

Feb 2020

# ABSYNTHÉ

---

Trent's Alternative Press

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

OUR CENTER FOLD,

**// RED //**

STORIES,

**07 // THE CAR CRASH**

**11 // A STOLEN HEART**

POETRY,

**14 // FORGOTTEN**

& MORE ...



# CONTENTS

04 // SUBARBAN DREAMS  
ZACHARY BARMANIA

06 // GASOLINE AND COFFEE BEANS  
& FROZEN GLITTER  
REMI AKERS

07 // THE CAR CRASH  
MARIA TOEWS

10 // TO THE ALL THAT BOYS THAT LOVED ME  
NAOMI WOLF

11 // A STOLEN HEART  
JAMIE-BOYD ROBINSON

14 // FORGOTTEN  
KAVYA CHANDRA

16 // RED  
NAOMI WOLF

18 // THE WITCHING HOUR  
JAMIE-BOYD ROBINSON

19 // THEATRE OF THE FORGOTTEN & LEAVE HIM  
JAMIE-BOYD ROBINSON

20 // LOTTERY TICKETS  
MELCHIOR DUDLEY

24 // THIS POEM HAS NO TITLE  
SPENCER WELLS

25 // CONTAGION  
BRAYDEN KNOX

28 // THE READING ROOM  
KELSEY GUINDON

31 // OUR TEAM

---

# SUBURBAN DREAMS

Zachary Barmania



I started the walk up Government Street towards its intersection with Prince Edward Drive, my home street. I've made this trek countless times, at all different hours, and states of mind. My friends Ethan and Dylan have lived in this neighbourhood as long as I have, and they knew each other since boyhood. I joined them in high school. Very little divided our homes, and even less divided our natures. Gravel filled the potholes, silent trees the lawn, cool blue air the sky. I crossed the road into the shadow of the school, Lambton-Kingsway, where I grew up. So many fantasies lived out in that park, in the garden beside the road, beneath magenta blossoms. For every fantasy there was an injustice, a tantrum. I can't even begin to address the moments of boredom that have eroded from my mind, the contentment I didn't know I felt. I was a true acorn, though I may always think this of myself. I turned left at the intersection, beneath the humming yellow 'yield' sign, no doubt the highlight of some local mother's political career. It's in this moment I feel the anatomical presence of fear, the termites in my bones. I breathe deep of silence, and let it pass. It's a straight shot, ten minutes up the road. Slightly drunk, slightly stoned, the stairway stretches to the horizon, the distant lights of Bloor, beyond the hill, and Queen Anne at its top. The parking lot, scene of countless kiss-and-rides, beckoned to me with agoraphobic pressure, the strange anti-gravity of empty space. I averted my eyes. I ignored the flagpole rattling as it tossed in the stagnant atmosphere. Fear made an Orpheus of me, transfixed forward until I cannot but peak. The statue house loomed ahead across the road. Once the lawn teemed with statues who alarmed me, though now the sight of it all torn up gave me pause. The crocodile kept a basketball in his open mouth, a

---

## Suburban Dreams

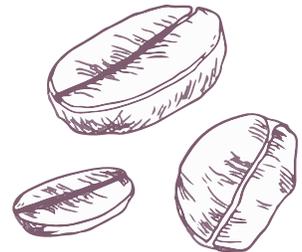
jack-o-lantern at Halloween. How it was ravaged, like a pipe bomb had been unleashed upon the face of Suburbia. That was my father's childhood, not mine. How far we've come: father grew up fearing the IRA, I grew to fear a statue, and a parking lot. And the Shale Pit. It was once a quarry, dug to supply the fledgling neighbourhood with building material. Houses rose from the mudstone. Families filled the homes, and ghosts filled the Pit. A layer of soil, two baseball diamonds and a sandbox were all it took to turn the Pit into a park. Minors replaced miners, and now the ghosts only creep in shrouded in the morning mist. I beheld the dawn there, once. The darkness awakened something primeval, the lizard that holds my brain-stem, and takes control when I panic. I'll often cross the road away from the park, but not tonight. Tonight I proceed, but I never look in. The Faeries dance in my peripheral vision, but my ignorance holds them at bay.

I reach Queen Anne, ducking below the mountain ash tree, her boughs hanging low with the berries of winter. Orange, they are, the street light hums that color, my skin too. Yes, and there is the house where once I saw a coyote. It was a rush of fear, the bile I long to taste. Now, skunks are the creatures of the night, them and me alone. The hill rolls gently down. I used to have to walk this route with a french horn in tow, and I would rage at my weak arms. I wish I had been a flute kid, they could just leave their instruments in their lockers. I'd forgotten about that. A car slides past me. I cross the street at the end of the decline, and enter the shadow of a long hedgerow. A needley bush, it is, dotted with red berries. Ayesha would just eat random berries, like a crazy person, and they still do. The family that owns this bush, this corner house, must have lots of kids. There are always toys on the lawn. Perhaps it's one man who's simply a messy collector. You never know. The hedgerow ends just before the canopy of a maple begins. Beneath the canopy, tucked into a small hill, is a shale and mortar house. I admire the garden as I pass back into moonlight. Strath. I taught myself to longboard on this street, after they redid the pavement. Smooth and hot as the summer sun, it was. I smoked Rooftop cigarettes here, the first being nothing more than nauseating. I grew into a real smoker, though, in time. I cross the street, and pass the church. You can hear the bells from my backyard, on Sundays and weddings and Easter. I rarely appreciated it. Once, I was alone, warm and content at home, when distant bells were the only music. The corner of Prince Edward and the Kingsway. Mariah lived there, though why that's important I couldn't say. She moved away years ago, decades now, away from my home block. Martin lives across the street, a new family where Anne and Pella once lived. And my house. My house sits on a small rise, which makes it easy to distinguish. A tall pine shades the front lawn, Mom's garden dwells in that shade. Ivy covers the outside like a shaggy beard, the foliage that conceals our windows. I can see glimpses into the living room, empty at this hour. Mom and Dad left a light on for me. As I have countless times, I crossed the lawn, beneath the tree, climbed the three steps, and entered my home.

---

# GASOLINE AND COFFEE BEANS

Can't enjoy the things I did.  
Nothing's ever candid.  
I feel every high and low in reverse,  
As I triple check the contents of my purse  
On my way out the door.  
What the hell do I do that for?



Never one to find thrill in the fight,  
Been more concerned with the softer things than taking flight.  
While you're preoccupied with the material, physical,  
I'm looking at the celestial, finding a metaphorical  
Way to pantomime when I cannot explain  
That which hides in the recesses of my brain.



I've got an itching in my veins  
And a searing migraine  
As I take my last sip of coffee  
Before I savor the beauty of a dying tree,  
So, I can pretend happily that all is pristine  
And comfort myself with the smell of gasoline.

# FROZEN GLITTER

Slam my eyes shut in the light and see red.  
With them open, it's patches of blood on glittery white snow.  
I can't remember a word you said  
As my breath is swept away the way the winds blow.

Tilt my neck and face the sky.  
Find comfort in azure that, in the summer, felt like dread.  
I embrace the sting of the year's coldest day and sigh  
Because, for once, winter is colder than the gnawing in my head.

Remi Akers

---

# THE CAR CRASH

Maria Toews

“We’re back, let’s go,” my Oma commanded as the car door slammed shut. We were on our way to my Uncle and Aunt’s house for a family reunion and my whole body was sore from being in the car for six hours. It had been snowing the entire time and didn’t look like it would stop anytime soon.

“Did you buy anything?” I asked, eager for a donut.

“Just coffee,” my Opa replied, “we needed to buy something or else they wouldn’t let us use the washroom”. With that I knew the steaming, black liquid would remain for the whole trip. My Opa had the philosophy of keeping whatever drink he had to end of the trip.

Hours passed by as I looked out the fogged up window. I was squashed between my brother on my left and my Opa on the right. I had hoped my nose would have gotten used to the stench of my Opa’s horrendous B.O., sadly it only seemed to get worse.

I glanced at the clock. We’d been driving for about seven hours, only one hour left. As my eyes started to glaze over everywhere I looked started to spin. The car turned into chaos as everyone started panicking. My heart froze, as my gut climbed up my throat. The car did several twirls before falling backwards into the ditch. It seemed as though we fell for hours. My head lurched forward then crashed back into the headrest as we came to a rough landing.

Something wet splashed across my face and onto my clothes. I started to panic as I thought we might have fallen into a lake and the window had cracked open. I started thinking of all the ways I could die: hypothermia, drowning, a combination of the two. As my mind went wild with possibilities I looked over to my Opa to see if he expressed the same distress. When I looked over all I saw was a confused man sitting in quiet shock with an empty coffee cup gripped tightly between his hands. As the lukewarm liquid slide down my face and infiltrated my clothes I was grateful; at least I wasn’t going to die.

My Uncle had climbed to the top of the ten foot tall ditch and had been waving his phone around for the past twenty minutes. I looked around to find darkness everywhere. I shivered as I realized the car was slowly losing heat and my coat was in the trunk. I looked out the back window to see a tree had smashed into the car’s trunk and there was no possible way to get my coat.

“I’m not staying here to die of the cold!” my Oma stated. “I see a house, let’s go.” My brother and I tried to convince her to stay, after all, we were in a deep ten foot ditch

---

## The Car Crash

with snow up to my waist and my Oma's low blood circulation and trouble breathing wasn't going to make this any easier. She didn't seem to hear our reasoning, and being stubborn, she tried to push the door open but it wouldn't budge. Since the snow blocked her in, she climbed over to the driver's seat where my Uncle had made a path in the snow to get to the top of the ditch. As she opened the door she started to wobble and lost her balance, falling face first into the snow. I saw her gasping as I glanced at her body lying in the snow. I heard the door next to me burst open as my Opa shoved his way through the snow to help her.

I scrambled for her purse and desperately looked for her inhaler. My brother broke out in laughter and my face grew hot as I turned around and exploded, "how can you laugh at this? She can't breathe!" My brother just laughed harder at my anger and frustration. I finally found the inhaler and fumbled it over to my Oma. I saw her frail body slowly rise and then trudge through the snow trying to get to the house in the distance. We all scrambled out of the car as my Opa shouted where we we're going to my Uncle who was still waving his phone on the top of the ditch.

I shivered as I got a good look at the car for the first time. A telephone pole stood not more than two feet from the side of the car and a tree had smashed into the middle of the car's trunk. I yanked at the trunk lid with desperate hope but it didn't budge. The tree had made it impossible to get anything out, including our coats that had been shoved in at the coffee shop. I ran to catch up to my family who had been slowly pushing through the snow to make a trail to the house.

As we got closer to the house I could see that it was more of a cabin. The siding was half peeled off and the porch roof looked like it could collapse at any time as I stood under it, hiding from the wind. Shivering, I huddled closer to my brother to block out the piercing wind. I heard the melodic song of the doorbell ring throughout the house. As soon as the jingle ended I saw a light flick on in the entrance. The door burst open and I looked up to see a tall, man standing in front of me.

"Hello?" The man stood there with a puzzled expression. His eyes shifted to my Opa. As the situation was explained the stranger decided to help us.

"Well come on in!" He welcomed us with a genuine smile. A few minutes later my Uncle came in with a presence of defeat.

"I can't get any service out here," he explained to us.

"You can use my landline," the man offered. "And make yourself comfortable since you're going to be here a while."

I looked around the room and saw pictures of weird mystical creatures hanging everywhere. I had the eerie sense they were watching me. My ears suddenly perked up as the mysterious man went on to tell us of his many adventures and strange beliefs. With each new story he puffed out smoke from his cigarette and created a huge, black

---

## The Car Crash

cloud around us. The smoke was so dense I feared for my Oma's breathing. It seemed like eternity until my Uncle came back from the phone.

"I got a taxi to take us to the nearest town thirty minutes away. He will be here in around forty-five minutes," he explained to us. The time seemed to pick up pace and pretty soon the doorbell rang to signal the arrival of our next uncertainty.

After being shuffled into the taxi and sent on our way, the glowing arches of McDonalds soon illuminated our path. We all gave our thanks to the burly man behind the wheel as we made our way into the warmth of the building. I came out of the wash-room to see everyone sitting around a table, safe and sound. Relief washed over me as the soothing hot chocolate warmed my body. I felt strangely content. Suddenly the light of a tow truck glared in my eyes as I saw our car being towed into the McDonalds driveway.

"Time to go! I got just enough CAA points to get us a ride in the tow truck," my Uncle beamed. I stared at the small truck we were all supposed to fit in. I knew exactly where I was going to sit as we all piled in, and I dreaded it.

"You're in the back next to Opa and myself," my Uncle confirmed. I climbed in, and as a muddy jumpsuit fell on top of me, I knew this was going to be a long ride home.





# TO ALL THE BOYS I'VE LOVED BEFORE



Naomi Wolf



The day I first saw you  
You were out on the field.  
Shirtless and sunburned,  
Your spirit revealed.  
I crushed hard in secret  
'Til we finally spoke.  
The chemistry was there,  
We sizzled and smoked.  
We didn't last long,  
I'm sad to report.  
It was just getting good  
When you chose to abort.  
I still don't know why  
You couldn't commit.  
Was it me? Was I boring?  
Was I not the right fit?  
I thought us well-suited,  
Thought us equally yoked.  
We talked and we fought,  
We'd laugh and we'd joke.  
You'd overheat,  
I was always too cold,  
But we fit together  
In our own custom mold.  
Seeing your face  
Would brighten my day,  
But now looking back  
You mustn't have felt the  
same way  
Because someone who liked  
me  
Wouldn't do what you did,  
Wouldn't stomp on my  
feelings  
Like a two year old kid.  
I know that I pushed you  
To go out on a limb,  
But where is the harm

In learning to swim?  
In testing the waters  
To see if we'll float?  
Laying foundations  
For a newly built boat.  
You didn't even try,  
If it was a test, you'd have  
flunked.  
You pushed me away,  
Our Titanic, it sunk.  
I was wrong and I'm sorry  
For asking too much,  
But then again it wasn't me  
Who couldn't look and not  
touch.  
That girl from the bar,  
Probably drunk and carefree,  
You kissed her, you asshole,  
The way you also kissed me.  
You didn't even tell me.  
I found out by mistake.  
That's mad disrespect  
You cowardly snake.



You were a douchebag, a  
dick,  
A jerk, and a liar,  
But somehow, I didn't mind,  
I'm the moth, you're the fire.  
I asked you to give me a  
reason to stay,  
But you couldn't, so I  
Gotta Go My Own Way.  
I got over the girl,  
Sure, I don't like to share,  
But when you couldn't admit  
That you actually cared?  
That was it, the last straw,



I can't wait here for you  
While you beat around the  
bush  
Of what I know to be true.  
I quit, I give up,  
This game has to end.  
I guess I'll just settle  
For being your friend.  
It's not what I want,  
But what choice do I have?  
The last time we tried  
We ended up mad.  
You had no right to abuse  
Those feelings I felt,  
You could see that I loved  
you,  
All my cards had been dealt.  
We're both to blame here  
For us not working out.  
I cared too much  
And you had your doubts.  
I think of us often,  
Of what could have been.  
Every time that we talk  
I wonder "What could this  
mean?"  
But now I've stopped hoping  
That you'll wake up and see  
Everything you ever wanted,  
You could've had it with me.  
So, a note, no, an ode,  
Addressed to the few,  
To all the boys that I've loved:  
Oh wait, there's just you.



---

# A STOLEN HEART

Jaime Boyd-Robinson

February 14th. Valentine's Day. A day filled with hearts and candy that tastes like chalk. A day to exploit one's vulnerability, to show every crack and fissure in one's heart.

If one has a heart, that is.

Marsha doesn't know why or how her heart was stolen, only the when. Sometime during the night of Friday, February 13th. Of course it had to be that day.

Last night she went to bed after a day of café hooping with a colleague, heart thumping dully in her ears. This morning, she woke up to the ear-piercing sound of silence. She didn't know why everything was so silent at first. The electricity was still running. The 8:15 train was rushing by her house. She could hear the far-off voices of her neighbours. But something was *missing*. It was only when a feral cat knocked over a trash can did she realize that there was no lurch in her chest. There was no mis-thump. Maybe she was having a heart-attack. Maybe she died in her sleep and this was a strange after-life. Being the logical researcher that she was, she ruled both these out. A heart attack required pain which she had no memory of. The afterlife required a great deal of questioning and she had no time for that rabbit hole.

Marsha tapped her fingers against the armrest of the rickety plastic chair. The waiting room of the Clinic for Broken Hearts was filled with crying and confused patients galore. There was even a large blood-

stain on the floor by the door.

Back when the clinic first started, it had only been for broken hearts. That was when the world realized that there was more to hearts than originally thought. Marsha admired the clinic for all the research it had done, but she had never been interested in hearts. Until now. She wanted to know how it was possible for her heart to be *stolen*. Without any scars or pain. She wanted to know how she was still *alive*.

"Marsha Peninski?" The nurse said. "Doctor Coeur will see you now."

She snorted at the doctor's name. Dr. Coeur? Really?

She was lead into a plain office, something she could appreciate. She sat on the exam table, eyes wandering around the room. Heart monitors of all kinds were stashed in corners or hung on the wall. Marsha hoped that at least one of them could tell how her current predicament had happened.

The first thing Marsha noticed about the doctor was that his movements were more robotic than human. The second thing she noticed was that he looked like an empty shell of a man. It looked as if emotions never crossed his mind. All he could do was stare blankly. Marsha smiled. He seemed like the perfect candidate to tell her what was wrong with her heart.

"What appears to be the problem?"

---

## A Stolen Heart



Dr. Coeur asked, monotone.

“My heart has been stolen.”

Dr. Coeur eyed her shrewdly, as if she were making a joke.

“I’m not joking, Doctor. I have no heartbeat and my ribcage feels...empty.” At times, Marsha wondered what it would be like to have no heart. If her emotions would disappear along with it. She was glad her emotions were not connected to her heart for she did not like this emptiness.

“Is there any way you can get my heart back?” She asked after several long moments of silence and blank staring.

Dr. Coeur shook his head as if coming out of his empty thoughts. As if in answer.

“There is nothing I can do if you have given it up willingly. There is nothing I can do in general. You must find who you gave your heart to and take it back.”

Disappointment, anger, shame tinged her cheeks a pale pink. What kind of doctor was he if he could not give her any logical answers?

“Willingly? But I—”

“I must attend to the next patient,

Ms. Peninski.”

She was about to give the doctor a piece of her mind but he was already out the door, his staleness following him like a shadow. Marsha hopped off the table and stormed out of the room. Avoiding the curious gazes of the other patients, she left the clinic. She would bring this up with her colleague. She would know what to do.

The café was bustling by the time Marsha got there. She wasn’t particularly fond of busy cafés. They were a nuisance. Especially with tables of loved-up couples.

Her colleague was easy to spot with her auburn hair and spectacles. If her heart hadn’t been stolen, it would have lurched. Marsha waved at her before grabbing a coffee. For as long as she could remember, Marsha had been fascinated with the woman—admired her even. Valerie put herself into her work just as much as Marsha, perhaps even more. She was also hilarious in a way that none of their other colleagues could understand. Marsha didn’t understand why Valerie enjoyed cafés when she was the kind of person she was.

“So what’s new with you since we saw each other yesterday?” Valerie asked.

Marsha wanted to giggle. Valerie always wanted to talk about mundane things when they weren’t at work. And she

---

## A Stolen Heart

appreciated it. Sometimes talking nonsense took the stress out of their lives. Besides, Marsha enjoyed this side of Valerie.

But then the stress of her mundane life caught up with her. The place where her heart should have been ached. Marsha sighed.

“My heart’s been stolen.”

Valerie raised an eyebrow.

Marsha flushed. Her statement could be taken two different ways.

“I mean there’s nothing there. Someone came into my house in the middle of the night and took it out of my chest. I don’t know how or why but it’s not there anymore,” Marsha continued.

Valerie’s other eyebrow rose.

“A heart cannot be stolen. It can only be given willingly. So who did you give your heart to, Mars?”

Marsha fumbled for an answer. Dr. Coeur had told her the same thing. But she hadn’t given up her heart willingly. She would never do that. It was *stolen*.

“I didn’t—”

Valerie was pulling something out of her purse. At first, Marsha believed it to be a book. Valerie was known for bringing some fantasy book with her wherever she went.

But then Marsha saw the red.

It couldn’t be.

Valerie would never steal—

Marsha would never give—

If she still had her heart, it would stutter. The heart in Valerie’s hand stuttered.

It couldn’t be Marsha’s.

But the emptiness in her ribcage called out to it. As if calling out for a long-lost love.

Marsha stared. “How did you—”

“I didn’t steal it if that’s what you’re thinking,” Valerie said. She held out Marsha’s thumping heart. The café had suddenly gone quiet. Marsha didn’t want to make eye contact with any of the other customers because she realized what this meant a second before they did. She was rather embarrassed that it had taken this long. Logically, it should have been obvious.

Then again, emotions weren’t her strong point.

“I found it on my pillow this morning. Thought I’d bring it with me to see if it would lead me to its owner. Guess I didn’t have to look very far.” In all the years that Marsha had known her, she had never seen Valerie as shy. And yet, as she held Marsha’s heart out across the table, Valerie looked as if she were holding out her own heart instead of Marsha’s.

Marsha smiled. She had fallen in love slowly enough that she didn’t notice until her heart literally followed the one that would take care of it.

“You keep it,” said Marsha. “My heart belongs to you.”

---

# FORGOTTEN

Kavya Chandra

I.

The modern myth,  
the urban legend states of a continuous path of travel  
where submerged roads cause hindrance, not peace, and  
peace is vaguely considered a constant state of happiness,  
and happiness is from sunsets, valleys  
and parks and music,  
here, we all forget the cultured disgust, the  
lies we've proliferated in the name of scientific research-  
our blood is boiling for the approval of bigoted critics, my lips are sealed.  
there's been monetary accusations,  
there have been rats asked to leave and forget-  
why do we need ourselves to be explained?  
when will we learn to learn that the production of imbalance  
is the balance that we need to find hope?

the incredulity of mistaken identity-  
is this the parallel of definitions  
that have lined our grenades?  
this country is burning, this identity is at stake, and yet  
the refuge is lost on our lips-  
we don't sell love here  
we don't sell community  
but there's buyouts on Etsy, tell me,  
is this what your care looks like?  
is this what love *feels* like in this country?

these broken land lines are mines of defeat,  
this movie hall will never turn bright, and this tape will never stop reeling  
our eyes are taped open and the learned men can only tell us two things:  
these lies are true, and there is no truth to be told  
so what can our children believe?  
we talk in languages we cant speak  
listen to the words we don't understand  
and call it home, call it comfort-  
how do we share knowledge when we don't want to understand?

are we welcome? or is intrusion an excuse?  
is this what home is supposed to mean?

---

## Forgotten

a bloodbath of exclusion and shame? of unfortunate love-  
is this the family we chose when the Lord didn't show us any mercy?  
we don't pretend to offer gratuities as we walk down the same halls, anymore.  
we don't look up from our broken shoes, anymore.

### II.

In this city, we make parachutes out of screams  
and use big loud bangs as excuses to create capitalistic chiasms.  
the pertinence of reinforcers overshadows the quiet of the light,  
September is so close to our skins, when all of it sheds and  
we trace linings of pressed leaves, hoping  
the memory of something better, someone better, will freeze in the winter,  
and we'll find it in the summer, and forget about it when  
the wildflowers grow on our porch again,  
and when we look about, like women who've lost their lives to  
dead men at sea, dead kids on the street, to any  
form of love in the green-  
we steal water, milk, sugar and tea,  
burn boats so we can't escape,  
trim hedges so we can't see the way of the wind,  
burn fingers and cuts in lemonade,  
hoping someone's words will be knives,  
someone's knives will be the things we can't say,  
and on this island with riches and fruits and gold,  
we'll find holes to dig into,  
to reinforce the soil into our mouth, our noses, our lungs-  
hoping that buried in the dirt, we'll feel a part of something again,  
hoping to see grandma in the silence of the water  
as we drown ourselves in this potpourri of patriotism and love  
as we forget to call our homes and plant trees in these cities that never sleep  
never questioning, never answering.

we don't know how to speak in simple terms.



# RED

Naomi Wolf

This fairytale story,  
I regret to admit,  
Boasts a villain so cruel,  
Whom none could outwit.

For nearly twelve years  
Did his terror reign true.  
He devooured his victims,  
Ate one child, then two.

One fine afternoon,  
He met a young lass,  
She would have escaped  
Were it not for her sass.

I wish I could change  
The events that transpired.  
The mistakes that she made,  
The plan that backfired.

But alas, I cannot,  
For the girl sealed her fate,  
The day that she strayed  
And made herself late.

The one fatal flaw  
That caused her demise:  
She disobeyed Mother,  
She wasn't too wise.

She wandered off course  
One day in the wood,  
Enticed by a voice  
To lower her hood.

Therefore, I write  
A eulogy of sorts  
For the daughter once loved  
More than rubies or quartz  
...

Once upon a time,  
Beneath hundreds of trees,  
Lay a quaint little cottage  
Buzzing with bees.

A girl and her mother  
Lived there alone,

Mostly content  
In their haven, their home.

The girl was petite,  
Just barely thirteen.  
Her blue eyes were sparkly,  
Her smile opaline.

She was neat as a pin  
And straight as a line,  
Her nickname was Red,  
This daughter so fine.

A day's walk away  
Did her Grandmother dwell,  
Sick and bedridden,  
She was often unwell.

Mother said, "Dear,  
Take Grandma a treat.  
She's in need of a friend  
And of goodies to eat.

But be careful out there,  
You know it's not safe.  
You must stay on the path  
Or you'll make yourself late."

With a slice of sponge cake,  
And a bottle of wine.  
Off went the girl  
With a meal so divine.

The mother looked on,  
With a sad little smile,  
How her daughter had grown  
In such a short while.

She remembered the days,  
Of dress up, I Spy,  
The laughter they shared  
In the heat of July.

Little Red would stay close  
To the house she adored,  
She would play all day long  
And never get bored.  
Now she stays out past ten,



## Red

Says, "Mum, leave me alone!"  
She's become independent,  
Does things on her own.

The mother retreated  
To the cottage once more.  
She intended to wait,  
But soon came the snores.

It had been a long day,  
She just had to lie down.  
As she dreamt about Red,  
She smiled and then frowned.

Her mind set the stage  
Of a terrible scene.  
It felt far too real,  
Perhaps more than a dream?

Poor Red was alone  
On a dusty stone street,  
Someone tapped on her shoulder,  
Her heart skipped a beat.

The figure emerged,  
Stepped into the light.  
Paws like a bear's,  
Fur dark as the night.

He then said, "Good day,  
Little Red Riding Hood.  
What brings you out here  
To my part of the woods?"

She replied, "It's my Grannie.  
She's sick in her bed.  
I'm to deliver her treats.  
She needs to be fed."

The wolf nodded slowly,  
Mind reeling with schemes.  
So hungry for human,  
He could burst at the seams.

He could either play tricks,  
And eat her up later,  
Or devour her now,  
Wasn't sure which was greater.

He decided to catch  
Both Grannie and Red,  
"May I tag along too?"  
The big bad wolf said.

Red looked at the wolf  
And heaved a great sigh.

"If you must, I suppose,  
But her house is nearby."

The wolf did not like  
Her dismissive behaviour.  
It was then that Red knew  
There was no one to save her.

She tried to say sorry,  
To take back what she said,  
But the wolf's eyes were gleaming  
And turning bright red.

She ran from him then,  
As fast as she could.  
She dared not look back,  
It would do her no good.

Her cape became loose  
As she ran far from danger.  
She knew better now  
Than to chitchat with strangers.

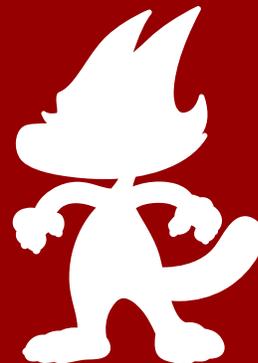
...

Some say there's more,  
Some say that's it.  
There's the wolf's massive lie  
And the whole Grandma bit.

Anyhow, the end  
Is much of the same  
Red was a fool,  
She brought her Mum shame.

So, when you think back  
To this story so old,  
Remember the lesson:  
To do what you're told.

Who won in the end?  
Who's smarter than the rest?  
Let's never forget  
That mother knows best.





# THE WITCHING HOUR

Jaime Boyd-Robinson

There is an hour between 2:59 am and 3:00 am in the city of Peterborough when one should be wary when getting into a cab. During this hour, there is only one cab company that will get you to your destination without any trouble. There is no number to call, no questions to ask. It is simply there when one is stranded during this dangerous hour.

The car is always a neon pink with angel wings as its logo. They say the combination warns off the pests of the night.

You must follow two simple rules during your cab ride. One: do not look at the driver. You will see things that you can never, and will never explain. And two: do not tell anyone, under any circumstances, what you see during your trip to your destination. What you see will only feed on your belief and grow stronger until you start to see it in the daytime. Only when your thoughts of it cease to exist will it cease to exist. Failure to obey these two rules will leave you to the creatures lying in wait when you are stranded next.

The cabs that you see during the day and night will not be out at this hour. If you see one of these cabs during this hour, do not get in it. Your family will wake up to your skull adorning the kitchen table. A week later, the rest of your remains will be found scattered along the shores of the Otonabee River. Your family will not know what happened to you for you never told them you were stranded and you will never have the chance to.

So good luck and be warned.

---

# THEATRE OF THE FORGOTTEN

Jaime Boyd-Robinson

the Curtains close  
on a Voice cut off too soon.  
the Curtains close  
on words that hang over the Audience  
leaving them petrified  
leaving them with their hearts  
on the grubby Theatre floor  
the Curtains close  
on a Story that they listen to,  
let wash over them.

on a Story that they will ignore.

the Curtains close  
on a Character left in the dark,  
on just another Story,

on a woman begging for help.



# LEAVE HIM

Jaime Boyd-Robinson

Leave him  
In a cloud of dust  
On the side of the road  
In the blazing heat.  
Waterless, confused.

Leave him  
with the tumbleweeds,  
with the wind blowing through his hair  
and a cactus as his only companion.

Leave him  
with your back turned,  
eyes forward,  
and your memories of him  
fading away.

---

# LOTTERY TICKETS

Melchior Dudley

When Don and his wife first opened the convenience store and full-serve gas station, they made fifty dollars a day selling lottery tickets. Things had changed since first opening, though, and after eight years of slowly declining business, Don sat down and spent an hour or two calculating exactly how much they were making from the store. To his surprise, he found they were making less than fifty dollars a week on lottery tickets, and after accounting for inflation and taxes, the total amounts were less than breaking even. It was like taking a dollar, turning it over, and calling it income. But Don didn't tell his wife, and they continued to sell lottery tickets.

His wife was happy as long as people kept coming into the store to buy things, and as long as his wife was happy, Don was happy.

...

That was six years ago.

Two years passed, and Don's wife died. After the funeral, his son quit his job managing a tech start-up to help him with the store. That summer, Don and Alan replaced the store roof. They hammered nails in the hot sun for what felt like an eternity.

Two more years passed, and Don was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.

After dinner, they usually drank black tea. Don read the newspaper, and Alan filled in the sudoku and crossword puzzles. The routine was just about the only thing Don remembered. But one night, Alan decided to forgo the puzzles, and instead, spent four hours crunching numbers to determine the store's profit. At around midnight, he discovered that they were losing money on everything--it was the worst with lottery tickets--but he decided not to tell his father. Don had enough to worry about.

As he fell asleep that night, numbers glimmered like ghosts in Alan's mind.

...

The bell of the store jingled. A customer came in to buy cigarettes, and at the same time, Alan saw through the window that another customer was pulling up to the pumps.

It was lunchtime, and Don was eating a ham and mustard sandwich from a table

## Lottery Tickets



shielded from view. Don caught Alan's eye, looked past Alan to the red car at the pumps, and wiped his lips with a napkin.

"They can wait--" Alan started, but Don waved away his protest.

"Money doesn't wait. I'm not a cripple yet." Don pulled himself up with the help of the table, his knees and hips cracking loudly. He walked outside.

Alan advanced to the counter as the customer in the store, a tan, gruff-looking man, plopped the bag of chips on the counter.

"And a pack of Kools," the man added.

---

## Lottery Tickets

Alan turned around and grabbed the Kools off the shelf. No need to check I.D. on this guy. "Anything else?"

The man scratched his stubble. "Yeah, just one of them--" his eyes drifted over to the window. "--uhhhh....say, isn't that your old man fighting the lady out there?"

Alan jerked his head to the window. He could see Don struggling with a middle aged-woman for something. The woman hit him with her purse with one hand and held onto the object with the other.

Alan ran out of the store.

...

"Let go, you--!" The woman screamed.

"No!" Don croaked.

"Stop hitting him!" Alan commanded.

The blonde woman looked over at Alan marching towards them. She stopped hitting Don, but kept her hand gripped on the remote-controlled car they were fighting over. Don saw she was distracted and tried to yank the object out of her hands. He nearly succeeded but, even though it looked like her shoulder dislocated with the jolt, the woman kept her grasp. She yelled back. "Tell him to let go of my son's toy!"

Alan touched Don's hands. "Pa," he said, exasperated, "can you let go of the toy for a second?"

Don released his grip, watching the lady pulled the toy close to her chest. He turned to Alan, confused. "But Alan, that's your toy. This lady was trying to steal it!"

"I didn't steal jack!" The woman cried. "While I was looking in my purse to pay him for the gas, he grabbed it right off the seat--"

Alan held up a hand as if to say, "I know."

"Pa," he said, "that's not mine!"

Don waved away the idea. "Don't be ridiculous. That toy is yours."

Alan rolled his eyes, turning to the woman. "I'm sorry, my Dad has Alzheimer's.

Sometimes he gets confused." As if the word "Alzheimer's" had been his cue, Don hobbled back to the store, holding his finger in the air as if he had remembered something and the dropping of his finger would make him forget again.

---

## Lottery Tickets

The lady sighed and put the toy in her purse. "In his condition," she mumbled, "he shouldn't really be working."

She didn't know it, but this was the wrong thing to say to Alan. She had struck a sensitive nerve. While she fiddled in her purse, Alan felt fury rising to his cheeks.

"Get out," he said, clenching his jaw, "and don't come back."

The woman snapped to attention. "Huh?"

"You're not welcome back."

The woman was stunned. She couldn't remember exactly what she'd said, but she could see Alan's cheeks were red and he leaned forward towards her in a threatening way. Not one to be intimidated, she told Alan that she had to pay for the gas.

"We don't want your money," Alan answered.

Indignant, the woman got in her car. As she was about to pull away, she glanced over the store. She saw the yellow stains running down the white side panelling, the eavestrough laying dejected on the cement parking lot, and she had already noticed large flakes of rust on the red-painted pumps. She knew the store was on its way out, and she felt that was almost justice enough for the way she had been treated by the rude son. She wasn't angry at the old man; she'd had rougher treatment from men who knew better what they were doing. But the son! He was a vile, aggressive rough-neck who obviously thought he was the best thing to grace the planet and looked down on anyone with a backbone of their own.

...

Alan watched her drive away and turned back to his father's store. He stared at it, seeing it for what it was for the first time, and a vision of his father crossed his mind: descended into bed, eyes glossed and tilting slowly to the heavens...his final breaths.

He understood his father's inexplicable sadness for what little he left behind. Alan felt even worse for how he would probably lose his father's store....Everything was going under, it was impossible to save, and he would have nothing to pass on to anyone else when his time came, just like his father. But there was no other future. What--he would start a new career, fresh-faced and ready to allow himself to be trod on every day for a chance at climbing the ladder? Yeah, right. He just didn't have the energy.

Alan took a deep breath, lifted his chest, and started towards the store, calling his father's name.

---

# THIS POEM HAS NO TITLE

## (I DIDN'T HAVE THE TIME)

Spencer Wells

Her poetic sublimation  
Eyes creasing into the folds of  
blinding lights  
The street is harrowing, cold and full  
of people  
Of a similar likeness  
The inebriation, jovial hearty laughs  
Over the icy tonics at the counter  
The men and women seek to satiate  
Their killer instincts  
We stumble, slip, and reach out for  
the moon  
The ceiling of the sky with stars and  
satellites  
Streetlights, downtown studios, a  
woman in the window  
Looks down on the kingdom, and the  
clubbers  
Forcing our way past crowds of  
scantly clad dancers  
And jewelry flaunting disenfran-  
chised youth  
We exchange insults, war stories,  
Forging unlikely bonds  
In the midst of the heat that radiates  
From our pores

Her poetic and intricate state of mind  
In confidence, the incantations  
Tapping into the recesses of the  
conscious  
And that which is not seen nor heard  
I am cursed to forget these things  
Had I chosen not to write them down  
Or brand words such as those  
Into my head and tongue  
That I may recite at an opportunity  
When the pain of dancing in leather  
boots  
The blisters that tear apart my heel  
Are reminders of something more.



---

# CONTAGION

Brayden Knox

0634485

English 2609H

Emily Bruusgaard

Assignment #1

Day 1 of the hydro-plague  
June 21st, 2019

This was a terrible idea. More lives than expected have been taken today and I am partially responsible. It was clear a change needed to be made and it was even more transparent that difficult choices would accompany any future progress in the correct direction. However, I suppose all the consequences were fictitious to me before now. Before seeing the terror of this virus before my own eyes. I am unsure of if we got the chemistry wrong or if the world we live in is far more terrifying than initially thought. But as I log this today, about 87.5% of the Greater Toronto Area has died of a virus that I distributed via the rain.

This virus was not random and was created amongst my team here at Volrox headquarters in Scarborough. We specialize in epidemiology, genetic viral testing and synthesis. We came up with an idea two years ago following the incline of public mass murders and devastation in the city in order to rid the GTA of the homicidal behaviour it was experiencing via contagion. These behaviours themselves were a disease devastating all of America at the time. Why not if you have the power, take matters into your own hands? It seemed so simple; target the specific brain chemistry of individuals with sociopathic behaviour and find the exact perfect virus to terminate them. Finding the ideal virus took the majority of the two years leading up until now. It was nearly perfected too, targeting only those capable of harming others by sensing a certain neural environment, then destroying the host if the proper conditions were met. It would have been successful. It would have been if the remaining years of testing and trials had taken place. Everything was on the correct path... until this morning.

This morning my team watched with despair as a mass shooting devastated the pride parade taking place downtown. Thousands of people ran for their lives in their colorful outfits as three gunmen targeted LGBTQ+ individuals that attended the festivities. Hundreds were reported injured, 30 with life threatening injuries and 21 dead. Mariah's daughter was one of those who were reported dead. Mariah Harroway, age 34 is one of my lab technicians and co-creator of the virus we dubbed 'Patho-Psych'. When she got the news, she didn't cry. She didn't break down. She didn't even change her expression. All she did was blankly leave the room. The rest of the team and I were sat there stunned as the other names flashed over the screen, many of them praying it wasn't their children. We were so silent the sudden alarm blaring over the building speaker made us all jump.

---

## Contagion

“Contaminate Override- Viral Release” and “Stay Indoors” kept repeating in its monotone voice over the speakers. She released it. Mariah out of anger and hatred for those who took her daughter released the beta, completely untested version of our virus and in perfect timing. As the sky rumbled and darkened outside, I ran for the window.

“Shit!” Danny yelled as I slammed the last window shut.

“Someone go, find Mariah and bring her here now!” I exclaimed to rest of the team as two of the other lab techs rushed out the door. “She released it.” I muttered as I watched through the window.

My heart hammered in my chest as I watched the first of the raindrops fall. Small drops hit the window in small and quite ticks. Then came larger drops, smacking into the window and demanding to be heard. The first scream was in the distance, hardly audible through the heavy rain. The rest that followed could be heard no matter how hard you tried to shut them out. Hundreds of people below us in the streets started dropping, convulsing and puking blood. Smothering from the inside out. Just as intended when we made the virus.

The crashing of the others through the door and back into the lab startled me from my trance out the window. Danny and Tom had Mariah held by either arm despite her lack of resistance or care.

“What the hell were you thinking?” I demanded through tears. “You could have killed thousands of innocent people! We don’t know how accurate it is yet! We had years to go, Mariah!”

All she could do was let out a whimper and look down, slumping in the arms of the other lab techs. “They took her,” she said in a strained voice. “They took my baby girl away.”

The room once again fell silent as the screams in the streets grew louder. It was difficult not to feel her pain. This kind of pain was the very reason we started the Patho-Psych program in the first place. A collection of scientists who had all suffered from a similar situation. The loss of a loved one to another person. A drunk driver, a rapist, a school shooter and a kidnapper. This exact situation was why we needed to stop it. But not now and not like this.

I sigh and return to looking out the window. The streets are hard to see but hardly any movement continues below me now. I sighed and rested my head in my hand.

“Danny and Tom, take her to the office and get her some water. Keep an eye on her and don’t let her go anywhere near the main lab.” I said. They nodded and shuffle her out. “The rest of you come with me. We need to gauge the situation and from there determine the next plan of action.”

It is now 23:35 on the evening the rain began. I am writing this in order to keep my mind clear and jot down any progress in the situation. We were able to

---

## Contagion

track various radio stations and social medias for a few hours after the rain began. Most people spoke about staying inside, ensuring the public that as long as you don't come in contact with the rain, you won't be infected. Some are saying they were in the rain and survived, while others saw everyone they loved fall before them. It is clear our beta version was unsuccessful. There is no way to tell who it infected or how sensitive its selectivity is. When initially creating it, I feared that those with smaller mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder may be targeted by the virus as well despite a slightly different neurochemical pathway than those we initially targeted. This was an issue I planned to look into in the next few months of research. Now I can only guess from the safety of the Volrox building what damage we have done to those who have come in contact with the rain.

At this time, the world has gone radio silent. There is still power in the Volrox building, but it is clear there has been loss of electricity randomly throughout large parts of the city. I have not seen a plane fly or land since the rain began, though this could be from the clouds of the storm shielding them it is highly doubtful they are operating. No more cell reception. No more internet. No one knows what has happened except for me and my team. We know and we have no way of stopping it. We took the night to try and reach out to family and organize ourselves.

Tomorrow we meet at 8:00 am to try and fix this before it spreads. I have doubts we will be successful as we have no idea what this version of the virus is truly capable of. I suppose we will see in the days to come. I will update this journal as frequently as possible.

I fear I started something I can never be forgiven for. The one thing we tried to stop we just committed ourselves. We took the lives of thousands and I don't think we will ever get them back.

All I can do now is hope to fix this,



Jennifer R. Harvey





---

# THE READING ROOM

Kelsey Guindon

The quiet had always been comforting to her. Sitting alone at her dining room table, the room was hushed. The only sound was her breathing. The sun had set just an hour prior. Darkness had crept in, but Shay had never been afraid of the dark. Like the quiet, she found peace in it. She had never been one for loud, chaotic spaces; she found it a chore to entertain other people. She was happiest when she was alone with only silence to fill the space around her. At 27 years old, she was unmarried. She didn't have friends. That's precisely how she liked it.



Sipping her cold tea, she let herself slip away in the silence. She preferred complete silence to music; she didn't even own a television. Her peace was soon interrupted when she heard a loud thump like something had fallen, seemingly coming from upstairs. She lived in a large house. It had been her family's, and she tried her best to keep it frozen in time. Shay never repainted and she kept the curtains that her family had put up when she was a child. Maybe it was a draft, or squirrels in the attic, such as with any old house. Still, the thump had taken her off guard. All alone, she knew deep down that her sense of safety was merrily an illusion.



With soft steps and tea in her hand, she abandoned the dinner table and stepped quietly up the stairs, making sure she wouldn't spill her drink. In her reading room, she found herself

wishing for a sweater. A chill filled the room. Not one to jump to conclusions, she thought that perhaps the thump had been the shutters hitting the frame. She must have left the window open before making her tea.

Quietly, as if any sound would hurt, she closed the window. Relief filled her chest. She would be able to finish her dinner on time and then proceed to sleep exactly at 8:00 PM, as she always did.

But her plans were pre-emptive as she heard some noise come from down the hall.

Footsteps.

Shay didn't have roommates.

She hadn't had a pet since Carny passed away.

The silence was no longer comforting.

Shay closed the door, this time genuinely afraid that any sound would result in pain. There was nothing sharp in the reading room. She didn't exercise so she was weak and frail; she would not be able to defend herself should she have to. She grabbed the biggest, thickest book on her book shelf in case she would need to hit someone over the head with it.



She hoped it was just neighbourhood kids up to their usual shenanigans.

---

## The Reading Room



Her house had always been a topic of conversation. Her family had owned a lot of land, so she was far from her closest neighbour, her house embedded in a thick brush of trees. She heard what the community had said about her family since she was young. They called them weird, eccentric. Scary, even. She remembered sitting in class in the fifth grade and getting passed a note saying “leave this town. We don’t want you here.” She ran all the way home that day and started screaming when she entered the door. Her mother had tried everything she could do calm her, but Shay was frantic. She threw her boots across the room and screamed for what seemed like forever, as tears streamed down her mother’s face.

The reading room was on the second floor, and far too high to jump from without being injured. Still, she knew that she may have to run for it if whoever was in her house were to find her. Her brain was running a thousand thoughts a minute. What would happen? What did this person want? Was this a joke? She calculated all the possibilities. Maybe she had been hallucinating. Fear can make people think and do crazy things.

The reading room had no lock. There was no use for one. No family, no guests. There was no point for inside locks. But now, she wished she had done some repairs to the old house. Fixed it up. Made it into a fortress. She was a fool. She thought she would be left alone. But the world never granted her a break. Her life had been cruel and unfortunate. She would often find herself dissociating, wishing she could disappear altogether.

The creaking of floorboards caused her to focus. She slipped into the corner

which was darkest, behind where the door would open to. She hoped this would give her some coverage should someone enter the room. Her arms clung around the book. It was a large encyclopedia that dust had collected on. She hadn’t picked it up in years. She couldn’t remember the last time she even held it in her arms. Once, long ago, the reading room had been her safe place. Her escape. When the world around her became dizzy and unclear, she could always find her way back to the reading room.

Loud voices started coming from the hall, but the words became mumbled through the door. There were multiple people. Men. The voices sounded too husky to belong to a child. Her hopes of neighbourhood shenanigans were diminishing. Something bad was going to happen.

1, 2, 3, 4. She began to count inside her head. It was a strategy she had picked up somewhere. It was the only thing that could calm her. Doors began opening and slamming recklessly. She began to make out words being said here and there. “Find her,” “not here,” “keep moving.” Her nightmares had been realized. Someone wanted to find her. She knew that whatever they wanted couldn’t be good.

The door to the reading room opened.

Shay held her breath and closed her eyes.

The man flicked at the light switch, but of course, the light had stopped working long ago. He grumbled under his breath and took out a flashlight. She could see through the shadows that he

---

## The Reading Room



was a large man. He appeared to be in a uniform. A uniform! Perhaps somebody had seen something suspicious and called the police! Maybe everything would turn out okay.

Still, she waited quietly. You could never be too sure what people wanted. You couldn't trust anyone nowadays. Thinking about it made her crazy.

He flashed the light in the corner. "Found her!" his loud voice filled the halls. She didn't say anything. She just sat, frozen in fear. "The room directly across from the stairs. She wasn't here when we checked earlier."

Another man, and a woman whose voice she hadn't heard, entered the room. The woman wore a white coat. She looked familiar. Where had she seen her before? It was a small town. She knew most of the families. Did she work at the cinema? Shay remembered she used to love going to the cinema with her mother.

"Shay, do you know where you are?" the woman in the white coat asked. Shay paused. They weren't trying to harm her. They must be there to help.

"Your name is Shay Pickett. You are 27 years old. This is your childhood home. You haven't lived here in years, Shay. I know you must be afraid."

She had seen this woman somewhere. Her voice was soft and reassuring, but none of what she said made sense. She began to hyperventilate.

"1, 2, 3, 4... Come on Shay. Remember what we've been practicing." The woman was patient. Shay closed her

eyes and began counting again. "1, 2, 3, 4..."

"This afternoon, you left the facility. Your new medication hasn't been working and you left. Do you remember that Shay? Look around you. This place has been abandoned for years. Since the accident with your mother. There's no electricity. There's dirt on your clothes. It looks like you managed to get in through the window. Can you see that Shay? You need to come back with us. It's not safe here for you." The woman seemed strict in her words.

Shay's head was spinning. Memories started coming back to her. Doctors, a room with white walls, colouring books. She remembered talking to the lady. When? Where? Who was she?

The man who had entered first reached his arm out toward her and she took it. It all seemed so familiar. Her thoughts didn't make sense anymore.

"Come home Shay. It will all be fine."

---

# OUR TEAM

**TYLER HOLT**  
DIRECTOR

**ZACHARY  
BARMANIA**  
EDITOR - IN - CHIEF

**SAID JIDDAWY**  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

**REMI AKERS**  
WRITER

**JAMIE  
BOYD-ROBINSON**  
WRITER

**KAVYA CHANDRA**  
WRITER

**MELCHIOR DUDLEY**  
WRITER

**KELSEY GUINDON**  
WRITER

**BRAYDEN KNOX**  
WRITER

**JULIE MUSCLOW**  
WRITER

**SHAUN PHUAH**  
WRITER

**ZACK WEAVER**  
WRITER

**SPENCER WELLS**  
WRITER

**NAOMI WOLF**  
WRITER

**MARIA TOEWS**  
WRITER



## ONLINE

ABSYNTHES MAGAZINE GOES BEYOND  
PRINT BY ENGAGING READERS WITH OUR  
ONLINE CONTENT. FOR YOUR DAILY DOSE OF  
EVERYTHING ABSYNTHES SUBSCRIBE AT

[WWW.ABSYNTHES.ORG](http://WWW.ABSYNTHES.ORG)

## ILLUSTRATIONS

11; 12; 13; 16; 17 / SAID JIDDAWY  
27; 30 / RACHEL TAUNTON

## PHOTOGRAPHY

COVER; 5; 8; 15; 21; 24; 25 / PEXELS.COM

**COPYRIGHT © 2020. ABSYNTHES MAGAZINE.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.**

