

Writer's Block

WINTER 2025



51st ISSUE

Students' Magazine for Writing, Art, and Photography

Content

Editorial	3
Butterfly of Spring (poetry) Mykyta Ryzhykh	4
Old-Fashioned Rituals (poetry)	
Dito Khupenia, Nestan Nikouradze	5
QUINCE VODKA (poetry) Cole Forster	6
LABOUR DAY FIREWORKS (poetry) Daniel Bliss	7
Domino Box (poetry) Hadley-James Hoyles	8
When I Was in Highschool (poetry) Viola Ferrante	9
Street Photographs (photography) Robert Casella	12
Meet Me While the Sun Sets (poetry) Akshita Singh	16
Icebreaker (poetry) Julia Fausing	17
River (short story) Rebecca Pyle	18
Salt Lake City (poetry) James Croal Jackson	20
Budapest (poetry) Yuval Gila'd	21
Last One (poetry) Richard Dinges, Jr.	22
Charnel Pastoral (poetry) Sara Atwater	23
Sofa Boat (poetry) Aaron Simpson-Bean	24
Farmstead (poetry) Richard Dinges, Jr.	25
The Room With the Flowers on the Walls (poetry)	
Naomi Pacifique	26
Aesthetics (poetry) – Rizwan Akhtar	28
This Winter (poetry) – Rizwan Akhtar	29
Spectacle (poetry) – Dominik Slusarczyk	30

Want to contribute to our next issue? Please send us your submissions via submissions@writersblockmagazine.com

More information on submission guidelines can be found on our website writersblockmagazine.com

For weekly updates on articles and events, follow us on our Instagram page [@writersblockmag](https://www.instagram.com/writersblockmag)

Colofon

Editorial Board

Editors-in-chief

Francisca Figueiras Meinedo

Lhya Munive

Graphic Design and Illustrations

Robin van Minnen

General Editors

Aleksandra Szcześniak

Arthur Mulder

Emilia Rieth

Raquel Rodríguez Mulero

Robin van Minnen

Sofie Woetmann Fredeløkke

Contributors

Aaron Simpson-Bean

Akshita Singh

Cole Forster

Daniel Bliss

Dito Khupenia, Nestan

Nikouradze

Dominik Slusarczyk

Hadley-James Hoyles

James Croal Jackson

Julia Fausing

Mykyta Ryzhykh

Naomi Pacifique

Rebecca Pyle

Richard Dinges, Jr.

Rizwan Akhtar

Robert Casella

Sara Atwater

Viola Ferrante

Yuval Gila'd

I seldom know where I'm headed, but if the story is meant to be, you cross over to the other side - you're inside it, and there's an engine.

Jhumpa Lahiri

The sentiment of feeling blocked has haunted every single person that enjoys writing at least once in their journey. The frustration of having something to say yet being unable to transform these thoughts into words puts a damper on the personal journey of writing. The aftermath of this blockade, once this block vanishes into thin air and the words start flowing, articulating themselves seamlessly, often results in many beautiful projects. And that is when our magazine comes into the scene.

Writer's Block yearns to house fantastic works of writing, giving a voice to those who share the passion for writing. From beautiful well-versed poems to enticing short stories, Issue 51 is a curation of pieces that our board invites you to read and contemplate, hoping it provokes joy and perhaps even the inspiration you need to dissolve your own blocks.

With the turbulence of a shifting editorial board and feeling blocked sometimes even during our work on the magazine, we are proud to continue to offer a place for these works of writing and photography to be remembered. Amid laughs, frustrations, and many moments of creative mismatches, we are proud of our team's strength and commitment to creating such a wonderful platform for those who want to share their stories. We are forever dedicated to the continuation of our most important tradition: offering a creative platform where writers from any part of the world can find a safe haven for their pieces. For their poems, their short stories, their reviews – their art. We are immensely grateful for everyone who chose to be part of this beautiful story; this magazine would be nothing without its visionary writers, its devoted readers, and its committed board.

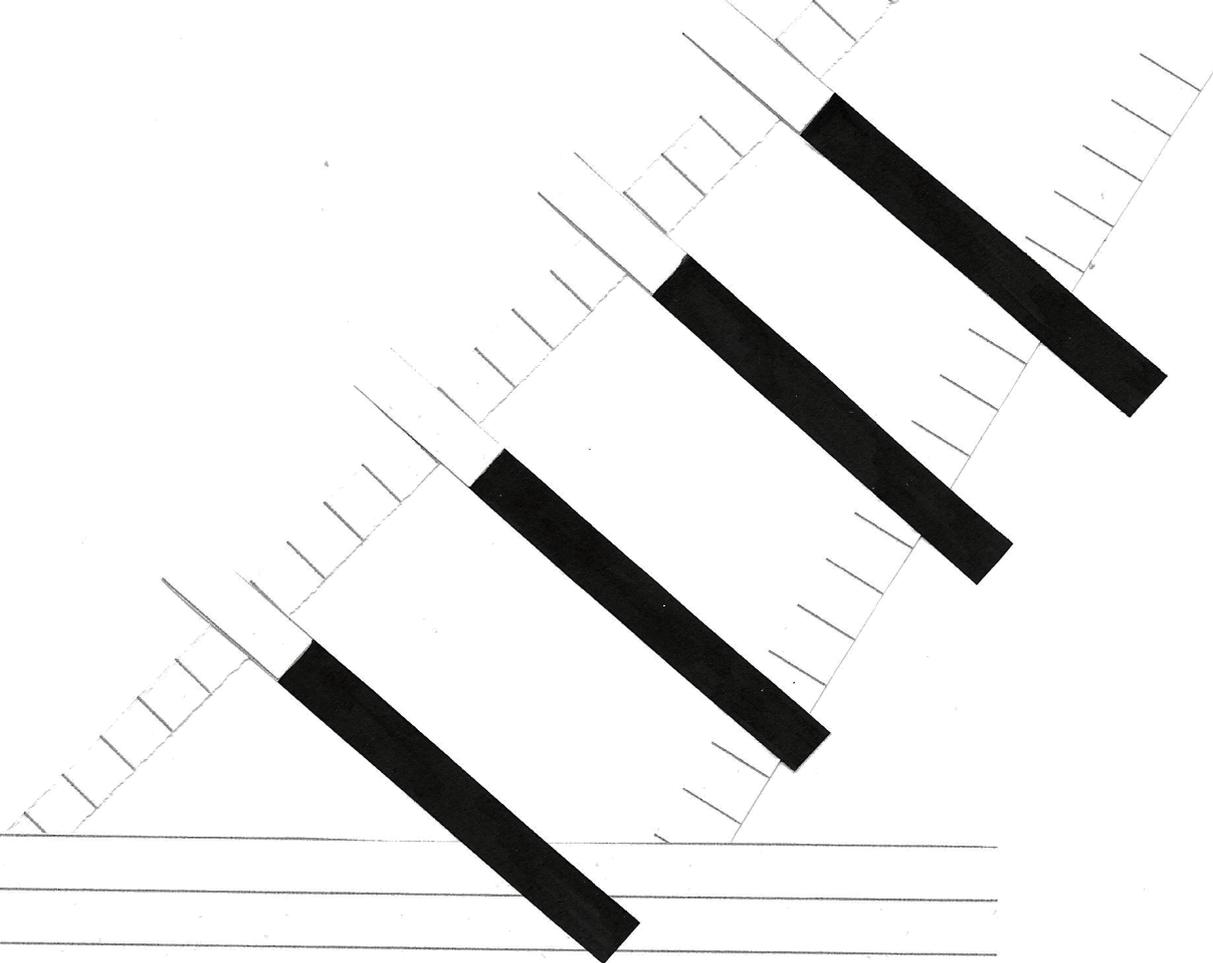
Despite the twists and turns, we move forward as stubbornly and passionately as ever. Issue 51 is now yours to cherish.

The Writer's Block team

Butterfly of Spring

butterfly of spring
and you are still sitting in a dungeon
my little dragon

Mykyta Ryzhykh



Old-Fashioned Rituals

Like dead insects inside a flooded cellar
memories of days, floated up to my mind:
when my heavy hand was still sliding down on your spine,
as if on train tracks.

Later, your legs- like a general's shoulder marks
on my own body- I adorned
for the last battle before sleep.

Poem by Dito Khupenia

Translation by Nestan Nikouradze

QUINCE VODKA

She wanted me to do sports, to pierce the mellow cocoon
of self-pity with her plain admonishment.

“Do sports.”

Isn't walking a sport?

Isn't the crude benevolence I feign toward strangers a sport?

Isn't guilt a sport?

Roll the blunt end of your vanity and
disrupt me like a new market.

You're good at that right?

You could tear it all down right?

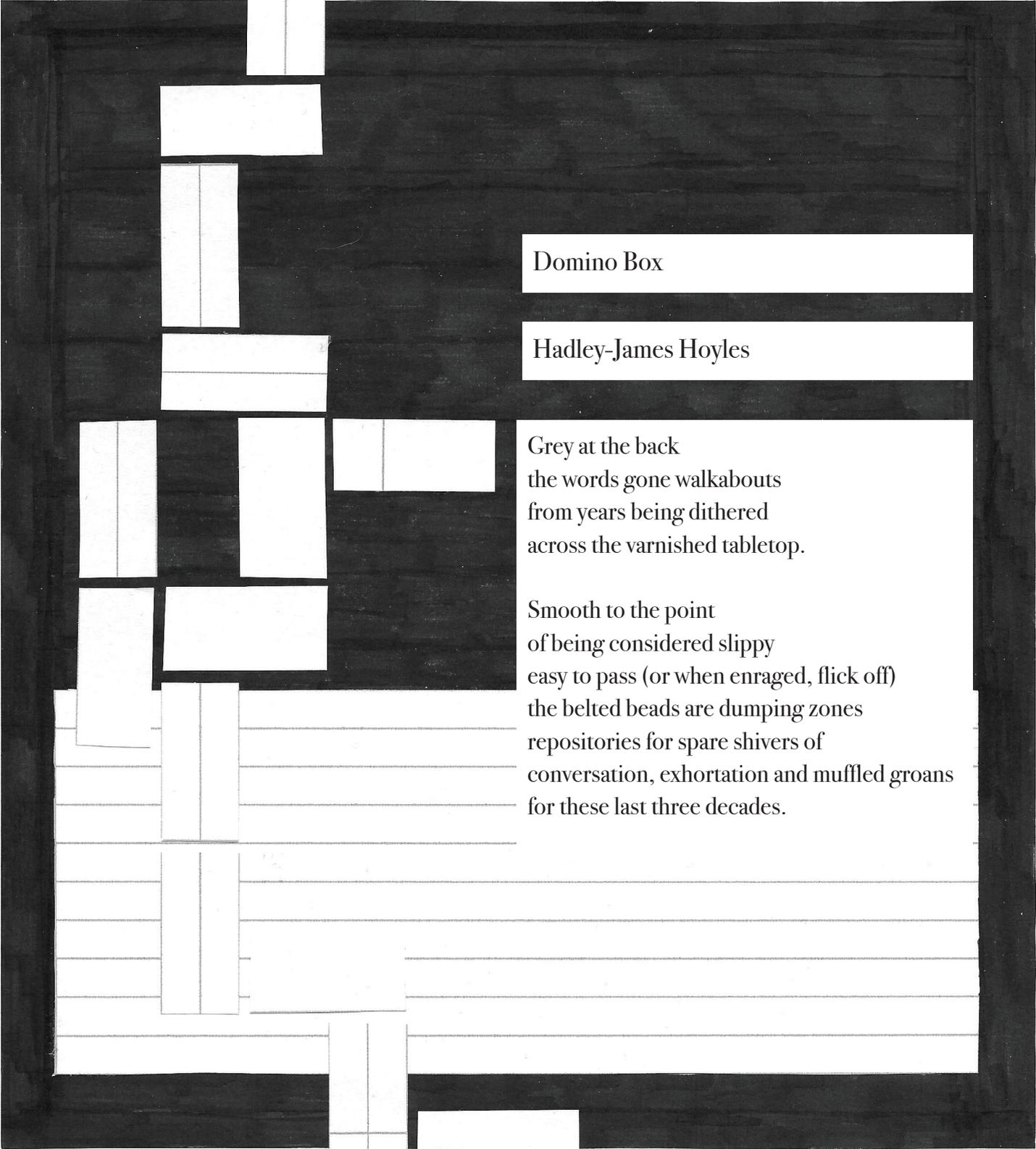
Cole Forster



LABOUR DAY FIREWORKS

Gunpowder stars rain down
on the park as sunset erupts
mixing with wildfire smoke
choking the country through summer.
Eyes shut tight to bursting lights
trying to keep my thoughts whole
protecting a mind from itself.
Saskatoon's aging me faster
than anywhere else ever has.
You place my name alongside profanities
screaming things we both know
I don't deserve and you'll blame
on vices and your mother through
messages sent just beyond dawn.
Interpret to tell you about a friend
who died a day before in Galveston
only thirty-eight not far from who we are.
Through a laugh you tell
me to bother a therapist
before digressing words
to try and bind you and I
into what was left in May.
Time apart was meant
to allow us to decide
on one story or at least
find a form of forgetting
instead of wondering why
I came back at all.

Daniel Bliss



Domino Box

Hadley-James Hoyles

Grey at the back
the words gone walkabouts
from years being dithered
across the varnished tabletop.

Smooth to the point
of being considered slippy
easy to pass (or when enraged, flick off)
the belted beads are dumping zones
repositories for spare shivers of
conversation, exhortation and muffled groans
for these last three decades.

When I Was in Highschool

Viola Ferrante

When i was in high school
I had an electrified fianco_ hip
A man had put it there
And it never left
We had no family
The 7 dwarf the seven
sisters
the beauty of a rotten lip
crimson joy
and drowning in piss.
7777

Like ants we moved
In the little dark narrow dirty streets
And Una danced
With her bare feet
On the pieces of broken moon
Glass
Agia stood strong
Tiptoeing
Broad and warm shoulders
For elia and noila the mirror
FEMENINE she is!

Oh, teach me sister

I want the cards

And PLAY

I sat

Witch>

Narrator, I looked their prose

Tomorrow we shall laugh.

.

Is my poetry too strong or meaningless I shall ask, pity shameful I am

Tell me lover

o o o

I will tell you our story, as you deserve and I complain.

Once there was two

Of three and then ten.

Meaningless numbers

number of beers each

The love we felt and the passion we Yelled At the orange blue sky of our deep coun-

try

So young and damned.

All in love

Are u thinking of breasts?

One of us!

One of us!

Take the glass,
Spit the beer,
Laugh,
Drink,
Kiss,
Fuck
In the alley in the bar,
Call him stupid,
Make me laugh,
Curly hair,
SPLASH!

Am I prolonging the story my beautiful chevalier man? U can't understand
Have u had your hidden eye
Open to the earth?
Walking home, sun rising,
Glass spouting.
I Am Alive
We the gorgon sisters.









Meet Me Whilst the Sun Sets

Akshita Singh

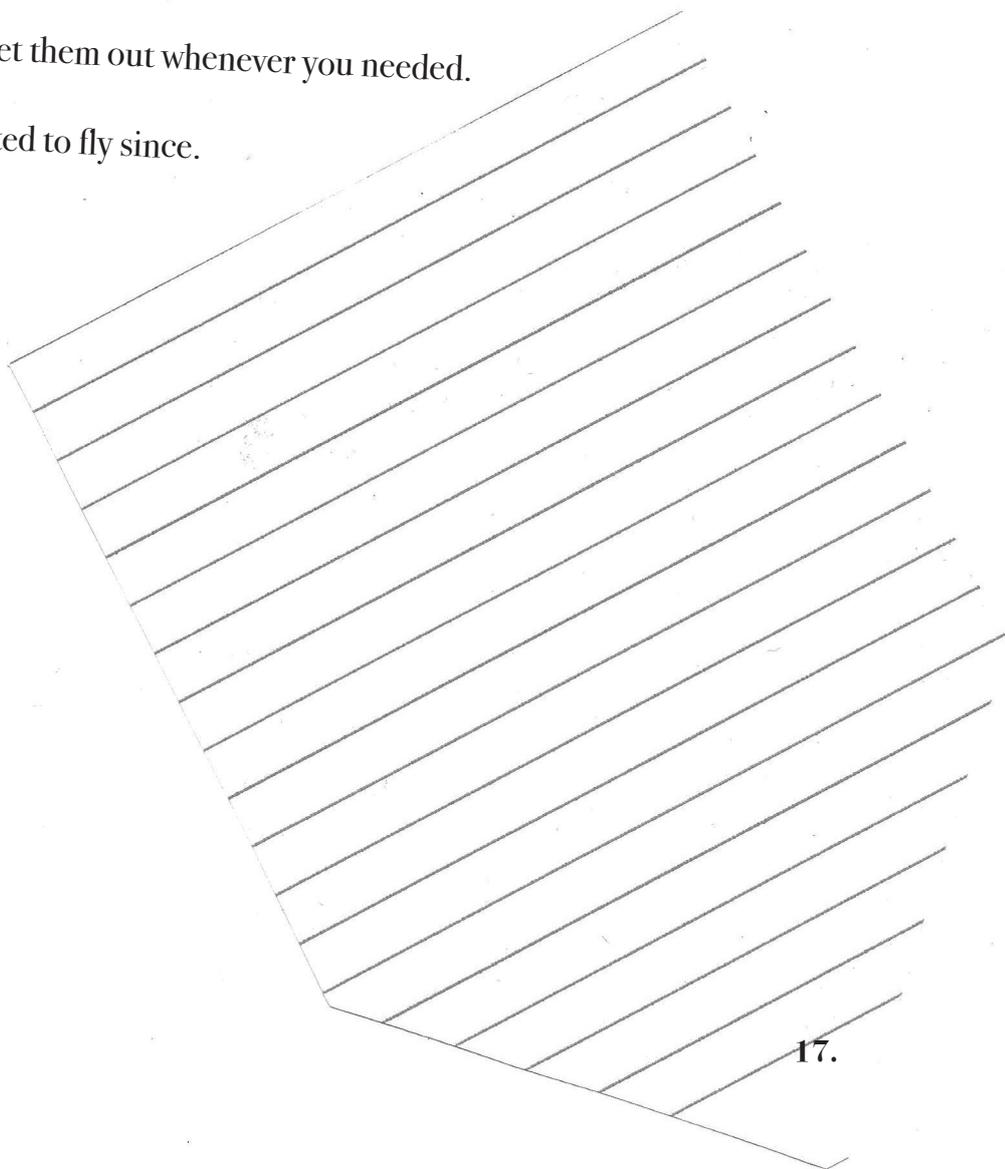
Meet me, my heart whilst the sun sets,
And the cold night's still away;
For soon the yellow-orange hues,
To dismal dark, will give way;
The warmth stolen from the sky,
The small balls of fire arise;
Yet not enough to thaw us both,
And set our souls alight;
The clouds will then trap the sun,
With coal-dark, lightning strikes;
And you and I, my dear,
Would not meet tonight;
So, meet me whilst the sun sets,
And fiery moods have not adjourned;
For if we miss this moment,
It will not ever return.

Icebreaker

we went around the room,
stating our names and preferred superpowers.
you said you'd like to have
tiny versions
of the people you love
in your pocket
so you could get them out whenever you needed.

I've never wanted to fly since.

Julia Fausing



River

Just as, decades ago, she'd believed a truck with a certain name on it, a name of a dream which had been fine and then wasted and then stolen through someone's else glory and someone else's fault—was, glowing, waiting, by the side of the road, a sign and a promise, and it (mostly) was—now she was sure there was a dark boat moving toward her. In the day. Not the night. Toward the boat she was on.

The boat had the words *Youth is Strong*, like an oracle, around the curving part of its front, the part that was the pointed arrow of the boat, the part that could choose where to go, the part where the anxious driver of the boat always sat, unless they were distracted. Other than these words, which floated awkwardly and white, a strange title, the boat was a flat, deep green darkness, as if the soul of the riverbed had been boiled and condensed into its hull.

Large birds were doing their awkward flapping, moving wherever their current anxieties were telling them to move, across the water and in the eddies near the Mississippi which looked like the Seine, moody and rippling as if there were a million irritable fish near its surface. These rivers, since trucks came and cars, and slow horses were gone, felt ignored: like a heart that ran, but for who? Like a lover now ninety and near the end of his life, surely, best forgotten, his memories faulty; whatever he might say could be troubling, could remind you that much of love is a desperate diver who gives away part of his soul every plunge, in exchange for something he is slowly realizing is not enough: he was a foolish diver, sacrificing too much, causing, by the end of his life, damage to himself.

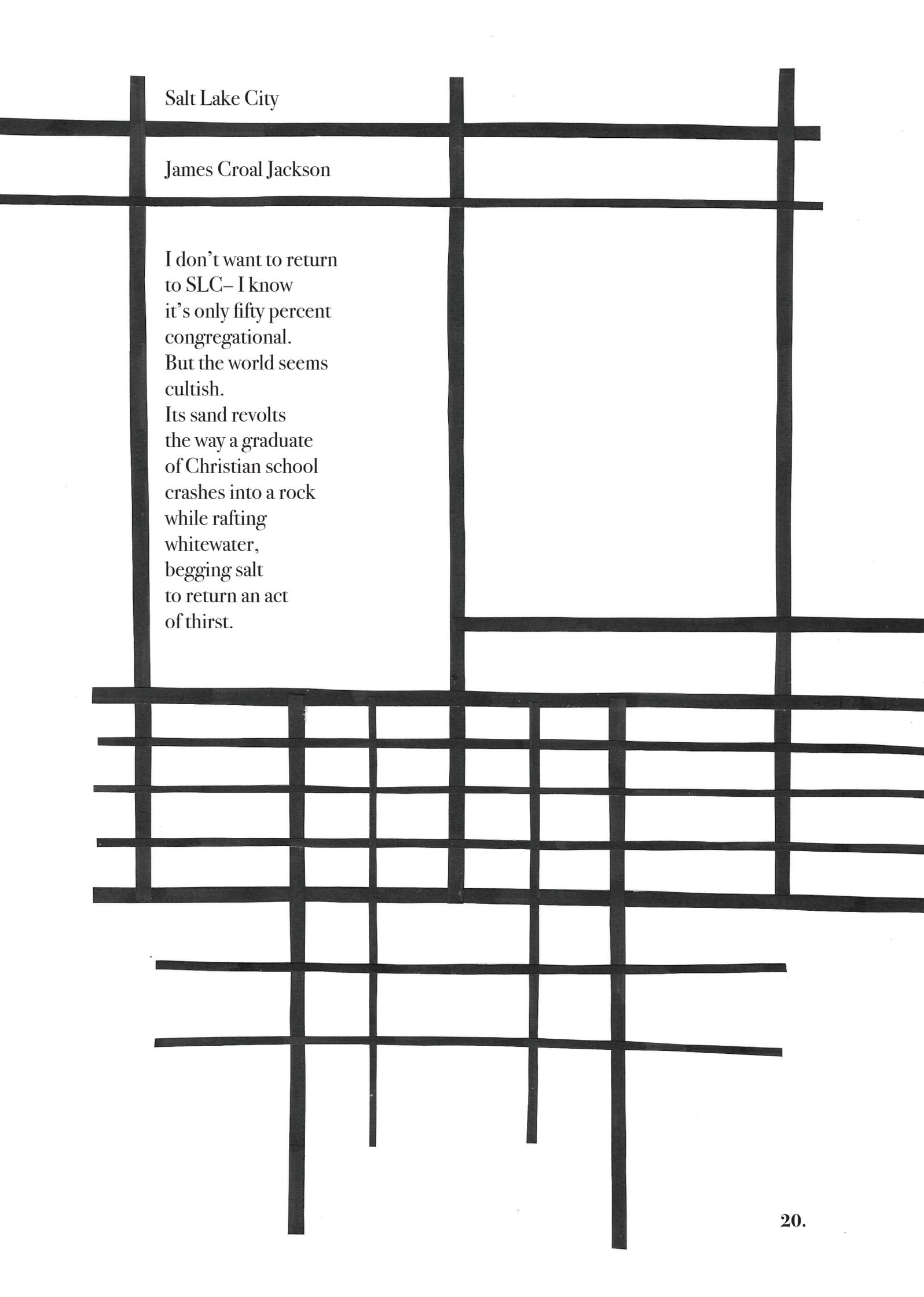
The man in this boat that seemed to be cartoonishly outlined was not young or old. He, whose face was as unsad as a map, was heading across the river. It was not easy to go across the river. How pale his skin was! He must never have done this before! Much easier would have been going with the river, wherever it wanted to go, ending up eventually where it always ended up, and finishing the difficult day, taking tourists to places Tom and Huck and Jim and Becky had likely been, if they were real people.

The clouds seemed to have sharp-cornered shapes. Wafts of soft white turning to almost cutting corners signaling the wind was moving faster, faster, signaling the clouds didn't have much interest in hanging in the air around the river. The clouds wanted to get to the plains and eventually pour themselves into the ground, their jobs done. They wanted to start over as clouds again.

He was handing her a canvas sack. The sack was very old but beautiful, dirty, never washed, with words printed into the canvas which meant something historical or hopeful about a company, but she couldn't read the words, only saw a fancy "W" and two cursive letters which were twinned and alike, and then the sack was rolled over again like a cloud, jumbling the red-printed words. The letters were bordered in dark blue. *Look at me*, said a company's name. But she wasn't looking. She was looking at him and wondering why there wasn't much expression on his face—just watchfulness.

It's full of money, he said, and he smiled. *All I have*.

Rebecca Pyle



Salt Lake City

James Croal Jackson

I don't want to return
to SLC— I know
it's only fifty percent
congregational.
But the world seems
cultish.
Its sand revolts
the way a graduate
of Christian school
crashes into a rock
while rafting
whitewater,
begging salt
to return an act
of thirst.

Budapest

Budapest
does not remember a thing.
The Arrow Cross fascist Party
Did not exist
Nobody was thrown into the river
tied to another person with a bullet in
his head
The Danube is so wide
That it can wash away in minutes
tree logs, human bones or rocks
from one country to another
Every city has a soul
and the soul of Budapest
caused the poet Attila Jozsef
to lay his head
on railway tracks
as if they were pillows.
Sorrow is capable of love
but that of Budapest
Is vicious.
Bored German tourists
drink cold beer in hot springs
The Euro is an enlightened coin
thrown into a hat of a Romano
playing the accordion on Erzsebet
bridge.
Budapest is depressed.
In the darkness of no emotions,
A celebrating sad city
does not remember a thing

Yuval Gila'd

Last One

Richard Dinges, Jr.

In an ancient arc,
sunlight guides wind
back and forth
across this lonely rock,
a thin skin I burrow,
first a warm embrace
and then a cold slap
in my face. I worship
none and pray to
neither, my own antecedents
who wrapped their arms
around this fearsome
glory long forgotten
when I breathe in
the last wisp of wind.

How would you savor it:

a sunlit field, warm with
particles of foam and starch?

Devour it right away, crouching
over ligaments and a heart faintly
beating?

I think you'd let it slip away.
Unable to digest eerie beginnings,
the how-it-came-about:

free of charge, without the specter
of fulfillment that sleeps with one eye
open beside your pillow.

Inside the question creeps a scornful last try.
Thorny, barbed, calling you back or

to throw you *off*.

On the charnel lawn, where bodies no
longer mingle intact, the question dithers.

You stutter at the S in my name. Stumbling
sideways towards the charnel ground where
our bodies might meet.

Meat unrecognizable.

Undead.

Not yet devoured.

How would you welcome it:

with a vulture's patient desire,
an eclipsing sun at your back?

Inside the question
a reckless caress.

You'll discard it before
reaching the jackal that waits

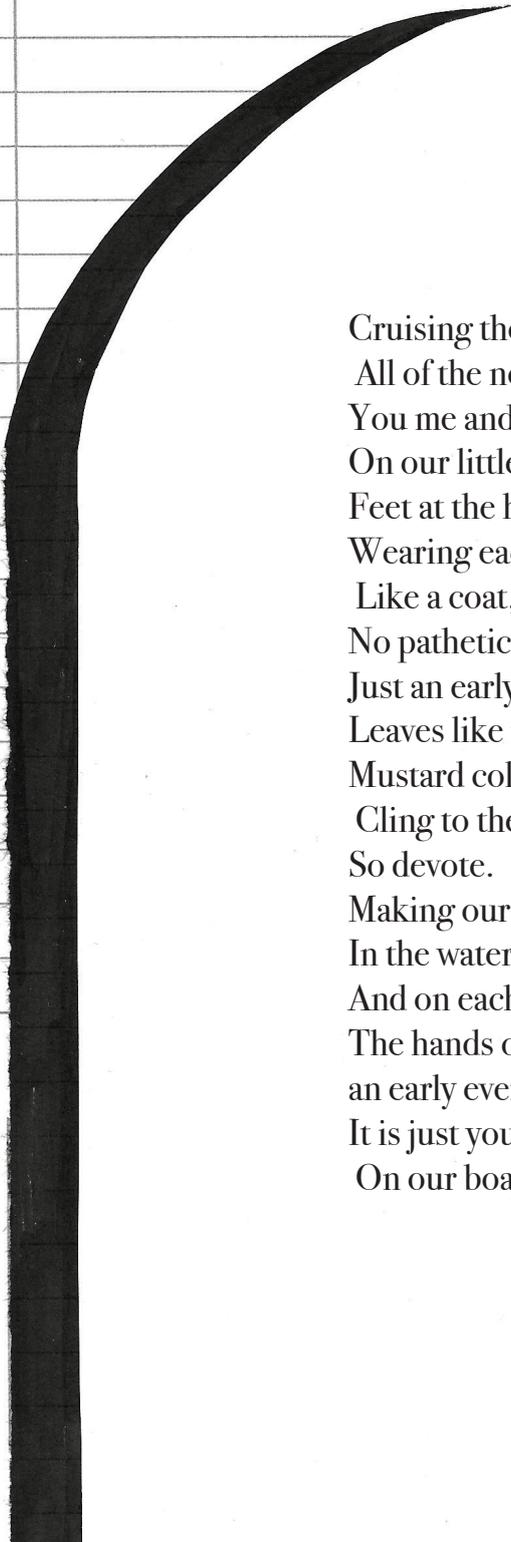
at the gate.

Charnel Pastoral

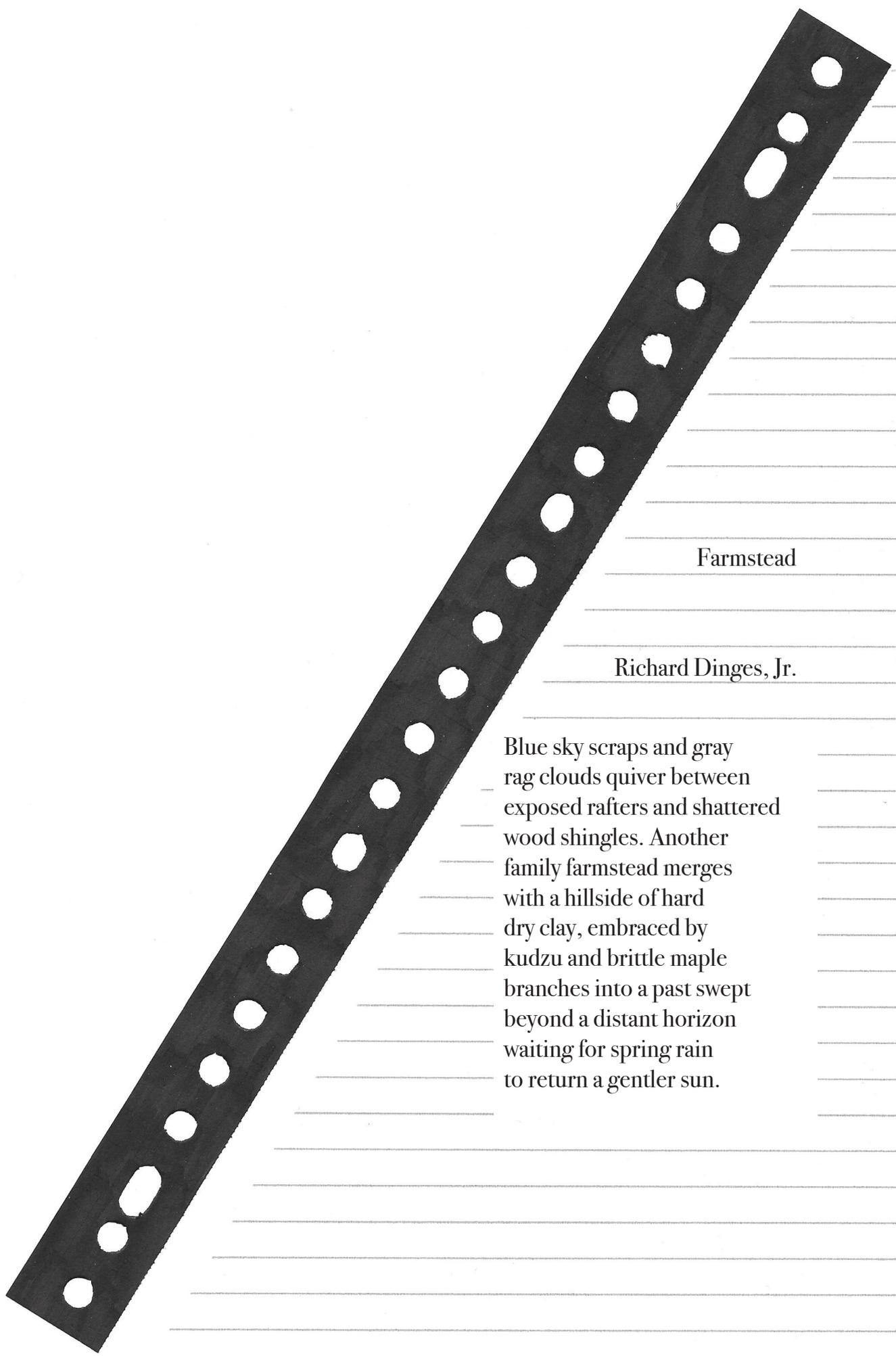
Sara Atwater

Sofa Boat

Aaron Simpson-Bean



Cruising the murky public waterway
All of the necessities afloat,
You me and the sofa
On our little boat.
Feet at the helm,
Wearing each others arms
Like a coat,
No pathetic fallacy
Just an early autumn anecdote.
Leaves like mustard
Mustard coloured freckles
Cling to the ripples,
So devote.
Making our own ripples
In the water
And on each others skin,
The hands of
an early evening wrote.
It is just you me and the sofa
On our boat.



Farmstead

Richard Dinges, Jr.

Blue sky scraps and gray
rag clouds quiver between
exposed rafters and shattered
wood shingles. Another
family farmstead merges
with a hillside of hard
dry clay, embraced by
kudzu and brittle maple
branches into a past swept
beyond a distant horizon
waiting for spring rain
to return a gentler sun.

The Room With the Flowers on the Walls

1. there is a room on the ground floor
the window
just about works, and
you can use it as a door.

2. the room is expansive
see
if you turn the TV on
and watch the program in which couples
date and un-date one another,
the space grows.

if you touch the other in the toes
and in the thigh
the belly button
the penis,
the mouth –
the space grows.

3. let me also suggest sardines
left in lime juice
for 15 minutes
to eat on the sheets, white.

before the eyes.
if you
stare
in the other's eyes
two, three, minutes
the room is huge
so big that it is no longer there
the dark takes over
engulfs
the light is soft
everything
is gone.

4. who can say what
time is
you've begun the sentence
and it has already moved
on

or
inflated-
with
disappeared-
into
look,
I love you
I love you.

5. what is that – *love*?
being inhabited-by
inhabiting
being.
look
how many shades
can you give
the colour white?

6. the room is in a village
somewhere
in the North of Spain
where your car might get stuck
in the port for the day
and you may have to re-think
your schedule.

the elderly men meet to fish in the evening
at the water's edge
as do the kids, fighting for the weights
and baits he brings them.

in the bar at the top of the slope, across
the church on the square, you stop for *sidra*.
the crowd is watching a football match on TV
and outside it is getting darker. space here
is dense.

you would like to say
things
you cannot, because
you don't speak the language so well
and anyways, you are not sure that words
for these things you want to express

exist.

Aesthetics

You are a sunlight simmering
on dust-worn leaves waiting for
a rain lost behind flat long skies
on dry patches silence shrined

barely buried in a rumpled dress
by implication the fate of a word
is to be obsolete afterwards but
its echo survives in big rooms

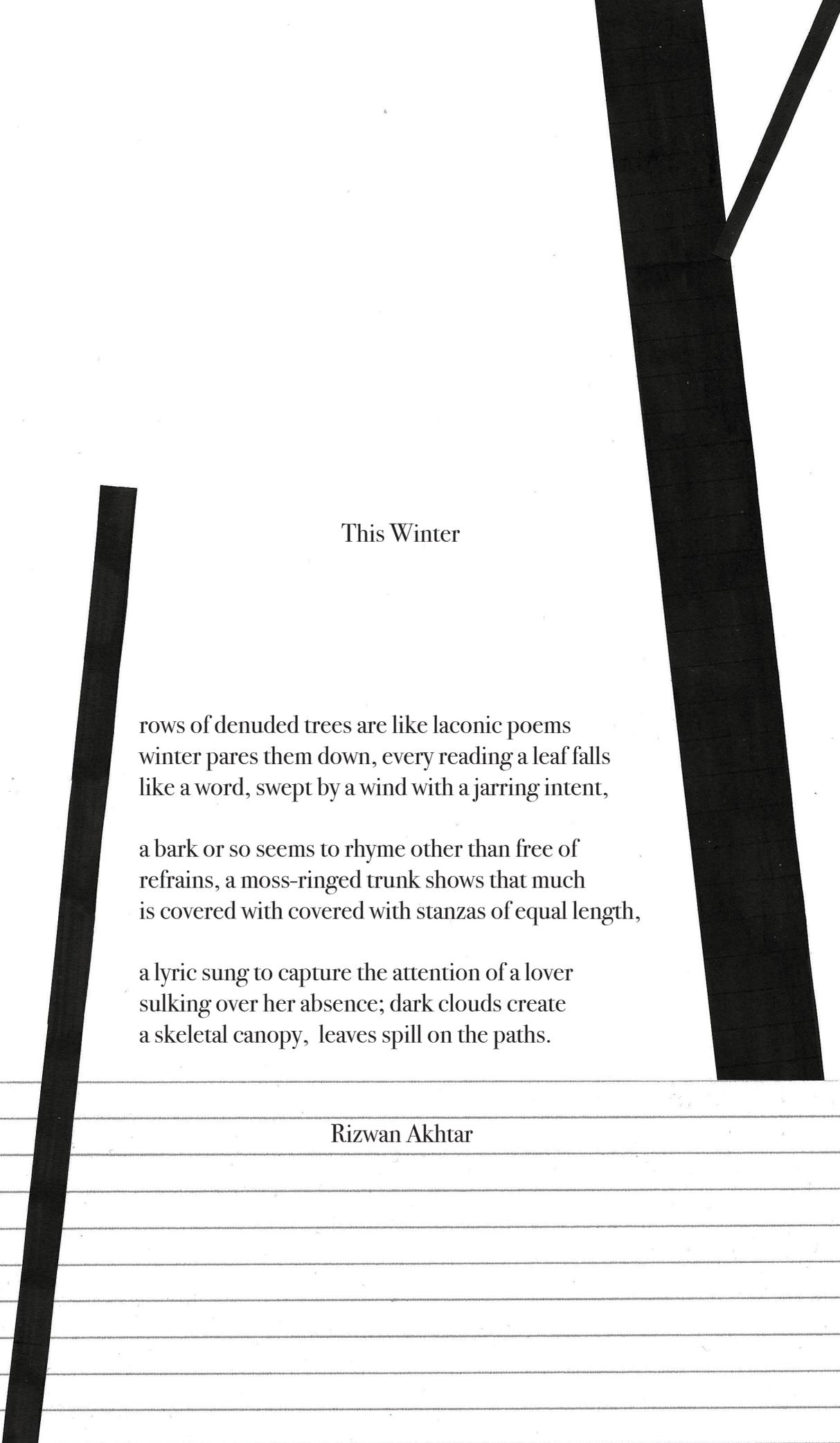
beeping monitors controlled
monsters defanged creatures
claim your body leaving out
fingers on black keyboards

palpitating nights in driveways
edges of roads histories refuse to
live same as files once corrupted
do not open and make you a clown

heavy with levity of details of your
private pause in a park or city's
dead end makes you a recluse
but early morning garbage men

rattle the utopia engraved on
many cards in your wallet you
would wish to lose and confine
to a bench withering beautifully.

Rizwan Akhtar



This Winter

rows of denuded trees are like laconic poems
winter pares them down, every reading a leaf falls
like a word, swept by a wind with a jarring intent,

a bark or so seems to rhyme other than free of
refrains, a moss-ringed trunk shows that much
is covered with covered with stanzas of equal length,

a lyric sung to capture the attention of a lover
sulking over her absence; dark clouds create
a skeletal canopy, leaves spill on the paths.

Rizwan Akhtar

Spectacle

My dragon is
Better than
Your dragon.

Dominik Slusarczyk

WB

WRITER'S BLOCK

*Students' magazine for
writing, film & literature*