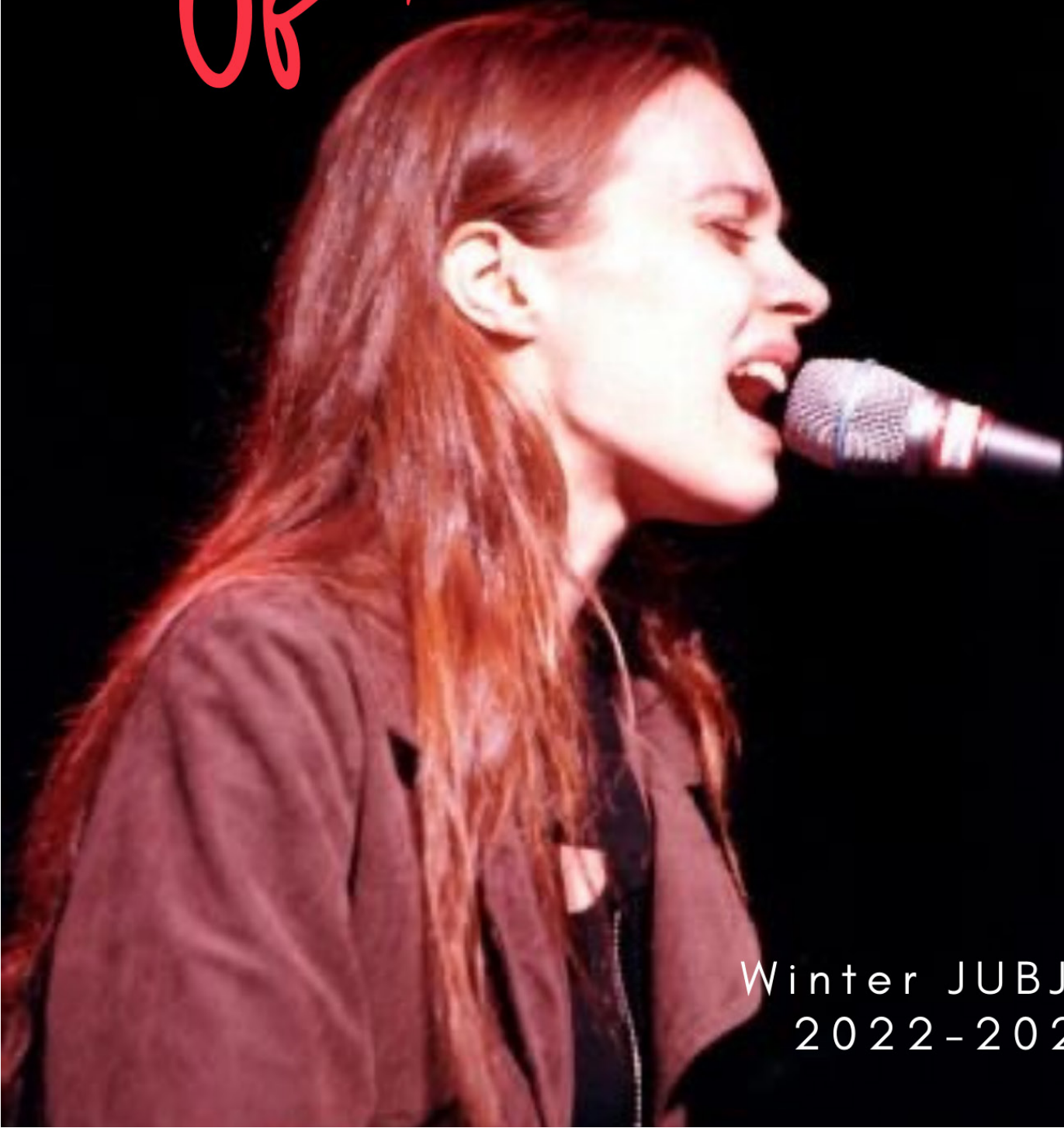


Flashes Of Music



Winter JUBJUB
2022-2023



THE JUBJUB



THE JUBJUB

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Skylar Fiebrich

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DEAR READER,

This edition of the JubJub includes a collection of flash fiction pieces. As writers, sometimes we need a nudge in the direction of inspiration and oftentimes we turn to the media we love for guidance. This edition has allowed us to choose our favorite song as our muse. When reading this edition, allow the language of music to connect us all and encourage us to embrace our love of storytelling. As you read, if you feel particularly moved, we urge you to listen to the song that fed the inspiration for the piece so you can feel the same artistry the writer did.

-THE LITERARY MAGAZINE STAFF



Smells Like Baby Powder and Cigarettes

Xavier Holub

I always hated the little jingle that plays whenever the automatic doors close behind you at the supermarket. It's infantile.

I guess that fit the mood for today though.

I had to find where the baby aisle was since I never bothered knowing where it was before.

Shocking, right? Never had a reason to till now though.

Wasn't too hard to find. It was next to the snack aisle, which in turn was really close to the liquor aisle. I definitely knew where that one was. A part of me nearly went through it out of habit. Only thing that stopped me was the thought of Ophelia seeing me like that. I didn't wanna disappoint her like that again, even if keeping away from bottles usually just left me feeling more disappointed in myself. But whatever. I didn't care.

It took me a sec to step into the baby aisle. Something just felt wrong about a guy covered in tattoos wearing a torn up leather jacket walking into a place like that. At least no one else was there to see my shame.

Not like they'd recognize me anyway. What're the chances of some lady in a grocery store being really into failed musicians?

"Oo oo! Lemme see your old guitar you haven't touched in months! Sign my album! One of the seven you ever sold, you worthless, washed up—"

Well. It'd prolly go something like that.

Whatever! Didn't matter. I was here for baby food, not for feeling sick about myself. I scanned the shelves, found the kind Ophelia said I should get, and took a few of 'em.

The bottles of food drifted past me slowly on the check-out counter's conveyor belt. I kept my eyes looking everywhere but at the cashier. I didn't like thinking about how much cleaner he looked than me.

I rushed back to my busted up car with my other hand shoved into my pocket, threw the bag into the passenger seat, and let myself fall behind the wheel. Just one grocery trip and I was already exhausted. I didn't even wanna open my eyes again. But I did. Lifting my head back up was a mistake though since all it did was let me see my old guitar case in the rearview mirror, still sitting there where I left it. Rockbottom. As hopeless as its owner.

Whatever.

I could put up with this a bit longer.

The End By Sissyphus

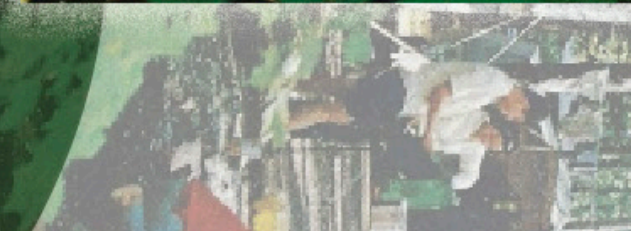


SEED OF MEMORY

Without fail, winter makes its first appearance in the morning. When the dew covers the valley grass and the air hollows out your lungs, and the sun only yet glistens through the clouds above. The coolness wakes the world up, and makes us shiver, and cling to one another in the moments where the shivering can only be stopped by the warmth of other people. The mountains that surround me are never without even just a bit of snow on the peaks of them, and always look sharper the closer you get to them. I remember days where my neck strained because of how high up I tried to see. I don't know what I was looking for or what I was trying to find, but I still spent my nights looking at the same old mountains anyhow. "Same old" seems a bit informal though to describe what they were for me. I can admit that I am a stubborn man, I cling to the familiar quiet spaces that I've known, so mountains, for me at least, were entirely grounding. They changed their colors with the seasons, and commemorated all the years I had spent living out in the West. I had moved to Montana later than I should have. I threw all my things in a suitcase, a couple of books on crop growing, too little jackets, my favorite fleece, and one pair of boots. To be honest, I had no idea what I was doing, but I am glad I did it. I desired peace and solitude and the idea of loneliness never mattered to me. I had hitchhiked my way here all the way from Virginia, it was spring when I decided to finally leave. The road was long, varied and filled with the still the most interesting people I have ever met who claim to do all they can to combat domesticity, self righteous I know, but some part of me felt that way too. I think not wanting to live a typical life in the suburbs leads to finding yourself in other people. Maybe that's why I don't ever leave the valley, maybe that's why I should.

SKYLAR FIEBRICH

Seed of Memory by Terry Reid



THE HOME OF

Milla Wenrich



Stars Will Fall by Duster

ETERNAL SILENCE

JESSICA BULLOCK

It was a peculiar night. Everything was too peaceful in the house of Violet Toms. There were usually screaming and strong voices radiating through the thin walls of her antique home. Violet had to sleep with pillows piled onto her head to try to keep out the sound waves, but there was never any success. She still always heard her parents argue over what small issue was made big today. Tonight was different. There was no screaming. There were no strong voices. In reality, there were no sounds at all. With this new-found peace, Violet let herself drift into her made-up land, the one where the sky rained stars. Every day the sky glistened with tiny objects floating down to cover her body. They were her stars, only hers. The stars helped her escape her reality as she soaked them up. A sort of medicine that only she had access to. As she ran, her speed gained rapidly. Pushing herself through the grass collecting more and more stars. Once her lungs couldn't release any more air she slowed and eventually came to a stop. She slips out of her world of stars and opens her eyes to the destruction she caused.

The silence was deafening, calm, and too real. The two faces of her childhood stare at her, and she stares back at them. Sitting in a pool of red you would think she regrets bringing the knife to their hearts. It's quite the opposite for Violet Toms, she finally got her silence, and they finally got their ending. A final whisper so quiet, so innocent, comes from Violet's lips as she prepares for an eternity in her made-up land: "All we know is that stars will fall."

Dear Arthur,
Nov. 15th 1995

I know you will never get this letter, even as I burn it from the flame of my stove. The smoke will waft and make a symbol I will believe to be a message from you. Since you left there's a place I go. Every Sunday, sometimes Wednesday, and always on Friday. I sit in the grass and stare at the stone. Your name engraved, covered in moss, from the years I have waited, an imprint of my body on the grass, where I sit. Do you think I have forgotten? I remember how we met as if it's only been a few years. How my arms were full, and you opened the door. When we were together I swore I could lay forever and look into your eyes, get lost in the simplicity of being with you. I still have the wedding dress, though it's weathered and yellow with time, I can't put it up, it hangs on the outside of my closet, ready for the day. I've been told to move on, that thirty years is long enough but how could I forget you? I now have a dog, her name is Dorthey. I had to sell the house we bought to a family. I cried. My memory has started to fade. There's something about you that I can't remember, it's the same damn thing I used to swear I would archive forever in my mind. And god I wish we met when we were younger, that we had more time. When I see the train go by I think you sent me a sign, and even though you will not see this letter, I will still burn it, praying to God that he will give me mercy, and that it will somehow be received. I placed your favorite baseball card in the envelope. I will write again.

With love,
Lottie

ABOUT YOU

S t e l l a S e r i n g e r

ABOUT YOU



Hill Britton

About You by The 1975



INSPIRED BY:

**RADIO HEAD'S
FAKE PLASTIC
TREES**

Untitled
By Lexi Chestney

She heard the startling roar of the car engine and felt her fingers curl until her ragged nails were etched into the grooves of her palm.

One, two, three. One two three seconds until the door opened.

She turned and watered the plant sitting in the middle of the table. Its leaves were decaying, its stem was a deep brown, its roots crept up from below the dirt.

She kept her back to the door. She said no words, yet she was aggrieved. His eyes were pleading for sanctuary. She offered up no such luxury. One, two, three deep breaths. Conversation was inevitable. She reached for him with bleeding hands.

Her index finger made contact with his skin, and she felt a sudden chill crawl down her spine. A large crack made its way from the tip of his head to the bottom of his feet. Another one appeared across his chest, then diagonally through his heart.

One, two, three; he crumbled into a heap of spitting ash. Only his skeleton remained.

He took one last step towards her as he
crumbled into dust.

IN THE SWIM OF THINGS

"I haven't overcome everything," Elseser says, "but I continue to put up a good fight." Di Petsa dress.
Fashion Editor:
Gabriella Karefa-Johnson.

7035A

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He Doesn't Know Why by: Skylar Fiebrich

It is night when I question what it means to be alive. When I wonder how long I can reside amongst the vast and wild plains before becoming part of the land myself. I have learned that my fascination with freedom is almost unquenchable. I follow no laws of money, of conversation, of time, and the only thing that guides me is my still infrequent memory. Sometimes I will reflect on who I was a day ago, a year ago, two years ago, a century ago, but I often neglect those pastimes. My hair has grown long, and free, and is a vivid illustration of how much I have been away. When you found me, I could tell you noticed it alongside my empty pockets filled with nothing but a crumpled twenty dollar bill that I can admit, sometimes I do quench tightly when loneliness enters my mind, and I begin to think of you.

It seems as if you are always looking for me, and never rest until I am found. I see your silhouette against the painted skyline from miles away, your rugged hands clutching the reins of your horse, and your eyes sagging down towards the earth. But when you reach my camp, you do not yet collapse. You force yourself to stand as I look up at you from the ground.

"So, what made you run off this time?" You ask me, as an amiable grin begins to dance across your face. My voice starts to crack as I tell you that I do not know what I am running from, and that I never do. You sit down, the ends of your maroon jacket getting covered in dust, and now I begin to ask myself the worth of solitude because all of me right now wishes that you will not ever leave.

inspired by:

Fleet Foxes'

He doesn't know WHY

THE QUESTION

INSPIRED BY:

IF I FALL BY
THE STORY SO FAR

Canon,

They're finally letting me send letters again like in the first few weeks because I've gotten so far into treatment. Honestly it's been so long I can barely remember what the outside looks like. But I'm coming back home Canon! Clear your head of what you read in the first letters I sent you. I'm not the scrawny twitching addict you knew a while ago. I've been told I've improved so well I'll be let out soon, or graduate, or whatever you call leaving rehab. Back to real life so I can take up space on your couch and rob your pantry again.

Seriously though, It's strange to write so level headed, and to talk to you with a clear mind for the first time must seem weird to you. I mean you've never seen me fine on my own. And I know I owe you a lot when I get out of this place, which flew by I might add. Growing up for months and months in rehab is one thing, but out there? I don't know Canon. It doesn't feel like I'll be able to fix the relationships I destroyed while I was sick. What if we can't get through to each other again?

I have this feeling when I get out that I'll just get sick of the situation I created for myself back home, that I won't be able to love the people I met because I was a different person. I feel like I might just get addicted again if I can't get past what people think of me. I'll start taking all those yellow pills that give me that purple glow I get.

Reading this letter I'd very much like to throw it out, but I've been anxious to ask this. Canon, after all that I've done to you, as I financially drain you as in this rehab center, or in the past as I've physically beaten you for drug money, or emotionally scarred you for years as you're big brother who did drugs in our bunk bed, Canon, If I Fall again, back into my sickness, would you be there?

Your brother,
Fisher

Chayanne

by Stella Seringer

Chayanne Texas was the kind of town where everyone knew everything, and the reputation of your ancestors carried on to bite you in the ass. It was a town of the southern bell, debutante, and secrets in the attic. And in this seemingly sleepy town lived the golden girl fallen from grace, Jamie Pound, who never thought, not in a million years, she would amount to anything. She spent her days working at the Dixie Stop and her nights dancing, or quietly waiting, while the dinner got cold, for Beckett Banks to return home.

On one particular day, in the middle of a hot and humid July, Jamie sat waiting. It had been two hours since she had come home from working, her feet sore and dignity diminished, and he still had not returned. She listened to the clock tick, the crickets chirp, and the suffocating sound of the cicadas buzz as she stared at the beaten down screen door waiting for the moment his headlights would light up the dark room. A few more minutes passed. She picked her nail, looked up at the blinking kitchen light, fixed her hair, undid it, then fixed it again. Suddenly the rumble of his truck down the dirt road came, and her vision filled with fake light and then the sound and light died and it all got dark and quiet, the door slammed and the screen door screeched.

"Evenin'" Beckett said the single word slurring as he stumbled in. She took a drag of her cigarette then blew the smoke out making sure it would not cross his path. He came closer and she stood, the taste of cheap whiskey on his lips was all too familiar and the feeling of his hands on her hips felt foreign in comparison.

"How was your day?" she asked, his scruffy unshaved jaw scratching her face. He went to sit at the table.

"Long" he leaned back, waiting. Jamie rushed over to the oven where the meatloaf had been sitting. "What's for dinner?" he asked.

"Meat loaf" he nodded then lit his cigarette, he took a deep breath in then blew the sticky tar like smoke out and into the air. Then, as Jamie was plating the food, he stood, his long willowy legs quickly making their way over to the rundown kitchen counter.

"How much did you make tonight baby?" he asked.

"It was a slow night, only around three hundred." Beckett flinched then took another drag,

"Better pick up a shift tomorrow then honey" he said as he strolled back to the rickety kitchen table.

"Yes" the meatloaf was done. They sat at the table. Beckett told Jamie about his day. She played with her food, then gave him seconds. Whisky was poured. Another cigarette was shared between the two. TV was on. Jamie finished the dishes. The smell of mildew clogged her nose as she sat on the couch. Beckett left for bed, the smoke still lingered in the air as Jamie locked the door to the trailer. The lights of the park blinked outside. Jamie sighed then looked the other way.

Outside, after the last lights flickered away, the town of Chayanne was dark and quiet. And Jamie lay as the rough arm of Beckett wrapped around her torso. Recently it has been hard for her to fall asleep. She would lay and stare at the wall, its paper peeling at the edges, as the sound of Becketts snores lulled on.



Milla Wenrich

INSPIRED BY:
FLEETWOOD MAC'S
STORMS



GLOWING

by Michael Anthony

Inspired by: Slaughter Beach, Dog's "Glowing"

As we fell asleep I can clearly remember the last conscious thought I had being about the trickle of the droplets falling from the basement ceiling to the bucket that rested on the floor. I remember what we did before we went to bed even clearer. I remember rummaging through your old belongings preparing for our move, trashing some, and cherishing others. In just 6 days we would leave the town we resided in together. The town we grew up in. The town we said our first words, kicked our first ball, took all of our tests, worked all our shifts, and the town we met in. Leaving wasn't easy for either of us. This town knew our names

and, if it chose to, could grab us by our throats.

I foggily remember an empty bed, shivering myself awake when I felt water splash upon my forehead, causing me to jolt up. I can not remember looking for you, but I can remember finding nothing but dark. I stepped out of bed and I could not find the floor, instead my legs became submerged in the thickness of a lagoon, and grime was up to my knee by the time I touched the ground. I was sick to my stomach, horrified not by the sludge surrounding my bed and suffocating my legs, but by your absence. I hopelessly fell back toward the bed, but did not land. I

smacked the surface of the muck and was instantly submerged. I opened my eyes to nothing but a burning sensation. A fire was set to my eyes by the slush. There was no light. I tried to surface but to no avail. My body hit the roof of the room but was still engulfed, for the water had risen, and I felt myself begin to drown. I felt like giving up, like letting myself fall slowly back toward the bottom of the room that turned itself to a raging river. Without a thought, I violently kicked, propelling myself toward what I could only hope would be an exit.

I can plainly see the isolated bottomless pitch black pit I

now exist in. From time to time I catch slivers of shimmery frames glowing, radiating your warmth, but also your newfound sorrow, allowing me to witness a glimpse of you now. As I rest here I can only wish that this is not forever. That eternity is only a little while, and everything can end. I don't miss much about what was, and I don't mind the resting, but I am terrified that soon the shimmery frame will reveal a happier you. A version with me gone from your mind and your life, unable to bother ever again.

ROBBERS
ROBBERS

THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975
THE 1975



THE TALE of **2** ROB BERS

In the company of some people, time drastically slows down, but with others it's as if you can feel the ticking and the world starting to get blurry, and your heart never stops beating. I find that when you meet people that elicit that feeling, it's hard to let go of them. You become addicted to the momentum they walk with, and eventually you start chasing it, even when it begins to chafe at your own life. And when it does, you do all you can to get away with it, and eventually to leave it, but never forget it. You do all you can to remember, to remember.

I still haven't thrown away the clothes I wore that day and probably never will. My red balaclava remains tucked away in some drawer alongside some photographs of you and I before it happened, before we became so intoxicated with one another that we failed to differentiate between where you ended and I began. I suppose that a life of crime was only natural for two people who lacked true understanding of anything besides one another.

SKYLAR
FIEBRICH

The air was crisp that fatal morning, and I remember thinking that I was stupid for asking if you were cold. If I'm honest, I don't know why we tried to rob that convenience store, we had all we needed, but maybe that was the problem. When an empty afternoon

locks ties with insanity, chaos follows, and it did.

The moment was fast, and hard to keep up with, and as you reached for the register cash, I recall thinking it was already too late to warn you about the outline of a gun surging out from the worker's pocket. I only initially noticed the hole in my shirt because of the noise, not the pain and as you glanced over, worry tainting the light blue of your eyes, we started to run, and run, and run. I clutched the hole in my chest and your hand, and surged forward out from the store and into the parking lot. We stumbled into the car, and quickly drove off, and I felt ridiculous and alive. I recall our parting conversation, and when the doctors told me alone that I would be fine. The feeling of saying goodbye even now still feels too familiar, but we no longer have our youth to act like fools.

Tri-Tone Tri-Tone

By Xavier Holub

As a kid I always thought if I hid under my blanket then the ghosts couldn't get to me. Was it too childish for me to be trying that now? Maybe.

My phone kept buzzing and, for a brief second or two, lighting up the inside of my little safe space that was held up entirely by my own body. I clung to my phone, my nails digging into it, leaving small marks in the case. I didn't really care. It felt nice to pierce something.

Ughhh.

I had to do it at some point. For now, I could at least... look at the messages. Just look. I swiped open my phone and opened my texts to find out what I already knew.

They were from her. All fifteen of them.

At the very least it felt like my blanket was keeping her specter from touching me. But still, it lingered there, just outside of reach but practically stabbing through with her awareness that despite my lack of responses, I was still here.

I didn't want to read them. I really didn't. And I probably never would of I hadn't been stupid enough to open my phone, making it so all I had to do was let my eyes wander just a little bit until it was too late and I had already read the entire thing. I could hear her voice now, speaking to me in that same cheerful tone despite the sound having to pass through my blanket.

"Hey! How's your weekend going?" The first message echoed through my head, then my entire body. I started shaking. It kept going.

"I found this flower. It made me think of you."

"Check out this new song! I think you'd like it." The phantom sent a chill so thick it could freeze me even with my cover. My teeth were chattering.

"Hey. I miss you. Could we hang tomorrow?" And there it was. I was horrified.

"Hello?"

Petrified.

"You there?"

My breathing was everywhere.

"Please text me back."

I felt like I was going to die.

I made an opening in my blanket fort by lifting the cover. The cold flooded in, washed over me as the ghost stuck her gnarly claws inside and lightly grazed my skin. I hurled my phone outside and slammed the cover back down. The ghost wailed. So did I.

I'll try again tomorrow.



Inspired by Ghost by nelward

Art by Reed Kracher

MORE FRIGHTFUL THAN BEING A HITCHHIKER; PICKING UP STRANGERS BY MILLA DEUR



ART BY MILLA WENRICH

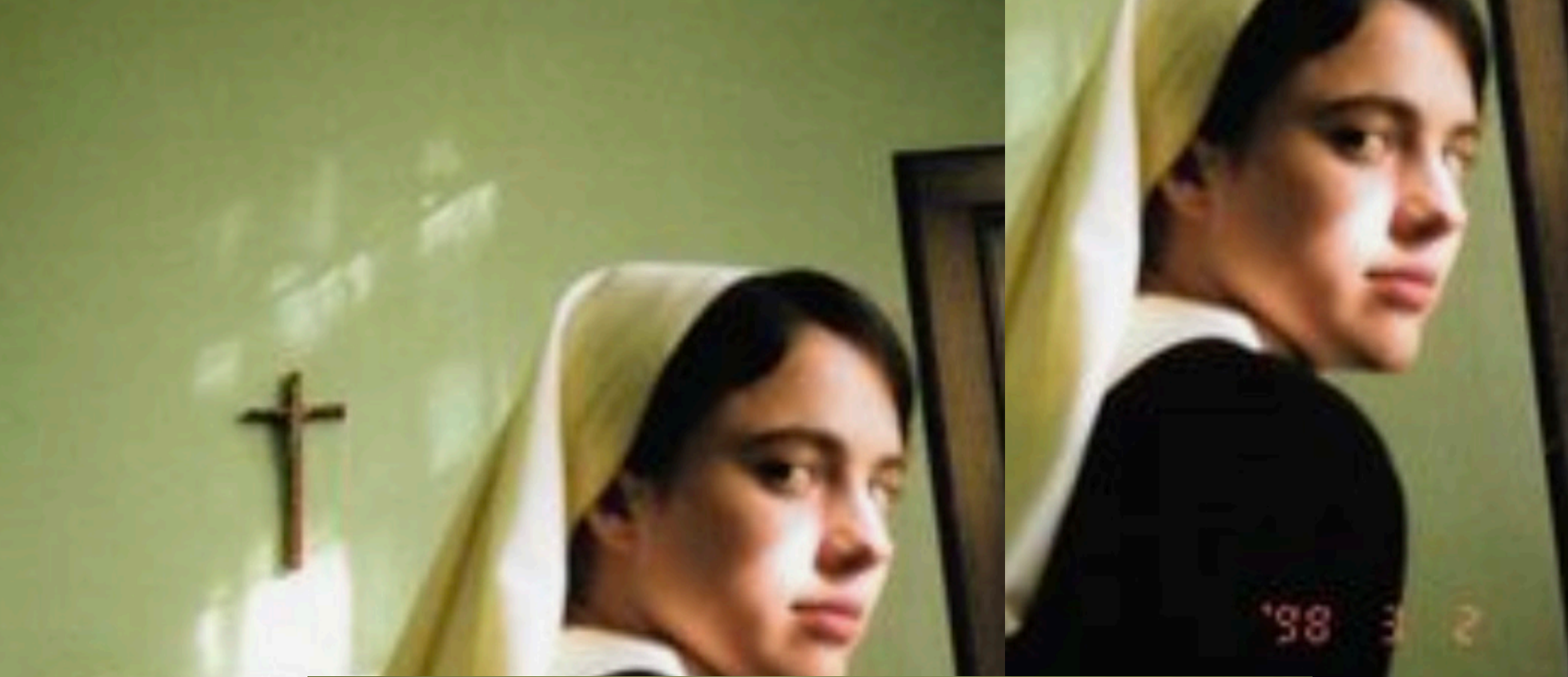
INSPIRED BY BACK PACK
BY ANDREW JACKSON JIHAD

I was driving on a long and barren road, it was nearing night as the sun was hitting the horizon. I was on a long and barren road, nothing for miles, so I thought it quite odd when I saw him walking up from the middle distance. I slowed my truck as it neared him, coming to a full stop when he was at my window. I had to get out of the truck to hear him, 18-wheelers are pretty tall, and I didn't want him to have to shout. He seemed very distraught and his clothes were all dirtied, I couldn't tell if he was covered in blood or mud. When my head was level with his he asked if I had a phone he could use, and I said "No, but even if I did there wouldn't be service."

I offered to drive him to the nearest town. He seemed very rattled by whatever he had come from, so he just nodded. I opened up the passenger seat for him and he jumped in. On the ride he didn't say a word. I asked his name, but he said nothing, just stared straight ahead, down the road.

Eventually my truck reached the town, he got out before we reached the first gas station. The next thing I knew, I was reading the next day's paper and seeing his face on the front page. He was arrested for the murder of his late girlfriend.





THE DRUNK

Xavier Holub



Though the cathedral's old stone walls had become cracked and covered in vines, they still stood proudly to provide shelter to vagabonds and all those seeking spiritual liberation. Every morning at six a.m. sharp, just as the tower bell began to ring, the doors would unlock and the central lobby would be flooded by dozens of pilgrims scrambling to the mess table where the nuns had orderly laid out the pastries they had baked only a few hours earlier. The smell of flour, sugar, and butter would linger in the old building for the rest of the day. In this way, all mornings would begin at the abbey, where prophets gathered, lived, died and lived again.

Sister Azalea watched over this ritual every morning as she swept the halls outside the lobby. She always found it odd, but as a nun it was her duty to never question these things, especially since they were in the name of charity. She simply continued on with her work, meticulously collecting dust and keeping the building as clean as her spirit was, supposedly.

Her thoughts were entirely retracted into herself when a loud banging noise suddenly brought her back. As she flinched and dropped her broom, she snapped her head to look towards the source of the sound.

Hardly standing up straight in the cathedral's doorway was an intimidating looking figure. She watched the wanderer stumble his way over to the offering table, where he grabbed a handful of pastries and, through a half full mouth, began to spit out words the poor sister could not understand. She slowly approached the man, noticing the drops of golden dew trapped in his thick stubble. He constantly swayed back and forth, but his eyes lit up when he noticed the nun. Through coughs, this messiah began to preach his sermon. The sister took a step back, but found herself drawn into his slurred speech. His throat, coated in alcohol, gave his words that same intoxicating property as they traveled up through his body. With gracefully weaved nonsense, the prophet could inflict an enlightened state that only wavered if you took the time to think about it. Azalea chose not to.

And as simple as that, the prophet found himself with a new follower.

The drunk stumbled his way out of the abbey with a swath of disciples behind him on their way to communion.

The Drunk by Kiltro



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