine tinted light pink, lighter than my salmon-colored shirt, almost clear, with thin square frames that shadowed my face in a hazy glow. Whether or not we were actually in the sun didn't matter; looking good had to be prioritized. A fashion show was held, a catwalk, walked. And through it all, smiles, laughing, joy.

POEM: Bea Tran '18

Blue

Pacing back and forth on the beach,
Hair bobbing to the rhythm of my steps,
I drag my feet across the sand,
Finding my way to you.

Across the blue sea,
Under the blue sky,
My heart, a sorrowful blue.
Eyes blue from tears,
I am finding my way to you.

Am I colorblind,
If I cannot see anything other than
blue?
The promise you kissed into my heart,
Onto my hand,
Its light waning, bluer.
From ruby to sapphire
to agate without agape.

The waves sung a tune of liberation,
so I threw your promise
into the unforgiving blue.

NOVEL (excerpt from Chapter Two): Ryan Natcharian '19

My dearest Roran,

I could not be more overjoyed that you are allowing me to remain as lady of your household. For as long as I have known you, you never allowed me outside of areas concerning my work, and now, I have free range over every nook and cranny of your ancestral home. Thank you. Everything is coming along smoothly on this side. As far as our elusive quarry goes, we have tracked her (or him if you insist. I personally hold on to the belief that no man could ever have concocted and executed a plan so diabolical) down to the eastern region of Ezbegoth, so at least you and Peregrin are on the right continent. Next time you write to me please refrain from referring to our work as 'your mission' and never insinuate that I am your house sitter ever again. You and I both know very well what we are talking about and I am at least a legal citizen of your library by now, if not a duchess. I cannot wait for when you return for your resupply, so I can see that wonderful scowl that is firmly bolted onto your face. It delights me to know that I am the one who put it there. One last word, you may need a new stable boy, at least temporarily. He had a run-in with Kaxby, but don't worry, he will only remain petrified until you come home, since you know the procedure to reverse the effect and Kaxby hasn't eaten the poor boy yet.

Ta ta,

Madeleine

PERSONAL ESSAY (in French): Liam Scott '18

Vagabonder

Quand je voyage, j'ai un but très simple en absolu, mais cela est difficile à réellement accomplir. Je voudrais apprendre au sujet de la ville où je me trouve, et en même temps je voudrais ressentir comme je connais la ville quand je pars. Il me semble que ce but puisse être accompli par l'errance. Il faut vagabonder et explorer pour connaître un lieu.

Certaines personnes croient que l'idée de vagabonder dans une ville pour découvrir la vraie ville est trop romantique ou idéaliste. Je pense que cette idée est fausse. Pour explorer tu dois juste te promener sans un vrai chemin ou sans plan. Être détendu comme ça va te libérer des limites du monde touristique. Il faut sortir des sentiers battus. La ville dans laquelle tu as commencé ta promenade sera différent de la ville dans laquelle tu la finis.

J'ai vagabondé ici à Rennes et ces expériences constituent quelques de mes meilleurs souvenirs. Mon exemple préféré est quand j'ai trouvé les bouquinistes sur la Place Hoche. J'étais avec mes amis pendant le temps libre et après ce temps nous nous sommes trouvés sur la Place Hoche et avec nous il y avait environ dix vendeurs de livres d'occasion. J'ai trouvé mon livre préféré en français et après avoir l'acheté je suis tombé amoureux de ces bouquinistes, cette place, et ce marché.

Il est évident que ces bouquinistes adorent leur emploi, mais surtout ils adorent les livres et ils s'aiment les uns les autres. Comme le dit un bouquiniste, "La communauté ici, c'est très génial. Nous avons la même passion ici ensemble." Je crois qu'il est génial de trouver un lieu où tous les travailleurs adorent leur métier. Indubitablement tout le monde voudrait avoir cette passion- je suis sûr que je le veux- et donc pouvoir voir ces hommes heureux est exaltant. Par ailleurs, leur passion et leur satisfaction sont évidents quand un autre bouquiniste dit, "Je pense que c'est vraiment la vie de France, tous les jours un marché de livres, et tous ces hommes qui aiment les livres. Je trouve ça bien."

Un marché des livres d'occasion est certes un peu éclectique; toutefois, tout le monde devrait apprécier ce lieu spécial qui est fréquenté par les rennais et ce que je pense que est le vrai esprit de Rennes. Comme l'explique une cliente, "J'ai commencé venir ici il y a dix ans. C'est rennais et je l'aime." A la fin du séjour je serai venu ici plusieurs fois et si j'habitais ici je viendrais souvent. Bien qu'il soit juste un marché, en fait il représente beaucoup plus. Ce marché- l'objet de mon errance- me manquera toujours.

Ce marché est une sorte de microcosme car tous ces livres ont suivi beaucoup de chemins différents et se sont retrouvés au même endroit et puis ils partent, comme toutes les personnes dans la vie, et surtout comme nous. Nous avons vagabondé et nous nous sommes retrouvés les uns les autres ici. J'espère que nous nous souviendrons de l'idée de l'errance et j'espère que nous n'oublierons jamais que vagabonder dans le monde physique donne lieu à l'errance dans nous-mêmes.

Les Sources

Interview 1, Bouquiniste avec les Cheveux Fous, 7/1/17

Interview 2, Bouquiniste avec l'Écharpe, 7/1/17

Interview 3, Bouquiniste qui Fume, 7/1/17

Interview 4, La Femme Excentrique, 7/8/17

Interview 5, Le Nouveau Habitant de Rennes, 7/8/17