



PERSONAS

Multilingual Literary Journal

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**MULTILINGUAL CREATIVE WRITING JOURNAL
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FOREWORD

AS AN ENGLISH COMPOSITION AND ESL INSTRUCTOR AT COLLEGE of the Redwoods, I began assigning a paper in which students would detail a journey from outsider to insider status. The purpose of this paper was to get students to write about a personal learning experience with a larger audience in mind. Their journey had to communicate something valuable and go beyond a description of the events. They had to look for the lesson in the experience. The central question was “why would anyone who hasn’t lived this care about it? What can be learned from your experience?”

Like any instructor, I have scrapped many assignments and paper topics, but this one, I have held on to as the first paper of the semester for two reasons. 1. It helps the students think of writing as something intentional which communicates something of their lives—something only they know—and 2. I have learned a lot about, and from, my students through reading these essays. When the class gives feedback on these learning experiences, we have great discussions, and we create trust.

Trust is a crucial, but often overlooked ingredient for writing. Many students come to college distrustful of the writing process. They have been taught to think their instructor, as grader, is the only one who will ascribe value to their work. When students communicate their learning process and discuss the value of that communication with the class, they drop the pretense of authority and resulting language which can confuse meaning. Students focus on answering important questions to clarify their personal experiences.

It is a wonderful thing to see students trust the writing process and focus on communicating something personal

which their readers can benefit from. I have been privileged to read and respond to many such papers.

In many of these papers, students would talk about an experience of cultural or linguistic transition, melding, or even conflict. I learned a great deal from these papers and often wished I had a way to share them with the community. When I read about a student’s journey of language learning. I thought about the valuable addition the paper would make to discussions about accent. Reading about students’ struggles to embrace the culture of the US wholesale, I was reminded of chronological, cultural, and linguistic fluctuations of that culture. In many of these occasions, to express themselves clearly, students would use different languages, much the way groups of close friends or family members have personal languages which they only use with each other, but contain so much meaning.

It occurred to me that when students write about their experiences learning, changing, understanding, rejecting, or questioning they contribute to our understanding of these experiences. This, not a grade, is the purpose of writing: to advance the conversation.

This journal is intended to advance the conversation of multilingualism. Primarily because there is a great deal to be communicated on the subject which has gone under-considered or consigned to the realm of graded writing.

Hopefully, in reading this journal, you will find something communicated to you that shifts your understanding and inspires you to (re)examine your perception of culture and language. We hope that you’ll then write something on the subject to share with us for the next issue which will continue to advance this conversation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU—THE MOST IMPORTANT EXPRESSION IN ANY LANGUAGE.

We are indebted to the many great contributions we received from students and from the larger community.

The faculty and staff of College of the Redwoods' Adult and Community Education site in downtown Eureka who worked with students, typed up handwritten contributions and worked on layout.

The readers from various College of the Redwoods academic departments who spent significant portions of their spring break reading submissions.

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And you. Audiences make meaning and you have made this work meaningful.

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DEDICATION TO SARAI HAILU-MONTAG

Laurel Jean

DEAR READER,

SARAI WAS MY STUDENT FOR TWO SEMESTERS IN WRITING- AND READING-focused classes that most students find intimidating, boring, or, at the very least, a hurdle to get over before moving on to what they really want to study.

Sarai did not enter the classroom with this attitude, however. She had a core belief that education is empowering, and that she was only going to get out of a class what she put into that class. And she put a lot into both of my classes.

Sarai was creative, inquisitive, kind, and hardworking. She wrote with passion and genuine interest. Her ideas and perspectives leapt off the page, and I always looked forward to sitting down with her and discussing her latest project.

Sarai understood that writing, learning, and life are processes, that good things take time, that reflection and space are necessary for success. She taught me to slow down, to value my health and mental well-being more.

Like many people, I have lost a lot over the last few years. People, friends and family. I miss them all, every day. And I miss their potential, not just their presence. I miss what could have been. I am so grateful that Sarai's words are being immortalized in print, that her potential is here for all to witness.

Dear reader, please enjoy Sarai as I got to see her. Her friends and family knew her best. I cannot hope to know her well, but the brief time I was Sarai's teacher is important to me, and it was through her writing that I got to know her the most. I was very much looking forward to what else she would

achieve, as I imagine all who knew her were.

I have missed her presence in my classes: her quickly-raised hand, her thoughtful responses, her careful thinking and consideration, her openness with others, and her ability to be present, to give her full attention to the moment.

Please take the time to give to her what she gave to so many others. Thank you.

MOTHER

Sarai Hailu-Montag

My mother was born in a palace

She told me stories of the garden there

the huge Banyan tree and the monkeys

that would dart down from the branches

and steal the glasses from her little nose.

Mother Ethiopia has so much beauty she

would tell me with a far away kind of stare.

I wonder if she was thinking about the night they fled

my grandmother waking her up with a hard shake

the tears in her eyes the sharp words

“The emperor has fallen, your father is dead, they are coming for us.”

She has told me so many times about that night I feel as if I were there.

I can imagine her tiny hands on my grandmothers shoulders
the chicken that my grandmother brought with her
then killed and cooked in the plains just outside Addis Ababa
The bloody coup that came next and my great grandma who
refused to leave with them.

Wishing instead to die in her country.

I visited once, I felt the embrace of a long awaited loved one

I felt it in the village in the children who

tried so hard to be my friend even through the gulf
of language

I felt it in my family my aunts and uncles who numbered in
double digits

don't you know

we are all family here.

Salhem they say hello my beautiful, while trying to feed me
morsels of meat

just killed and cooked that day.

The deaths of thousands

The blood has not been cleaned

It has just changed

but the beauty of my mother Ethiopia

could never fade

not while the Banyan stands

FIVE GENERATIONS: A SHORT AMERICAN TALE OF LOSS AND ENRICHMENT

Katherine Cech Latonio

I AM GOING TO TELL A STORY THAT IS TRUE, OR TRUE ENOUGH. It could be about people I know. I might have changed some parts. It could have happened to a lot of people.

In 1903, while still a young child, František immigrated to America because his father, like so many others at that time, was seeking “opportunity and freedom” (and avoiding a ten-year conscription in the army). The family settled in the Bohemian neighborhood in Cleveland. His parents spoke Czech. He spoke Czech. Their friends and neighbors spoke Czech. This was important to his father. Still, František became Frank, his mother Růžena became Rose and his father Antonin became Anthony.

Frank followed his father’s dusty boots into patternmaking at the Taylor and Booges Foundry, and then, after a traditional courtship, he married a second-generation girl from the neighborhood whose grasp on the language had loosened considerably.

Their kids, with names such as Dorothy, Henry and Eugene, picked up a little Czech at home from their father (which came in handy when visiting *Bába* and *Děda*, the grandparents who preferred the old language) and at the local Sokol (the Czech community center) where Frank coached basketball and taught gymnastics on weekends.

But later, when they went off to school and married and moved to places like California and Texas and Montana, their Czech was mostly forgotten—left behind much like their letterman’s jackets and prom dresses.

One of Frank’s boys joined the Marines and married a WASP—the sought-after bearer of American-ness with English and Scottish ancestors some of whom could be traced back to the Mayflower. For their children, they chose names like Samuel and Robert and Barbara. These kids grew up in the 50s and 60s with “Leave it to Beaver,” Boy Scouts, ballet lessons and braces. They visited their great *bába* in Cleveland from time to time while she still lived, but never met their great *děda* who died before they were born.

When she visited on the train from Ohio, their grandmother could be counted on to play endless games of Crazy Eights and make *buchta*, a Czech sweet roll that was highly favored by them all. And for their birthdays one year, she sent the daughters plastic dolls who were dressed in traditional Bohemian clothing. Sadly, the sisters were just a bit too old for dolls and were only mildly (and temporarily) impressed.

As teenagers, they didn’t care much for their last name which no one could ever pronounce. They would have happily changed their names to Johnson or Peters. In fact, their eldest brother did just that (as one of his uncles had done before him) which broadened a rift between their father and this son that never fully healed.

In school they took French, German and Spanish classes for their second and third languages. Czech, of course, was not offered—but they wouldn’t have taken it anyway.

The family did have some Czech cookbooks stashed in cupboards with a few recipes that the family maintained—but not many. Like other kids of that era, they preferred hamburgers and spaghetti and tacos.

After he retired, their father bought some language cassettes and relearned some of the old language. He spent more time visiting family that remained in Cleveland and Ohio. He even made a point of stopping by the Sokol.

His second wife collected Czech cookbooks to please him, and sometimes attempted the dishes. His third wife didn’t bother.

Once, his grown daughters surprised him with a Czech feast that they thought might have special meaning to him. He gamely endured the cooking (which probably was nothing like his mother's Czech dishes) and charmed them by (ostensibly) correctly pronouncing Vepřový Řízek and Houskové Knedlíky.

Before he died, their father could be coaxed into sharing phrases from the old language which seemed exotic to his kids and grandkids. Though by then he had trouble remembering that his grandson had become a Marine just like him, he did not forget how to say goodnight to his mother: Dobrou noc, drahá matko. But they realized after he passed that they had never asked him what the language, the food, the Sokol—what any of it—had meant to him or his own parents and grandparents, or what it meant that it was no longer part of his life (or theirs).

Later, in her 60s, one sister took online Czech language lessons and visited Prague and Český Krumlov where some of their ancestors had lived. The other sister dabbled in genealogy, Czech history and the history of the Czech settlers in Cleveland. She connected with a second cousin from Cleveland whose daughter actually took gymnastics classes at the old Sokol. All of this seemed important somehow.

When their dad's third wife was downsizing years after he died, she found, among his things, a picture of him standing in front of the Sokol in gym shorts, a skinny 14-year-old flexing his "muscles." He'd also kept his děda's smoking pipes from the old country, a much-cherished Bohemian crystal candy dish that his great Aunt Borovec had brought to America on the crossing, and a tea cup that said, "Drahé Babičce"—Beloved Grandmother.

It's hard to know why their father kept these particular things, but they must have seemed important somehow. So, when the older sister's grandson was born, she decided to have him call her Bába, and she kept the teacup for herself.

But let's back up just a bit.

Long before all that, back in the 80s when the older sister was in her 20s, she had married a Chicano who as it happens had been adopted from Mexico at birth by a displaced Oklahoman and a Mexican-American woman who'd been unwittingly sterilized as a teen runaway in the 1920s after she ended up at a state institution and her grandmother signed some papers she couldn't read. (I am not making this up. This sort of thing actually happened a lot back then.)

The little adopted boy grew up with a surname like Jones or Scott, believing he was half-white and half-Chicano, and, since his school was mostly white, he became mostly white.

His second-generation mom and the occasional visiting tías and tíos spoke Spanish to him as a young child, but later he forgot it and did only marginally well in his high school Spanish class. Most sadly, his mother died quite young, though not before her son had mastered her menudo recipe.

When the older sister and this man had a baby, their son was raised Southern Californian: orange groves, soccer practices, Karate lessons, backyard swimming pools and Del Taco. Oddly, when everyone else was taking Spanish in high school, their son took French. He didn't make it into Spanish until college and then readily forgot most of it.

But then this young man—the great grandson of old František/Frank—married a third-generation Latina who had spoken Spanish as a young girl with her mother and her abuela and who did take Spanish in high school. And when this couple's son was born, he was cared for by their friend's Nicaraguan mother who spoke only Spanish. Perhaps not surprisingly, one of this baby's first words (after mama and bye-bye) was agua.

As a toddler, he went to daycare where his parents were asked if they minded Spanish being spoken to him along with English, and they said yes, of course, please do. Which is why, on a recent visit to Ensenada at the age of two, he was able to answer the server in the restaurante with sí, no, más, and gracias.

And so here we are today.

The toddler's mother has remembered her childhood Spanish, and his father has studied up on his college Spanish. When called upon, they can speak Spanish with their students' parents and teach their young son sus colores, números y letras. When next she visits, Bába will bring him a new book, ¿Puedo jugar yo también?, which they will read together (because after giving up French in college, she had taken one year of Spanish herself and sometimes gets the pronunciation almost right). She will also pass on her sister's message that he is a smart and handsome boy: Jsi chytrý a hezký kluk.

The story continues as all stories do, but after five generations, I will end it here:

It's a rainy Saturday morning, and Antonio Eugene--the great, great grandson of František—is enjoying menudo with his G-Pop and later, after his nap, will be sampling buchta with his Bába as she smiles into the swirls of coffee and cream in her “Drahé Babičce” cup.

Somehow it all seems important.

I DO NOT KNOW ANYTHING

Mehmet Ali Ozruh

4.5 YEARS AGO WITH A FRIEND IN TURKEY, I FINISHED “CAMBRIDGE English Grammar.” And I said, “Okay, I can do anything now.” I came to America. The first stop was New York. The city was very crowded and most people were quite helpful. There were too many support groups, etc. to develop language. But I could not speak English! And the first job was written in a 6 -week ESL course. I was repeating daily homework on the course. And the next day I could answer the lesson. But when I heard something that wasn't in the book in daily life, I was freezing. “How can you help you?” Instead of the sentence, “How did your day have been so far?” when said. Mali, Blue Screen, System Error!

Unfortunately, New York was very expensive and exhausting for us. The next stop was a short and enjoyable visit to San Francisco. Golden Gate Bridge coming out of the clouds. Surfers under the bridge, docks and legends slopes. It fit in 2 weeks. And I came to the rural area of my dreams of North California. Here, people devote more time to themselves and their personal development. Most of the time they don't spend time with each other. Therefore, pet care is very common. Almost everyone has a guitar or is interested in a musical instrument. Most people I know understand agriculture or gardener. But it is a difficult place to develop a foreign language. After a while, the social distance made daily speech practice even more difficult. I forgot everything I learned in the next 6 months. The ESL classes we could go for a few weeks in CR were also closed. I worked for 6 months with Aj Hoge system. He was very boring alone. Fortunately, online ESL courses started in the 2nd season of Pandemic. Very fun. It is quite enjoyable to

read, write and interpret the stories of famous writers. Many people share and discuss a common interest.

It wasn't easy to learn English. It was very difficult. People in America were from a very different world and it was impossible for me to understand this world. While I was trying to order coffee, the young man who brought the order was laughing at my accent with his friend! The auto mechanic takes an extra 60 minutes of money to explain a detail that I don't understand. My roommates have been mobbing at home with the manager of the house for 6 months. The counter said the price of 20 dollars from the label price in the gift shop. One of the negativities I had was that I misunderstood people. And a lot like this. These were the details I wanted to forget instead of telling you.

After all this time, I understood what has changed, that people and their behavior were not very different. In this community, they were enthusiastic, angry, sad, lonely and having fun. I realized that opportunism and self-righteousness are the same in every country and in every language. Where you don't know your language and culture. You may be like a magnet for these people. But I am patient, and as time passed, there was a more sensitive and polite environment around me. There were other people from this culture that helped me solve the problems I have experienced. I got a new car repairman advice. In another cafe, Barista acted more patiently. She understood what I wanted and helped me give my orders in detail.

Learning, as I imagined at the beginning, is not a process where I can work hard and relax for a while. I need a lot of practice. Now I can understand better. If my next day is planned, I find and watch videos with English subtitles or read and prepare for the resources I found. Still, I don't know anything after 4 years. So I learned to ask questions. And those who really see you answer your questions politely and patiently.

MI VIDA EN GUATEMALA¹

Magory Morales

MI VIDA EN GUATEMALA Y LA DE MI FAMILIA ESTABA ESTABLE, TENÍAMOS un negocio propio y nos iba bien. Al principio de 2013, empezó la pesadilla: notas con amenazas en nuestro negocio y llamadas con amenazas exigiendo dinero para dejarnos trabajar en el negocio. Todo fue empeorando porque las cantidades eran cada vez más y nos hacían saber que estábamos vigilados. Nuestra decisión fue porque nos llamaron diciéndonos que, si no seguíamos pagando, secuestrarían a nuestra hija para enseñarnos que no estaban jugando. Todo esto pasaba sin que nuestra familia se enterara en una semana vendimos todo lo que nos había costado años hacer, y la misma noche que partimos de casa le contamos a la familia más cercana lo que nos pasaba y que esa misma noche teníamos que salir de nuestra casa. Fue un viaje muy difícil porque era un destino incierto y lleno de mucho peligro, sin la seguridad de llegar al U.S. y nos angustiaba el saber que regresar era una sentencia de muerte para todos, en especial para nuestra hija. Ella lloraba y todo el tiempo preguntaba si ya regresábamos a casa porque ella extrañaba a su familia. El viaje tardó 28 días y los últimos fueron muy difíciles. El dinero se nos terminó y solo teníamos para comprarle poca comida a nuestra hija, nosotros solo bebíamos agua en un paradero del bus. Una familia vio que solo le comprábamos comida a la niña, se acercaron a nosotros con comida y 40 dólares, y eso nos ayudó a llegar a nuestro destino con mi familia. El primer año fue difícil. Aunque sabía que ya estaba a salvo, la sensación de que alguien nos vigilaba me hacía esconderme cuando salía de la casa de mi hermana. Hoy, a casi 10 años el miedo solo es un fantasma, estamos seguros y nos sentimos libres en este país que nos

¹ Please see translations for texts in languages other than English in the appendix following the contributor bios.

permitió volver a trabajar por nuestros sueños, y recuperar lo que un día nos obligaron a dejar.

NO PENSABAMOS MUCHO EN LO QUE PASABA

Lucerito Carillo Varelas

NO PENSÁBAMOS MUCHO EN LO QUE PASABA, SOLO QUE VIVÍAMOS mejor, y si por supuesto fue todo un riesgo comenzar desde cero con nuestras vidas. Nuestros miedos más grandes era entrar a un mundo desconocido con un nuevo idioma. Viajar sola era lo que mas me aterraba solo venia yo con muchos sueños y metas por cumplir, yo solo había vivido en México toda mi vida. En el transcurso cuando llegué y conocí hermosas personas. Gaste como 770 dólares para llegar hasta aquí.

Llegar por primera vez a la casa de mi hermana que hacia 6 años que no veía fue hermoso. Al día siguiente hicieron una comida donde se junto toda mi familia que hacia años que no había visto. Adaptarme al tipo de comida y al nuevo idioma fue todo un reto.

Mis hermanas y mis cuñadas me ayudaron mucho incluso ir a la tienda era todo un reto por que yo no sabía que decir extrañar de México. Por supuesto extraño demasiado a mi mama, su comida, y los momentos con ella.

Estar en este país me gusto mucho por que inicie una nueva vida, estoy aprendiendo ingles y nuevas cosas. Conseguí mi primer trabajo en una pizzería que sin duda alguna fue una hermosa experiencia.

Me siento feliz de estar aquí por que mi vida es mejor. Me ha tomado un año adaptarme al nuevo estilo de vida, mi reto mas grande es aprender ingles en su totalidad por que se que me dará mucha seguridad personal.

Para mi futuro, quiero una vida estable, tener un buen trabajo, crear mi propia familia y aprender ingles en su totalidad.

LUB XYOO KUV TUAJ

Na Soua Xiong

LUB XYOO KUV TUAJ YOG LUB 4/2004 VIM PEB TSIS MUAJ CHAW nyob peb yog neeg tawg rog. Peb Khiav nplog teb los rau thaib teb. Thiab txiav txim Siab tuaj rau meskas teb no. Txoj Kev Kuv tuaj kuj nyuab kawg nkaus Li. Tsis paub Lus Tsis paub nrhiau chaw tias yuav mus Li cas rau Lub nyab hoom yus yuav caij tuaj. Thiab thaum lawv los kuaj yustej khoom thiab kuaj kuv. Kuv kuj ntshai kawg Li Vim Tsis tau Ruag lawv kuaj dua Li. Thawj hnuab kuv tuajtxog meskas teb no txawv heev rau kuv Li nruab hnuab Kuv pw hmo ntuj kuv Sawv Kuv hloov nyuab kawg. Kuv Kuj tau txais kev pab los ntawm ib Co neeg meskas Coj Kuv Mus Kuaj mob. Thiab kuv kuj muaj ib Co kwv tij pab coj kuv mus thov kev pab txog nyiaj txiag Thiab ua npav ntsuab rau Kuv. Kuv nyiam Lub teb chaws meskas no heev kev pab los zoo Cai los Zoo vaj tsev xis nyob heev. Kuv Zoo Siab tias Kuv Tau tuaj nyob rau meskas no. Tam sim no kun tab tom kawm ntawv kom Kuv paub Lus. Thiab mus ua tau hauj lwm thiab pab kuv tsev neeg.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG

Na Soua Xiong

WHEN I WAS YOUNG, I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT LIVING IN THE US because we lived in the mountains. There was no one to disturb our life. We lived happily. We planted and ate vegetable and rice, and we raised chicks and pigs.

But in 2013 I moved to the US because the Thai government would not allow us to stay in Thailand. We became refugees. My family and I can't go back to live in Thailand, but we can go back for visits.

I lived in the US for 11 years. Without know how to speak English. During those years when I went to buy food it was hard because sometimes I needed something, but couldn't ask for it, and sometimes the staff would ask me if I needed help, but I couldn't understand them and they couldn't understand me. They would just look at me. Today, I answer that I don't know enough English. All I know is yes, no, and I don't know. That is why I went looking for a school. I never knew the US had ESL classes for adults. The teachers are good. When I study it is hard to write and read English. The first time I heard spoken English in class, I wanted to try to speak it, but I felt ashamed, and, I was afraid. I couldn't speak or write, so I just listened. I felt sad and I felt alone, but slowly, I learned. Now, I take classes at Eureka Adult School and College of the Redwoods. I study four days a week! I feel ok now with my speech and reading and writing. Every day my English improves, and I feel I am more confident. I want to thank my teachers for helping me.

DREAMS OF THE GOLDEN ROOM

Chong Geyer

I WAS BORN IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF SOUTH KOREA. THE MOUNTAINS were all over and around me. We didn't have running water. We used to draw water from the well in the bucket. We dropped buckets in to well and then hauled them out. Then we would carry the water to the kitchen to be boiled on the fire. Our stove was made of clay with a hole beneath to start a fire and two burners at the top with pots permanently in place over the fire. We had a two-pot stove. This is what we used to boil wa-ter and cook food. We would cook barley on one and soup or another dish on the other.

The floor of our house was made of clay, and it had flooring on top of it. Cleaning the floor was a constant chore. In the morning, we would fold up our blankets and put them away, and then wipe the floor. We wiped it before and after meals and after every chore. We didn't have a bathroom. We had an outhouse. In the middle of the night, if we needed to use the restroom, we would have to go out there even in the snow. There was no heat. There was no light, except the moon. I would feel my way in the dark if there was no moon.

We grew almost all our own food. We farmed and foraged for almost everything. The only things we would buy were flour, sometimes ramen, and on special occasions, very rarely, meat. My mom would trade for a bit of rice, which we thought of as rich people food. We grew all our vegetables. We had cabbage, corn, beans, eggplant, squash, Korean radish, peppers, garlic, ginger, sesame seeds and more. My mom would make kimchi. She would ferment our own soy sauce and press sesame oil to cook with. Occasionally, we would go to the river to catch small fish with a net. That was a treat!

We had persimmon trees, and we would go to the hills and pick chestnuts.

In winter, we couldn't grow anything, so we had to live off our preserved food and food stored in the dark dry areas covered in cloth so it would last all winter long. We didn't have electricity, and that meant we didn't have a refrigerator either, so we buried clay pots in the ground to store our kimchi. We had oil lamps. My village had dirt roads, and no traffic. After school, my friends and I would pick snails and sell them to the local market. I used this money to buy my pencils and notebooks, and this was how I was able to take my first bus ride was when I was in 4th grade.

My very first memory, I was crawling and trying to get on the top of our wooden dining room table where all my family would gather on the floor to eat; I was grasping at the low table legs to get on top. My parents moved all the foods from the table to the floor, and then my father lifted me up and put me on the top of table. Then I was happy kid playing on the table, and my family ate on the floor. I have always reached for something greater than me.

When I was very small, I had a dream. I dreamt of a golden room. I had never even seen gold, but it was gold. It had golden walls, golden floors, and a golden ceiling. Everything was gold. I opened the door and entered the room. With every step, the room grew larger and became infinite. I was awed. I had never seen anything so beautiful. I felt at peace and loved in the room. When I awoke, I was filled with a desire to find this room. Over the years, I had this dream many times. As I went through traumas and difficulties, my desire to find the room kept me going.

In the cold of winter, my mom and I carried dirty laundry on top of our heads to the river and washed our clothes, towels, and blankets by hand. It was so cold my hands went numb. I could not even feel my fingers. Everything was so wet that the buckets of laundry weighed down on our heads. By the time

we reached home, all our laundry had frozen. We shook the ice off our things and hung them for a couple of days to dry.

I was about four or five years old trying to help my mom. I kept the fire going so that she could cook. My mom, my brothers and I went to the mountain to look for dead branches, trees, and shrubs to use for firewood. Even in the cold wet winter in rain or snow, we hiked up the mountains to gather firewood. We would carry our loads on top of our head to bring home so we could cook and heat up the house. However, it was so wet it would not burn easily; every time we tried to make a fire there, there was so much smoke. We struggled to keep it lit by blowing on the embers.

Our house was made of rice straw thatch. When it rained, the roof leaked all over the house. We had to put buckets everywhere, and we tried to dry wet floors at night with towels. There was no dry place to sleep at night. We would search for a little corner that was dry, and that is where we would sleep.

When I went to school, I was very tired. I couldn't concentrate. I kept falling asleep in class. My grades were poor. I would stay up at night helping my mother with her work. She worked all day tending our farm or working at our neighbors' farms. Then she would come home and clean the house and cook for our family. She raised five kids and took care of my father who was suffering from depression. At night, she took in work tying Shiburi fabric for dying, especially in the winter when there was no work in the fields. She survived on only a couple hours of sleep each night. She suffered from poor health later in life because she did not take care of herself. My mother got so angry and frustrated living this poor lifestyle; no matter how much she worked, there was still not enough food to eat.

My father was very depressed. He couldn't work. He would get angry almost every day and take it out on us. When he got violent, we would hide in the corn field or sometimes in the pepper field. When I was about ten years old, one night my

father started to attack my mom. He got angry and flipped the table spilling the food on the floor. He was on top of her and hitting her. I grabbed my father by the shoulders and managed to break up the fight. My mom and I left the house that night with no dinner. We were hungry and tired, and we went to the neighbors' house and slept there that night. The next day my mom left us for good. She asked me to bring her ID. I went to our house, and my father asked me where my mother was. I had to lie to him and told him that I did not know. When he went to his bedroom, I quietly retrieved my mother's papers and snuck out of the house to bring them to her. My mother told me to go play with my friends, so I did. When I came back early that evening to my neighbors' house, my mother was gone. I asked the lady where my mom was, and she told me that she had gone. I asked her to show me which way.

Starting that night, I climbed the mountains trying to hold on to tree branches in cold slippery wet weather. I looked for my mother all over the mountains, but I couldn't find her. I was very upset. I couldn't sleep or eat. I journeyed to my mom's uncle's house to ask if he had seen my mom. My aunt said, "No I haven't seen your mom." Now I had to do all the cooking and cleaning. There were only three of us, my dad, my little sister and me. All my older siblings had already left home.

I cried all day and all night. Every night I searched for her, thinking I would find her body. I kept calling, "Mom! Mom! Where are you?" There was never any answer, but I was not ready to give up yet. I was thinking, if she died in the cold wet snowy mountain, I wanted to find her body. That's why, even with snow to my ankles, I kept searching every day. At night I missed her so much I couldn't eat or sleep; all I could do was cry. My friends came to cheer me up every evening, but I couldn't play with friends. I cried myself to sleep. My friends finally gave up and left me alone.

Then one evening several neighbor ladies came to my house in the dark. They asked me to come outside. They told

me my mom was back. I was so shocked I couldn't even find the right words or believe it was true. I couldn't say anything. I was numb. I saw the women standing there, and my mom was standing in the back. She had come home. She told me that she had to talk to my father, but to stay awake to keep her safe. My parents talked, and my mom returned to our room. We slept that night.

In my life, I have had many difficulties and survived many traumas. My dream of the golden room became reality. I had a near-death experience in 2005. I was in great pain, sitting in my parked car, when I felt my spirit leave my body. I could see my body below, still wearing my seatbelt. I came to heaven, and God directed me into a room. This time the room was full of light, but it was the same room from my dreams. The trim was all made of gold, and with each step, just as before, the room expanded to reach infinity. God called me back, but in doing so, He told me that I would be right next to Him when I die. I returned to my body full of purpose and clear on how I was to live.

What I have come to realize is that with God, all things are possible. As a child growing up in a Buddhist family, I tried my best to become the best person I could be. Since I have come to know God, I have learned that our purpose is to help one another. It's not about me, but we should look at each other as brother and sister. No matter how little I have or how much I have suffered, there is always someone who is in a worse position. I am grateful to have survived all my difficulties and traumas, because these experiences have allowed me to understand and empathize with others. We need to be of service to those who have nothing, and that's how we can make the world a better place.

NOTHING IS EASY, BUT EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

Svitlana Ponomarenko

WHEN I WAS 10 YEARS OLD, THEY STARTED TEACHING ENGLISH at my school. I looked forward to those lessons. It seemed to me that I would speak English well. But with each lesson, my teacher said that we would never be able to speak English because only gifted people could learn it. She constantly told us that we were stupid, grimacing monkeys. So, I decided that I did not need English and I was not a gifted person. I never tried to study English again in grade school or at university.

When I met my husband I tried to learn English for a few months, but when he came to Ukraine, he said that we would live there, so I quit studying English, and he learned Ukrainian instead.

In 2014 the war began in Ukraine, and my husband left for America. I lived in Ukraine for another year and waited for a visa. I moved to the US in 2017. After a year of living in the US state of Florida, I began to learn English, starting with the alphabet. I had to start from the beginning, probably because my first English teacher had created a wall of fear and shame between me and English.

When my husband and I moved to Eureka, I found on the internet College of the Redwoods, and I now take in-person classes, and have been learning English ever since. Now I listen to podcasts almost everyday. I also try to write in English 2-5 times a week. My big problem is, I don't like to watch TV, and I don't watch movies or other visual entertainment, which could help me improve. However, I really enjoy studying at in-person classes. The teachers here are very friendly and patient. Every

time I listen to students from different countries, I admire the teacher's ability to understand everyone and help all the time. Of course, learning another language is a slow process, and sometimes I allow myself not to learn at all because I get bored and tired of pushing myself. I think it's OK to take breaks and just let everything soak in for a little while. I always come back to my studies, though.

One exercise that is helping me to improve my English now is, I find a children's audio book on YouTube. Then, I find the written text of the book, and I listen to the speaker read while I read and repeat after him or her.

My dream is to wake up in the morning and know English well, but it doesn't work that way.

"Don't stop, until you're proud—of yourself!"

MY JOURNEY TO ENGLISH

Evangelia Herrera-Martinez

MY JOURNEY TO ENGLISH HAS BEEN LONG, AND FULL OF STOPS AND starts, however, I will continue until I reach my goal of fluency because I have the best motivation there could be: my family. I want help my daughter learn English, and I love to see the pride in my family's faces when they hear that my English has improved.

Twenty-four years ago. I started taking ESL classes. I studied two days a week for two hours, but people decided to stop offering the class.

I was very sad because I was very interested to learn and speak fluent English.

After that, I started working at the Loleta Cheese Company, and I learned a lot of English by listening to my co-workers.

Years later, I started English classes again for a couple months. Those classes were so hard for me. I took them because I wanted to help my kinds with their homework, and sometimes, it was very difficult to do. But I accepted the challenge, and I even decided to take the citizenship test because my English was improving. I learned a lot and felt proud of myself. Ten years ago, I stopped working and talking in English by about 50%. I devoted myself to taking care of my daughter, who was born with special needs. Last year, though, I received an invitation in my support group to learn English at the College of the Redwoods. I didn't want to waste the opportunity to improve my English, especially because I need to help my daughter. I need to read her books, and I need to talk with her doctors and therapists. And I still want my family to feel proud of me.

At this moment, I really enjoy my English class. I know I'm not young anymore, But I try hard to push myself to improve my English.

I feel grateful for this opportunity, and I want to thank my teacher Deva for helping me a lot, and all the ESL teachers, and College of the Red-woods of making these classes available to the community.

In the future, I want to earn my GED. That is my goal.

But for now, I feel good when I can just order food at restaurants, when I go shopping, when I order my daughter's medicine at the pharmacy, when I make appointments for her, and when I can go to parties for my husband's job and speak with people. It feels so great to speak better English.

A RUDE AWAKENING

Becky Samorano

MY FATHER PULLS OPEN THE DOOR TO THE MEXICAN RESTAURANT as the bell attached to it jingles. My mother, little sister, and I file in and we all sit down on sticky vinyl chairs at a Formica topped table littered with chip crumbs. We fill up on baskets of free chips and salsa and slurp noisily on sodas in large yellowed clear pebbled plastic tumblers. Piping hot plates of rice and beans larger than my dad's bald round Polish head arrive. We are all skinny, knock-kneed vegetarians. We are on food stamps and are regulars at the food bank. Compared to our meals of instant mashed potatoes and frozen vegetables topped with melting Country Crock, this outing is a special treat and we are enjoying our food. I look up from my meal and notice that the other patrons are staring at us, wide eyed and slack jawed. Something clicks in my head. For the first time in my short life, I notice that the other people are not signing and we are. I begin to notice the sound of my parents' hands slapping together as they sign emphatically. I hear the low grunts that escape their mouths, not audible enough for them to hear with their tan behind the ear hearing aids. The occasional whistling from their hearing aids becomes noticeable to me. It dawns on me that my family is different from everyone else. From the looks on the other customers' faces, it seems like there might be something wrong with us. I feel like one of the animals at the zoo that my grandparents take me to every summer. My blissful childhood comes to a screeching halt.

We live in a town called Paradise on Forest Lane. True to its name, it is in the middle of the forest. We grow up wild and free. My sister and I roam up and down Forest Lane, and hike deep into the woods, crossing a burbling brook, where we pick

blackberries until we are scratched with thorns and our hands and face are stained berry purple. The rule is that we can go as far as we can hear our dad's piercing whistle sometime shortly before dark. Once we hear the whistle, we scurry home as fast as we can or we get in trouble. The other kids on Forest Lane are frequent playmates. Our neighbors, the Lefevres, are a Mormon family with eight kids. The dad is a butcher and their freezer is filled with giant styrofoam containers of frozen yogurt from the butcher shop that all the kids eat at will. They have enormous containers of Froot Loops and cable TV. We watch cartoons and MTV, knowing that this will be a secret between us as our parents are fundamentalist Seventh Day Adventists and this is forbidden. We are only allowed to watch two television shows, Sesame Street and Mr. Rogers. Our other neighbors are also a religious family with three blonde girls. They have an above the ground pool that we swim in during Paradise's hot summers. Their dad tells us that if we pee in the pool, we will get a purple ring around our tummies. My sister and I are home schooled. My father teaches me long division in kindergarten. Understandably, I am frustrated with this and stare longingly out the window, wishing that I could go play in the orchard that surrounds our house.

At the local Adventist church, there are Deaf potlucks on the Sabbath after church. The Deaf parents gather around tables of strange vegetarian casseroles and Jello molds. Don't ask, don't tell is the motto for our brand of vegetarians as we enjoy gelatin, chicken broth, and lard. They chat for hours on end, enjoying the ease in which they communicate with each other in American Sign Language. The room is filled with the sound of grunts, squeaks, and the odd whistle as the parents all sign with gusto. The CODAs (hearing children of deaf adults) and the occasional Deaf child all run around the church enjoying the lack of supervision from their distracted parents. We CODAs can say whatever we want around the parents, as long as we are quiet enough to evade the parent with the

best aided hearing and turn our heads so that our lips can't be read. When it is time to go, we tug impatiently at our parents' clothing as a second, third, and sometimes fourth goodbye is said. Our parents can't bear to leave each other and return to a Hearing world.

In the first grade, I receive a scholarship to Paradise Adventist Academy. We do not have a car so my father pedals me across town on the back of his 10 speed bicycle. He pumps his legs hard to get up the hills and on the downhills, our teeth chatter as the frigid wind whips past our faces. My father is determined that I get a proper Adventist education. Back and forth, twice a day, five days a week, rain or shine. When we arrive, the students crowd around and pester us with questions. Why are you on a bike? Why don't you have a car? I find these questions hard to answer as I only know the small world I have been exposed to by my isolated Deaf parents. Suddenly my world is full of contradictions. Hearing vs Deaf. Rich vs poor. Same vs different. Regular vs weird. I long to return to a world where we are all the same. Our Deaf world at church and just my dad, my mom, my sister, and me all signing to each other while eating rice and beans in a Mexican restaurant.

GWYLTT [◀WELSH], OR LUNCH ON THE DECK OF THE LODGE AT CAMP MATTOLE, LOST COAST WRITERS RETREAT

Zev Levinson

The yellow jacket buzzes our plates,
most of us tolerant, one fearful and fleeing.
Tobin lets it land on his jerk chicken.
The wasp saws with its jaws
and clambers until upside-down, cutting
one meat chunk until it's free and in its grip,
ascends heavily, circles thrice among us
before flying away with the prize.
In awe we laugh. A little while later,
it—or its look-alike—returns and repeats the process,
a miracle that would apparently turn routine if we let it.

I see a balance of wild and tame,
rustic cabins on a turbulent coastline,
triple-junction tectonic plates wrecking the one road,
lament my own predictability. Predictably,

I look up yellow jacket, find it a vespid wasp,
the latter word deriving from the former: vespa—
rendering it redundant in my trained eyes—vespid
being of a cosmopolitan family of chiefly social wasps.
Cosmopolitan? Of the city? I look it up, find
I'm wrong: worldly. Cosmopolitan regarding wasps: found

in most parts of the world and under varied ecological conditions.
But wait. Etymologically, kosmos = order + politēs = citizen.
And city, I know, derives from civis = citizen.
So there.

But where? I find the language
wild, and have to look it up. Wild: some seven definitions,
several with subcategories. Wild, then, is wild.
The language itself cannot be tamed,
ever-changing, and I find my cultivation
engendering a happy wilderness, at least in my head.

ESTÁS VIVO

Tylyn K. Johnson

No es un poema para ellos quienes habían estado enterrado,
ni quienes habían vuelto a las cenizas y polvos,
ni quienes cuyos cuentos están terminando
en las garras del piélago.

Son palabras sencillas para los vivos.

Por favor, continúan viviendo sin disculpas.

Si vivas con “lo siento” en sus bocas, recordar tu orgullo.

Por favor,
para mi, para ti, para ellos que
nacerán después de nosotros.

Es para ustedes;

quienes hablen lenguas olvidadas
quienes hereden culturas más grandes que nuestro
conocimiento del universo
quienes vistan las ropas de historia y modernidad
quienes sembren esperanza en sus comunidades por
sus vidas auténticas
quienes arrasen un mundo que se excluiría gentes
minorías

Ustedes están vivos.

Están aquí, en este mundo, cambiando la tierra extraña a la
tierra materna.

Eso es suficiente.
Ustedes son suficientes.

Estas palabras son para ti;

quien tengas ascendencia de la diáspora africana
quien respire con un corazón queer
quien muevas con un cuerpo afectado por discapacidad
quien te lastime por problemas de la salud mental
quien busques por una vida mejor en un país nuevo
quien sobrevivas el abuso de otros
quien escapes las tragedias en tus tierras maternas
quien creas en Dios marginalizados

Tú estás vivo,
y eso es todo lo que me importa.

ASÍ TE RECUERDO

Zoila Vazquez

Así te recuerdo yo.
San Miguel Allende.
Pequeno pueblito rodeado de montanas donde yo naci.
tus casas de adobe y tejas, tus chosas de carrizo y palmas.
las calles como columpios blancas y rocosas.
Los campesinos en su típica ropa blanca, sombrero y machete
van al campo a trabajar.
Las mujeres con sus cantaros lleno de agua sobre sus cabezas,
gente pobre, humilde, y en sus rostros mucha paz.
Las aguas frescas y apacibles de tu rio, pero como toro bravo
en tiempos de lluvia, que llegaba a mis oidos tu rugido cuando
yo era nina.
Tus noches plateadas de luna llena, cuando los abuelos o tios
nos contaban los mismo cuentos, los cuales no me aburrían,
oh en las noches oscuras, contando historias de miedo a la luz
de la vela o un candin. Que lindos momentos, cuando toda la familia
se reunía. Las luciernagas prendiendo y apagando sus lucesitas
jugando como ninos.
Los pajaritos dejan el nido, los cachorros dejan sus cuevas. Asi lo hice yo.
Vole, y el presente que hoy vivo, muy pronto pasado sera,
el futuro desconozco, solo se que expectativas me traera.
Vivo en tierra que no es la mia, a la que he aprendido amar.
Amado San Miguel Allende, "No quiero volver a ti, han pasado
tantos anos, que ya nada es igual" "Tu eres mi ayer que ya paso"
Y asi te recordare yo

BOONTLING

Ivan Smason

Dehigged, naught a belhoon
A skype and a shoveltooth
Left the Bucket of Blood
And walked toward the Drearies.

Along the way they spied a Brightlighter
And his bahlness of an applehead
Burlapping like beeljecks in a cow skully

A cocked darley told the Brightlighters
To pike or he'd high heel the one
For routing the kimmie in the boat in a cow skully
And the other for being a Madge

The hootin Boont boys then clipped
To Cloverdal to Zachariah Clifton's
Where they got some horns of zeese and some higgs

Rehigged and high pockety
They borrowed a kimoshe to jape to Philo

There they entered the Can-Kicky Sike
Where the keeper recommended
That they try the new bahl skee

After much blue grass hornin and harpin tidrick

The shoveltooth said to the skype
“That’s some bahl hornin”

To which the skype responded
“That really is some bahl hornin”

¡PONGANSE UNA MÁSCARA!

James Floss

(Una telenovela: Pandémica Española, 1919)

I heard a sharp rapping
A metal tapping
At my adobe casa door

I opened mi puerta,
And was flabbergasted!
It was him; I hated him!

¡Marlén, I need to tell you something!

¡Over my dead body, Jorge!

I tried to slam the door shut, but the
Iron tip of his formidable zapato
Forcibly intervened

Stop, or I’ll scream!

Marlén, no one will oír

I relented and fell backwards,
Into a diván in the salón

He stands, gargoyle grande
Sombrero shuttering the sun

Well, come in, I mutter
He hesitates, and then
Shuffles a few steps in

Perdón, I should not be here
Pero, you deserve to know

Know what?

Marlén, it's your sister

I flush rojo hot
I cannot stop as I
Recuerdo mi esposo
And my hermanita
Writhing hideously
In my nuptial bed.

She's dead.

¡No! I gasp!
¿Muerto; Isadora?
¡She was only 19!

It was the flu, Marlén
It hit our pueblcita hard
I lost two hermanos
And my uncle,
Tio Tomas, también
Marlén, I tried to care for her
I did; I really did but

There was nothing to do
¡Dios mío, nada!

He began to sob
Incontrolablemente
I wanted to embrace him
But stopped from doing so

I shouldn't have come aquí
You needed to know, though
He turned and slunk away.

He mounted his horse
And galopó away.

Entonces,
I was left alone,
Alone more than ever before
Con mas, mas miseria.

PARA HABLAR CON LOS MUERTOS

Patrick Galleguillos

I must cry the tears of sorrow
The sorrow that speaks in a universal language
In voices as silent as a prayer for forgiveness
Los Muertos, memorias dulces, con permisos
Listen to my silent tears tearing from my heart
Our family is fragmented as the shattered mirror
Reflecting many things, but nothing as one
Use your imperceptible hands and con Corazon alter our family
By your very presence on the feast day
We can come together in remembrance of all that was worthy
Our one night when your imperceptible hands
Embrace those breathing tears
We will bring our hearts to the table of death
You offer the pleasure of contentment
And Los Muertos de Familia will nourish the living

אז יש לי כמה קעקועים

Sarah Godlin

ורשב תא תחקל קירצ תוניצרב המכ
ונמאה טחממ ותוא ליצהל ידכ
דבכ ימתכו סיטמק ויב קיר חוורמ לע רומשו
יתרוסמ ופואב העבשה תא סייקל ותינש ךכ
חינמ ינא, סגו
סירחאה ויב רבקהל תוכזה לע רומשל
ימ לש הרבחה
תועיבצ

GOSSIPING FLOWERS

Daryl Ngee Chinn

At night, the flowers whisper.
Frogs try to interrupt, grip, clip, rip.
When light first hears the eastern sky,
blossoms under glowering clouds
or transparent blue begin to chatter.
They bend toward each other
with every breeze
and point to the ground,
the grass, their fellow petals,
and say, See that, Didn't you know,
Why, That, and even That.
It's good to see you again.

The pink camellias started the natter
in the late winter
when they were inflamed
with their blush pink indignation
because they had to whisper in the frost.
The red camellias couldn't wait,
and their mob shouted at anything living or dead.

Then the smaller, more numerous cherries
chimed in, gossiping in loud, prolific pink
before the plums, shameless and white,
joined in during rainy mornings
and forgot to stop when things cleared up.

And now, the daffodils have started,
shy and slender green at first.
They yawn noisily
with blinding solar yellow and white,
leaning this way
whenever the zephyrs blow rumors
and that way when wind wafted into their petaled ears
so as to repeat each whiff, sniff each pollen grain
for its true identity or just to bother
the bees and hummingbirds.

The impassive grass,
swept hither and yon,
nods back and forth,
its long-haired green crowd
awaiting yet another wet rumor
or shout of rain
from the pouting gray sky,
anything to slake its thirst.
Nearby, orange poppies
try to weasel into the talk,
to startle the glowering dandelions,
patient to blow their trial balloons
to the world on their own deadline.

Peach blossoms, brash and roseate,
raise old gray branches out
like hands palm up, and ask,
"Why the color fight?
Why don't we parade?
Make room for roses-to-be

I COME FROM THE RIVER

Lita Gonzalez Cendegui

with their quiet, small leaves,
their limbs awkward, adolescent, light green.
Listen to those blueberry bells, lilac and light,
and the snow flowers of infant pears.
Turn around, take a moment to watch
the maroon apple blossoms wriggle out,
the midget crocuses reminding us
of the low mumbling roars of the evenings.”

Meanwhile, the red rhododendrons
and white camellias are already rusting.
You hear them clank brown.
The plop to the ground, no screams or panic,
as they escape and plot to rescue the others.

Even the clovers stretch, white or red.
They try to calm the lanky grass
competing with the leafy swishes.
All are almost silent, almost,
yet all will soon drown out the moon,
which preens its monthly sky panic
above the blossom mob.
Purple black and shadow, to azure,
then back to thin, thin moon, talk and talk.

Here below, along the path or in puddles,
silent bodies of the spring, curled worm-like.
Alder catkin, tulip poplar,
somewhere, silent, April.

I come from the river, the desert and the snow. Copper has
forged a path of beauty and destruction in my people and in
my land

I walk the path of the flamingo, flying north of the world,
then south, then north again.
my land misses me, the condors await the arrival of the eagle.
good times will come when together they will fly through the
blue sky.

my home is where the roots are buried, the branches grow
and the fruits are born, this very large tree supported by the
earth has roots in many places, in many memories, in many
experiences.

so, do I miss you? Yes and no.

STRAIGHTENED NARROW

Laura Rowe

BEING HALF JAPANESE GROWING UP IN A SUBURBAN CALIFORNIAN town. There are many straight-edged ways of living and thought in the Japanese culture, many of which have positive (and negative) influences on the individual. However, being a product of a predominantly Californian-based upbringing, the free flowing and individualistic ways of American thinking take precedence over my rigid Japanese ways.

However much time I may spend in Japan, I feel that my individualistic American ways of thinking are more firmly rooted in my sense of self, but I still carry the self discipline and hard working nature of the Japanese people throughout my life.



TAMARINDO TREE

Roberto Rojas

LAS NUBES SE DISPERSAN EN EL CIELO ALREDEDOR DE ESTE GIGANTESCO montón de tierra en forma de manos rezando. El río se mueve con el viento y deja ver las piedras brillantes bajo el agua. Los peces se juntan y nadan hacia la corriente para evitar ser atrapados por los pájaros que vuelan alrededor de los árboles de tamarindos.

The white-painted house with red shingles is where the Gonzalez family has lived for many years in Comala, Colima Mexico. Carmen has two daughters Ximena and Patricia. Ximena, the oldest daughter, got married last year and Patricia is studying to become a teacher. They both live in their parent's house.

La casa pintada de blanco tiene un gran patio con piedras de río en los pisos. Al lado norte del patio tiene un gran jardín con todo tipo de plantas y hermosas rosas. El patio también tiene dos bancos de madera alrededor del suelo donde hay unas plantas de lavanda. Por las mañanas bajaban los pájaros a escarbar en la tierra suelta y buscar su alimento. En las tardes a veces los pájaros se esconden bajo las tejas del techo para protegerse de la lluvia.

In the morning Ximena's mother Carmen was dedicated to watering her plants and roses in her garden. Later, she decided to peel some tamarinds to make some tamarind water to complement her meal while watching her roses in the garden. Patricia suddenly entered the house and walked through the patio.

She told her mother with a loud voice "My sister Ximena is in the hospital and she is going to give birth soon."

Patricia's mother opened her eyes and with a big smile, she answered the beautiful news. Patricia's mother took the house keys that were on the garden table and accidentally knocked over the bowl, where the peeled tamarinds were. She and Patricia headed out the door to the hospital to go see her daughter where she was having a baby.

Al día siguiente hubo mucho viento y empezó a llover. Una semilla de tamarindo empapada por el agua y empujada por el viento se encontró tirada en la tierra suelta del jardín. La tierra abrazó la semilla y le dio calor durante la tormenta. La luna llena velaba su sueño por la noche. El sol lo saludó al día siguiente. Las garras de las aves lo pisaron mientras buscaban comida en el suelo.

On the fourth day, Ximema returned home but this time with a baby. Her sister Patricia had prepared the room where her new nephew and sister would stay. The whole family welcomed the child with love from their parents to their grandparents as well as Aunt Patricia.

Después de varias semanas dentro de la tierra, la semilla de tamarindo brotó y cobró vida. Algo verde intentó llegar al cielo, pero al mismo tiempo reclamaba el nuevo espacio que le pertenecía. Sus manos estaban extendidas y sus pies permanecían dentro de la tierra, pues ya formaba parte del reino vegetal del mundo.

After a few years, the child began to crawl and soon he took fearful steps. The decisions he makes will shape his personality and forge his character by overcoming his fears in his life.

Pasó el tiempo y las hojas del árbol de tamarindo eran frondosas y su tronco más fuerte que un arbusto. El viento dejó de ser un riesgo para él y su sombra ya cubría las grandes rocas del jardín. Estaba empezando a dar frutos, pero no lo suficiente para ser comidos. Ya que los diminutos frutos eran una representación de la abundancia que crecerá algún día.

The little kid was already walking and sometimes tripped over his feet for the desire to run. He was approaching the

little tree and his hands wanted to reach the leaves and pull the tiny fruits. When he was caught by his grandmother he pretended to do nothing.

His grandmother would lean out of the window and call out to him, "Luisito, leave the poor little tree alone."

Luisito ran holding his jeans to not go down and said "I just wanted to climb the tree."

Como si sus hojas se movieran y se cayeran. El árbol no se quejó ni se enojó. No tenía malos sentimientos y solo dio lo mejor de sí. No se ofendió con palabras desagradables o muecas. Solo sabe dar amor. Da sombra sin pedirla. Da fruto sin pedirlo. Es irrompible y resistente a la lluvia, al sol, al viento, al frío ya lo largo del tiempo. Su destino es crecer y acariciar también el cielo dando lo mejor de él.

The more the boy grows, the naughtier he becomes. He climbs on the tamarind tree without fear. He shook the branches from the treetop. He grabbed the fruits and threw them away as if they were cannons from a Ship. He pretended to be fighting with a pirate ship and tearing off a tree's leaves imagining that it was water entering inside the ship. Luisito breaks the tree's branches to use them as a sword to defeat his very imaginary enemies. The boy climbed down the tree and kicked the tree's trunk with anger for being defeated by his imaginary pirate enemies. Luisito's grandmother saw her grandson's behavior with the poor tree.

She came out of the kitchen and told him "the poor tree feels the pain too like us. They breathe, they feel and they love like us."

The child heard what his grandmother told him but did not answer anything back and ran to hide.

El árbol estaba sin hojas. Unas hojas secas anunciaban los vientos del otoño y sus ramas rotas movidas por el viento. Parecía seco y ya no daba una sombra tan bonita. El árbol no se cayó y se mantuvo con un espíritu inquebrantable. El árbol no salvó más frutos agrios a menos que no fuera para esta temporada. No lloró, ni se quejó porque era un árbol. No hay

tristeza, remordimiento o venganza para nadie ya que el odio nunca insistía en él.

Ending the year, Luisito returned to school, this time he already had many friends. His voice changed and everything around him became a little smaller. Now, he will be a victim of his emotions, decisions, and actions.

Cuando llegó la primavera sus hojas se movían de un lado a otro como si bailara, un vals coordinado. Su tronco creció más del doble de la medida. Sus frutos colgaban como cascabeles. La luz atravesó las hojas creando un vitral natural en el suelo. La sombra del árbol cubría como una gran nube. El sonido de sus hojas sonaba como una melodía angelical.

His granny no longer got up from her bed. The brightness of her eyes was fading away. Her hair turned like cotton and her strength drained away. Her words were running out and her memories were being erased by time. The only thing that didn't fade away from her memory was Luisito's name. His grandmother calls him with a lost look lying on the bed.

Grandmother said "Luisito come here. You are my first grandson and you taught me a new different love. I have loved my daughter with the same love my parents taught me to love them but I have learned from you my grandchild a different love. It makes me love you even in your mistakes and I regret not spending more time with you. I love you so much, my beloved grandson."

Luisito said with a tender voice "Me too, my grandma. Do not leave my side." He can't hold his watering eyes.

Grandmother said "Whatever happens, I will watch over you and I will never stop loving you. The symbol of my love is there. It's the tamarind tree. Soon after, you were born when you came into this house, the tree announcing your arrival. An angel sent by God who would take care of me and the whole family. I have to go soon but you need to take care of the family as well as the tamarind tree. The tree is a symbol of the affection that you earned with each look, smile, and hug you

gave me without asking for.”

The Grandmother sighed and slept with her hands holding.

No había hojas secas debajo del árbol ni ramas rotas. Había bonitas rocas de río que rodeaban el tronco del árbol. La tierra se mojaba cada dos días. Sus frutos cayeron y pronto desaparecieron. Los frutos ya no fueron arrancados. Las ramas cubrían el patio con sus sombras y se movían con el viento como las olas del mar. Los pájaros colorean las ramas del árbol junto a sus frutos. El árbol fue amado sin pedirlo ni ganarlo. El árbol no brilla al sol. El árbol brilla con el sol.

Luisito, before going to school, went to see the tree on the patio. He took his shoes off and socks. He walked on the loose soil and raised his hands to the sky caressing the leaves of the tree. He contemplated the tree’s fruits. Luisito approached and caressed the trunk of the tree, reminded of the words love of his grandmother and thought that nature is like love that lives forever. He smelled the aroma of the tree. He sighed and caressed the tree’s roots that are attached to the soil. He finished watering the soil around the tree and moved away from it. He put on his socks and shoes too while his mother was looking at him through the same window his grandmother used to be in the mornings a few years ago.

Luisito asked his mother while putting on his shoes “Why does the tree bear such sour fruits?”

His mother answered him. “So that way you will remember the sweet moments of life. Luisito walked out of the house waving his hand to go to school.”

Llegó la puesta de sol. El cielo estaba nublado y ventoso, pero aún sentía el calor de la tarde. Los cálidos colores del sol iluminaban los cielos como si estuvieran en llamas. Se notaba como una tarde de abril. El árbol se movía de un lado a otro azotado por el viento mientras sus frutos caían del árbol en forma de granizada. Los pájaros volaban bajo el cálido color del cielo mientras se escuchaba su cantar a lo lejos. Los colores

cálidos del cielo comenzaron a convertirse en colores fríos. El velo oscuro cubrió el horizonte y empezaron a aparecer unas pequeñas estrellas. Hubo un gran sonido como si el cielo se partiera en dos y la tierra se hundiera en su ser. Los árboles se sacudieron abruptamente con la tierra y el agua se desbordó del río. Del volcán salió una gigantesca columna de humo y fuego. Los cielos empezaron a llover con piedras de fuego y las casas empezaron a cubrirse de un fino polvo gris.

A relative of the Gonzalez family came in a hurry to tell them to evacuate the town because the lava was coming toward the houses and they were in danger. Luisito’s mother took her purse and walked through the house patio to leave. Suddenly Luisito entered the house when her mother was just about to leave.

She said with a loud voice “We are leaving right now because the lava could reach the house and burn it. The whole town is on fire. We are not safe here anymore.”

Luisito ran to the house’s patio. Ximena jogged close to him and pulled his shirt.

Ximena said to Luisito “We need to go right now. Don’t you see that the lava will arrive and will burn everything including us?”

Luisito got close to where the tree was.

Ximena said one more time with her watering eyes to see what her son was doing in the garden. “I beg you, Luisito, we have to hurry up.”

Luisito replied desperately “I can’t leave it here. I need to save it.”

Ximena told him, “You know very well that we can’t stay to protect it.”

Luisito jogged to get the garden hose and started to spray the roots of the tree, its trunk, its fruits, and its leaves. He sprayed his feet and his arms accidentally in his desperation to save the tree. “I can’t let the most beautiful memory of my grandmother just burn away.”

Ximena replied to him “What are you going to do? Get burned with the tree?”

Luisito said, “I’m going to protect it, no matter what it takes.”

Her mother approached him and hugged him from the back and began to caress his arms. She told him, “Let’s go, my little boy. I don’t want to lose you too, just for a tree. It can be lost, but not you.” Her cheeks were wet and a drop of water came down from her chin and then fell into the wet soil.

Luisito suddenly kneeled and touched the soil with his hands. He said with a broken voice to his mother, “This is the symbol of my grandmother’s love.”

Ximena replied, “Don’t be stubborn. You don’t understand that love is reborn again and again and again. As long as you have a little piece of the love, it will grow again.”

The boy’s gaze was lost while his mother’s words resonated in his mind and the fire approached the house. Suddenly he took some of the tree’s fruits scattered on the ground and put them in his packets. He stood up, hugged his mother, and kissed her on the forehead. Then they left the house while a small plotter started to catch fire in the garden and the fire started to spread on the top roof of their house.

Esa noche se puso roja. Los colores cálidos devoraron todas las casas y la naturaleza circundante, los seres vivos y no vivos también. Se vieron luciérnagas rojas en el cielo. Se escuchaban los ruidos de llanto de los árboles. Los colores rojos vencieron a los tonos verdes y luego los convirtieron en grises. El río de calor cubrió la ciudad. Las nubes de humo con finos cristales molidos cubrieron los cielos como un velo en la ciudad. Los colores cálidos llegaron a abrazar el árbol de tamarindo y sofocar cualquier vida de él. Se transformó para volverse uno con el mundo.

Many days passed until the Gonzalez family was able to return home. Nothing that was his home existed and everything vanished. They cleaned everything although Luisito ded-

icated himself to clean-ing the garden more than other parts of the house.

When he finished cleaning the garden, he sat down and pulled out of his pocket some brown seeds. Luisito blew his breath towards the seeds. He wiped his sweat with his arm. He approached the middle of the garden and dug a hole with his hands. He deposited three seeds inside the hole. He covered the hole with soil gently. He kissed the ground where he covered the seeds and he said with a whisper, “Grow again, Grandma’s love.”

Después del colosal desastre, vino una sensación de paz. Las tres semillas enterradas en el suelo dieron una nueva esperanza. Nació el amor. Nació para darlo todo sin que nadie se lo exija.

To those grandmothers who gave the most beautiful and pure love in the lives of their grandchildren, especially to Carmen Herrera.

AVERTED

James Floss

THE MASSIVE SOLAR FLARES WERE UNPRECEDENTED AND NOT AT ALL predicted. As cyclones of charged particles churned and surged toward earth, the northern lights, the aurora borealis, and the southern lights, the aurora australis, blazed into a maelstrom of colors not entirely within the rain-bow.

Static shouted on radios. Cell phone calls were dropped. Wavy lines of discontent interfered with all streaming platforms as nervous folk fiddled and diddled with their remotes to no avail.

Electronics failed everywhere all at once. Self driving cars, smart toast-ers, front door cams, all went dark. Planes dropped like downward flap jacks except for those with seasoned pilots who were able to manually land in the dark. Satellites made an awesome fireworks display as they arced downward with fiery tails.

First, Boston went black. And then Buffalo. Then New York. Pennsylvania. And then the entire Eastern Seaboard. Then North America.

Of course this was happening all over the world, simultaneously; sorry to be so Amerocentric.

One area, in south central Mexico, north of the city of Oaxaca, high in the Sierra Madre mountains, was still illuminated with a diaphanous and silky phosphorescent dome. It gave protection to and around the village of Santa Maria Teótlan. The Bruja, whose name was. Xoxocotlás, was in the midst of a Ayahuasca tea ceremony. She didn't plan it that way. It was her job, her livelihood. She was a mother of 6 and grandmother to 23.

That day, she had been guiding a group of wealthy CPAs

from a Silicon Valley start-up on the topic of fiscal and personal enlightenment when the eccentric conflagration occurred.

"Un momento, lo siento, hay una problema," she said.

The Ayahuasca allowed her to see earth's magnetic lines waver and buckle. With great mental effort and insight, she subtly nudged them back into symmetry. She aimed to keep her promise both to her clients and the earth. The planet sighed as the maelstrom subsided. The borealis dimmed. Back-ups succeeded and pin-pricks of light switched on here and there, weaving again a bright spider's web on the marble in the void. The darkness of moments ago blazed again.

"Es bueno otra vez."

Boston (and Buffalo, and the world) owed a lot to Xoxocotlás. She was in the right place at the right time, and in the right frame of mind. In her hut, one of the CPAs, Peter Cerelious, from San Jose California, fidgeted with a painful smile as he had just, unfortunately, shat himself.

I DON'T KNOW THE WAY, BUT I'VE BEEN THERE BEFORE

Anthony Lowe

“津田沼. 津田沼. お出口は左側です.”

“What?”

“The next station is... Tsudanuma. The doors will open on the left side.”

“Oh.”

The train comes to a graceful halt in Tsudanuma, a neighborhood which straddles the city boundaries of Funabashi and Narashino, and is only a few stops down from Chiba, the capital of Chiba Prefecture. These are all places I didn't know existed in Japan until a few months ago, so everything still feels newly rendered. Murakami once wrote a character who made it a point of loudly proclaiming he had never been to Tsudanuma in his life, which isn't totally unreasonable. Tsudanuma is of two worlds and neither of them are Tokyo.

Peter is saying, “My friend's place should be open by now, so we might as well head straight there.”

“Wakatta,” I say. Understood—but the word still doesn't sound right leaving my mouth.

“分かった,” he replies in a clear, didactic rhythm. He's lived in Japan for thirty years after moving here from Australia and I have no idea how he has the patience to deal with me. “行きましょう.”

“Ikimashou,” I say. Let's go. Bless that man for always trying to teach.

We leave the train and start our way up the stairs to the station exit, which sits above street-level and is hemmed in by several shops that are preparing to lock up for the night, their lights half-off and security gates half-closed. We follow

the flow of traffic through the gate and tap our Suica cards on the turnstile to allow us through.

Dusk is pretty in Tsudanuma. The buildings don't quite shut out the sky like they do in Tokyo, so you can still catch the lights of the karaoke bars and izakaya and pubs flicker on and climb the night, but you don't feel quite as overwhelmed. It's Tokyo-lite to some foreigners like myself, a little patch of metropolis to cut your teeth on before you're ready to graduate to the sprawl.

“Want to visit home for a moment?” Peter says.

“Home?” I ask.

“Yeah,” he says with a laugh. “Doesn't it look familiar?”

We approach a bar called the American FM, a big, bright American flag waving over the entrance.

“Ah,” I say. “Wakatta.”

“はい, そうです,” he replies. “アメリカですね.”

“Sure looks like it.”

The inside of the American FM is narrow and barely fits fifteen, but that doesn't really matter in most populous areas in Japan. There are probably another twenty bars and izakaya within easy walking distance of this one, each with their own flavor. If you can't find room at the American FM, you go to the Hawaiian-themed Hurricane Bar one block over. If you can't find a seat there, you go to the Irish Pub. No joy at the Irish Pub? There's the African Bar right around the corner. Somewhere in between is a sake bar, but I never learned exactly where it was. There's probably some kind of lesson there about trying different cultures, different places until you find where you can take a seat and stay awhile.

The American FM, however, had just opened. Peter and I walk in and push our way to the bar and, thankfully, find a few spots vacant. We came out to Tsudanuma to visit his friend's bar, but he never mentions this friend again for the remainder of our outing.

Peter orders a 生ビール from the American bartender.

Draft beer. The bartender tosses a coaster down and sets a glass of beer atop it. His Japanese coworker looks at me.

“飲み物は?”

“No arukouhoru biiru, onegaishimasu,” I say. It’s my first time ordering a beer in Japan, but I’ve semi-prepared for this scenario since I don’t drink alcohol. Thankfully, most places have alcohol-free beers.

She leans her ear closer. “言ってください。”

“Ah... No—No aru-kou-horu biiru, onegaishimasu.” The words sound like a car crash coming out of my mouth.

Her face scrunches up a bit before Peter saves me.

“ノンアルコールビール。All-Free。”

“あ! どうぞ。” She slides a bottle of Suntory All-Free across the bar and walks away.

A man storms into the American FM. He’s wearing a hoodie and keeping his head down. He slides to the far end of the bar, right next to the wall, and immediately lights up a cigarette before checking something on his phone. The American bartender, as per some unknown agreement, drops a bottle of Sapporo beer in front of the man without a word.

Behind us, a group of women are sharing stories while they drink, and their restrained laughter punctuates the bar every few minutes. On the opposite end of the bar are a couple Americans, sharply dressed. Likely airmen from the Shimo-fusa Air Base to the north of us. Near the door is a small stage where a young man with a guitar has suddenly materialized. He plays confidently, strumming careful, calming notes into the conversations and cigarette smoke. At the end of every song, the whole bar applauds. Everyone can only half-understand everyone else, but they all appreciate the music together.

I turn back to my beer, but Peter is already finished with his. He knows two languages confidently, but speaks neither one at the bar except to say “生ビール, お願いいたします” after every couple of songs. Draft beer, please.

He gestures to the other Americans sitting nearby, as if to

say, “Look! Your people.” I nod and smile, but decide against disturbing the airmen. They speak to each other in English, they speak to a newly-arrived Japanese man in their group in short, quick Japanese sentences, and then pivot back to English to order beers from the American.

I finish my alcohol-free beer and listen to time passing us by in the bar, but it’s a pleasant, full-dark kind of sound. Peter is considering another bar, but for now his head nods and he chuckles intermittently as if participating in some of the conversations surrounding us.

“Go West, young man,” he says to me with a bright smile on his face. He seems to enjoy saying it so much, he takes one more drink and says it again. “Go West, young man.”

The man at the end of the bar lights another cigarette. The American bartender refreshes his beer without a word. The guitar plays out another song to pass the time.

“My name is—”

“Bruce Springsteen!” Peter shouts over the music, all but canceling out the DJ’s introduction.

The music is blasting in my ear and Japanese names are still a bit difficult for me to retain. I say, “I’m Anthony! Ansonii desu!”

“よろしく! Nice to meet you!” the DJ says.

“Nice to meet you!”

“What kind of music do you like?”

“What?”

He switches to Japanese as if I’ll understand better. “どんな音楽が好きなの? What kind of music do you like!”

I don’t know what kind of music I like and I don’t drink alcohol, so these bars have been a challenge for me and the workers alike. “I was born in the Eighties. Anything from the Eighties, I guess.”

“Right.”

“Stuff like Nirvana, I guess.”

“Ah, right. Where are you from?”

“California.”

“Ah, right! You know, I went to California! Yes, as part of a, えとう, as part of a student exchange program.”

“Oh, awesome!”

“Yes, forgive me, no harm intended, but I always saw California as, ah, あのう, the wild west!”

“Sure, sure.”

“I remember when I was in California. Only fifteen years old, part of the student exchange program. I got lost, yeah. Got lost in LA and just, you know, just decided to wander around. Just decided to wander around the streets after it got dark. But after a while, I got so hungry. So hungry, but since it was the middle of the night, nothing was open. No restaurants or anything, all the lights were off. Wandered for so long, but eventually I came to a grocery store that was still open, the lights were still on. A Chinese grocery store. I went in and got something to eat in the middle of the night at a Chinese grocery store in America. That place is the wild west!”

“Sure, sure.”

“No harm intended!”

“No, no harm intended!”

“You said Eighties?”

“What?”

“You said any music from the Eighties is okay?”

“Yeah, yeah.”

“You said Nirvana?”

“Yeah.”

“You look like a guy who likes The Sonic Youth.”

“Maybe, but I don’t think I’ve listened to their music.”

“The Beastie Boys, then.”

“Yeah, yeah, The Beastie Boys are great!”

Peter leans over and shows the DJ a picture of an album cover on his phone. “Bruce Springsteen!” he says. “Bruce

Springsteen! ‘Edge of Town!’”

“I’m sorry, but I do not have any of his songs with me.”

Peter inquires about The Doors.

“Yes, yes, I have some of their songs.” The DJ turns back to me. “I will play music for you. I go on stage at 9:50.”

“9:50, okay!”

“9:50, please listen.”

“Okay!”

“Okay!” The DJ stumbles off to get recommendations from the rest of the bar.

I lean back in my seat. Unlike the American FM, nothing in this bar seems to adhere to any kind of theme. If I was back in America, I’d say the owner took a trip out to a thrift store, grabbed a bunch of odds and ends, and called it a day. Fake vines on one wall. A beach scene spread across ten or eleven canvas frames on another. A projection of some kind of ‘90s-era visualizer thrown onto the third wall. The owner is cooking German sausages and nothing else. We’re served a plate of crisped bread and a side of oils and sauces, the kind you might get at an Italian restaurant.

The people don’t adhere to any kind of theme, either. A girl comes over to make conversation with us, asks us where we’re from, and Peter hesitates before saying Australia. The girl is wearing a sundress with a sweater over it. Another man is wearing jeans and a leather jacket and his hat is backwards and he could fit in with the folks who frequent the biker saloons back home.

Our DJ smoothly takes over from the last one without missing a beat. “American Idiot” by Green Day starts playing. The patrons remember all the lines about America in particular. He transitions to “Sabotage” by The Beastie Boys, then “Once in a Lifetime” by The Talking Heads. Peter pays our bill and motions to the door once “Icky Thump” by Jack White starts playing. I give our DJ a double thumbs-up and show my appreciation with a smile. He returns the gesture. He thinks

I'm staying, but I follow Peter outside. He never played The Doors for Peter.

There's a full moon out tonight. Peter is taking slow, measured steps through the alleyways. He's soused, but is still able to pick out the landmarks that will lead us home through the night. There's the 24/7 coin laundromat, there's the vegetable patch, there's the gym with the inexplicable Dodge Charger sitting in the sideyard.

He seems genuinely distressed that the DJ didn't play The Doors for him. Distressed, then sullen. Fluent in two languages and there are no songs for him here.

"We must go West, young man," he says vacantly. "When I first came to Japan, it felt like a dream. It felt as though I had known this place in another life." He stops at the entrance of yet another darkened alley, barely lit by the moonlight. His whole body sways forward, as if to launch the rest of the thought out of his head. "In the next life, I shall live someplace else."

We stand there in silence. Peter is a man of two worlds and—such is the expat's misfortune—neither of them are home.

"行きましょう," I say, clapping him on the shoulder.

Peter nods, forces a smile, and takes a mechanical step forward into the alleyway. "そう、そう。行きましょう," he says as we leave Tsudanuma behind us.

I KNEW A MEXICAN IN TEXAS WITH A FIERY WIFE, AN OLD CHEVY PICKUP truck, and a different take on Spanish-English translations. I'd been trying to get him to sell me that truck since the first day I'd seen it, sitting up on blocks in my friend Jeff's shop. It was exactly what I'd been looking for, a 1960 Chevrolet half-ton, short-bed fleetside with a big back window. No motor or tranny, wheels or tires, and the paint was a little bit oxidized, but the body was straight and solid — a perfect builder's truck.

For months I'd tried to talk Leo out of that truck.

He wouldn't budge. He planned to put a Buick 455 in it and put it back on the road. Finally, I gave up. Then one day he overheard me telling Jeff about my problem with finding a decent truck to build.

"Why don't you buy mine?" he asked.

"Well, hell, Leo, because you won't sell it!"

"Sure, I will," he said. "Four hundred dollars."

"Four hundred!" I said. "But it's got no running gear! It's just a body, on blocks!"

"You're right," he said. "Four hundred is the wrong number. I should take five hundred for it."

"Five?!" I said. "But look at the paint! It's all oxidized!"

"You're right," he said. "Six, then."

"Six?" I said. "A minute ago it was five. I'll give you two."

"Okay," he said, "six seventy-five."

"Six seventy-five?" I cried, feeling this thing slipping away from me. "What happened to four?"

He said something about no longer feeling it was worth four. I agreed; it was worth two.

"Not anymore," he said.

It took twenty minutes, but I skillfully negotiated him into a corner from which he could not escape, and he reluctantly accepted my four hundred dollars, knowing (as he had from the start) he'd not get a penny less.

Jeff's shop was a cavernous stone building with a large doorway facing the street. Jeff, Leo, and I were standing in the doorway one day, blinking in the bright sunlight, drinking beer, when a car came around the corner up the way. Leo immediately sprang into action, grabbing me and Jeff and jerking us out of the doorway.

We'd just cleared the opening when, with a series of pops, bullets whizzed by us into the shop, some of them smacking into the rock wall we hid behind. As the car continued up the road, Jeff took a quick look to see who it was.

"Leo!" he exclaimed. "That's your wife!"

"I know," said Leo. "She is angry that I did not come home last night."

Geez, Leo. Thanks for hanging out with us.

Another time, as we stood blinking in the same doorway, beers in hand, a local rancher pulled up, as mad as hell.

"Where the hell were you today?" he hollered at Leo. "This is three days now you've told me you'd be there mañana and you didn't show up. I've had a crew waiting out there and everything! Where were you?"

"I was not there," said Leo.

"I know you weren't there," shouted the rancher.

"You promised me yesterday you'd be there mañana. I've got to get this done, mañana. Will you be there?"

"Oh, yes," said Leo. "I will be there mañana."

"You promise? Mañana?"

"Yes. Mañana."

"Okay," said the rancher. "I'll see you then."

I was standing there thinking, Hell, Leo's usually a pretty dependable guy, when Leo looked up from his beer and said,

"You know, you white guys got it all wrong." He shook his head ruefully. "Mañana doesn't mean 'tomorrow.'" His teeth flashed in a grin. "It means 'not today!'"

LAST DANCE AROUND THE WORLD

Brittney Kalogeros

L EST 20H SAMEDI SOIR AU CENTRE VILLE DE PARIS ET LE SPECTACLE VA bientôt commencer. The stage in the huge theater awaits; its mahogany floors and red velvet curtains hunger for the show, la recognition du peuple. The show is sold out from the box seat to the back row. The audience knows these dancers, car ils sont bien connu, they have put on inconceivable shows before. The world is watching, the audience clapping and cheering in anticipation; “Que vont ils faire cette fois ci?” Ils se le demandent. Their family and friends are amongst the crowd, the dancers feel their presence.

Ca commence: The dancers come on stage, spinning independently around a large globe as it is lowered from the ceiling to center stage. Ils sont magnifiques, le globe est incroyable, et en train de briller ; une ambiance de voyage sur tout le théâtre. Jusqu'à maintenant, même les parisiens ne peuvent critiquer. Each country on the globe is sparkling in carefully placed gold leaf, the oceans are bluer than one could imagine. Est-ce qu'ils sont vraiment faits d'eau? The audience oohs and awes, unanimously dazzled. Little clouds circle the globe, leaving it a little mysterious and even more precious. Les danseurs continuent leur danse, slowing their spinning, slower, s l o w e r , s l o w e r . . . They approach each other and begin to dance together.

He lifts her gracefully in the air, taking her to his side of the stage and carefully placing her down, she lifts him in the air, returning the favor and it is suddenly apparent that the rules of gravity are not applied on this stage. The dancers are graceful, careful, beautiful, and proud. Ils se regardent dans les

yeux avec un intensité que tout le monde peut ressentir. Ce n'est pas qu'un regard d'amour, c'est une profonde soif d'aventure, c'est un ac-cord, voilà la prochaine partie de la danse.

With pure confidence, they look each other in the eyes and join hands around the globe. The audience is on the edge of their seats. As the globe spins, as the world spins, the two dancers don't bat a lash. Their locked eyes begin to widen, the grip of their hands tighten, the globe is now theirs. They begin to spin in circles around the globe: faster, Faster, FASTER. They see the reflection of the world in each other's curious eyes. In a trance, they plan to spin like this forever, laughing, smiling, glowing in the reflections of the golden earth, wrapped in the clouds of the world; beautifully controlled chaos. C'est un moment magique, une sensation parfaite pour les deux danseurs et le peuple, ça ressent la magie du voyage. But suddenly they are spinning too fast, leur regards change en un instant. They know they will fall, they look at each other with panic as they continue to spin, they clench their muscles in preparation for the disaster to come.

They feel their fingers holding as tight as they can as the centripetal force slides their last lingering touch into space. Leurs doigts glissent à un tel point que le bout des doigts se décolle, le danseur disparaît. The clouds have now spread, hiding the fallen man like a blanket over the stage. La danseuse panique, ce n'était pas prévu et tout le monde le sait. Elle a peur, elle a honte, leur spectacle est détruit. Mais surtout, elle s'inquiète pour le danseur. Qu'est qui c'est passé? The woman searches for him, she chimmies up the globe for a better view, the audience gasps, and she finally sees him lying on the ground, wounded, possibly fatally. She runs to him, holds him in her arms as the stage curtains begin to close. “A l'aide ! A l'aide !” She cries. The curtains are drawn now and the audience sits frozen in silence, neither lifting a finger, nor speaking a word: pure stillness. “Tout va bien se passe mon amour”, elle chuchote. Il ne la croit pas, elle ne sait pas quoi croire.

HER SMILE

Jatziry W. Cantu Castillo

AND IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, EVERYTHING COLLAPSED, EVERYTHING was in chaos. His half-closed eyes were cloudy. Cold hands lifted his body from the ground. Then everything went dark and silent. The night passed hour after hour, and the silence persisted.

Without being able to open his eyes, he remembered that sweet, warm look, and how it had turned suddenly cold and dry, terrifying. He couldn't understand why he was there, in that darkness. She had asked him to take her to a nearby town. He was surprised, because in that place there was nothing left but ruins; even so, he could not refuse the request of that enveloping gaze. But an awkward silence fell at that moment he drove into the green thicket of trees. He tried to talk to her, but the sweet gaze that had rested on her face now was cold, and she ignored his questions. Suddenly, a shuddering fear took over his body, and as they advanced, it increased. He sped up, trying to get to the place faster, but it seemed like they would never get there. Occasionally he glanced at her furtively; she, just looking straight ahead, was silent. Then she smiled, and at that moment it started to rain. It was a thick rain, and it seemed to atle the leaves of the trees. "Stop," she said dryly. He looked at her and stopped. She opened the door. "But we haven't arrived," he said. Without paying attention, she stood there, motionless, looking at him with a lost but grateful smile. She seemed to analyze him. Fear lodged within him again, and he began to drive away from that haunting look.

The rain began to calm. The thickness of the trees was fading. Minutes later, he thought he saw a figure in the middle of the road moving strangely through the rain. He kept

driving without being able to distinguish what was in front of him. Suddenly, the figure turned quickly towards him, shrieking a high-pitched and deafening scream. He wanted to stop but was so close that he hit it with the car. Full of fear, he stepped on the accelerator, quickly moving away from the scene. When he thought he was far away, he slowed down and looked around to see if anyone had seen what happened, but there was nothing but darkness.

At that moment... a few meters away, the woman with the sweet smile appeared in front of the car. When he saw her, he braked abruptly, avoided her, and accelerated again, but then he saw her everywhere, in the opposite lane, straight ahead, to the sides... He tried to reach his destination without stopping, but she followed him, appearing everywhere with that same disturbing smile. He couldn't take it anymore. His heart was beating fast, and he was sweating cold; then his face turned pale when he saw her again siting next to him bloodied. He screamed deafeningly and felt a heavy blow. Pieces of glass embedded themselves in his skin as he was thrown out of the car, falling to the ground, listening to the cracking of his bones. He heard screaming and there was chaos. Through cloudy eyes he looked up at the trees and saw that smile fade into the darkness...

CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

JATZIRY W. CANTU CASTILLO Born in Mexico July 2002, Jatziry lived in Mexico all her life until 8 months ago when she moved to the USA. She really likes music, playing the piano and drawing. She loves plants and has a green thumb.

DARYL NGENE CHINN lives in Arcata where he taught his children to speak Chinese and his wife to understand it. He taught poetry writing to students for many years in several states. He cooks Chinese-style food and is helping to create a monument to Chinese and Asians in Humboldt County.

JAMES FLOSS has taught Public Speaking and Oral Interpretation of Literature at Humboldt State University (now Cal Poly Humboldt) and at College of the Redwoods for over three decades. In retirement, he enjoys writing flash fiction (mostly science fiction) and poetry. He also produced a podcast called Immigrant Voices, about immigrant experiences here available wherever you listen to podcasts.

PATRICIO GALLEGUILLOS is a Chilean-American born in California my childhood was filled with trips to San Francisco to visit with our Chilean relatives. Evenings were filled with steamy pots and lots of Spanish. I have fond memories of those times. Eventually, I earned my teaching credential and enjoyed my Hispanic 6th graders. I was able to have John Oliver Simon, from "Poets in the Classroom", work with my classes. It was there when I found my voice. My first free write was a love poem to my Chilean abulita who I never got to meet. Words just flowed out of my head from deep within the hidden spots of my heart/ mi corazon. As a teacher/artist/Latino I am so grateful to have found my voice. Eschuchame!

CHONG GEYER, born in rural South Korea, has been pursuing her education. She sees this as the key to helping others, which is her life goal.

SARAH GODLIN is the Archivist and Digital Publisher at Cal Poly Humboldt, and the author of *A Like the Flowers, B Like the Ocean*, a children's book about synesthesia. Sarah has been a Humboldtian for 24 years.

TYLYN K. JOHNSON (he/they) is a part-time writer from Indianapolis, IN. He writes to reflect his heritage of storytelling and love through the framed lenses of Black Queer artistry. Their language appears in just femme and dandy, The Indianapolis Review, Etchings Literary Magazine, the lickety~split, Brainchild Magazine, and Rigorous, among other spaces. Tylyn performed readings and obtained writing awards while earning his BSW at the University of Indianapolis. They are also the creator of Communal Creativity: A Game of Poetry on itch.io. Projects and social media can be found at <https://linktr.ee/tykywrites> (@TyKyWrites on Instagram/Twitter).

BRITTNEY KALOGEROS is an artist and English teacher living in Paris, originally from the United States. Her background in applied linguistics, focus on abstraction in her painting, and her experiences traveling the world are the major influences in the writing of this piece

ZEV LEVINSON is the author of *Song of Six Rivers*, published by Humboldt State University Press. He has taught at over one hundred sites with California Poets in the Schools since 1998. He's also taught at Humboldt State University, College of the Redwoods, the Redwood Coast Writers' Center, is a Redwood Writing Project teacher-consultant, and a founder of the Lost Coast Writers Retreat. Being a freelance editor and writing consultant—see www.ZevLev.com—Zev has acted as a contributing editor to various publications. His po-

ems and other writings have appeared in many journals and anthologies.

KATHERINE (KAY) CECH LATONIO writes stories and poetry from an urban homestead in Myrtle town. You can often find her exploring the natural wonders of Humboldt with her husband and two chihuahuas wearing little jackets.

ANTHONY LOWE is a grad student currently enrolled in Cal Poly Humboldt's Applied English program. When not working on his MA project, he divides his time between creative writing and researching local histories. If/when he grows up, he'd like to write professionally or continue working in education abroad.

EVANGELINA HERRERA MARTINEZ is married and a mother of four kids. She has lived in Loleta for 24 years, and loves to cook. Evangelina came from Culiacán in Sinaloa, Mexico. She is very proud of herself for learning English.

MARGORY MÓRALE (M M) fecha de nacimiento 11/30/78 nació en el departamento de Retalhuleu Guatemala soy la menor de 7 hermanos.

KAITLIN MOTTERSHEAD's work is articulated with a great level of intensity. In Kaitlin's words: "whether it's color, texture or subject matter, bland is not something that interests me. My style is rooted in my identity as the daughter of a strong Colombian woman and empowered new mother. The female form embodies the ultimate form of strength and resilience."

MEHMET ALI ÖZRUH was born in July 1980 in Izmir, Türkiye. He studied Art in Turkey. Again, at the beginning of July 2019, he came to America with his wife. They have been living in Humboldt since September.

STEVE PARR was born in Berkeley and raised in Humboldt. His cynicism is the only thing keeping him from being a full-blown Liberal. Outlaw, resistor of authority, trouble-maker and all-around scofflaw, he has muddled his way into respectability purely by accident and probably only in his own head.

LAURA ROWE graduated from UCSC with a BA in Music and has since been exploring the world of ceramics, as well as nutrition and health. She currently resides part time in Eureka and Los Angeles, working on ceramics and is currently finishing her nutrition certificate and Doula certification.

BECKY SAMORANO is a budding memoir writer and seasoned speech language pathologist. She is a Child of Deaf Adults (CODA) and her native language is American Sign Language. She is bicultural, straddling both the Hearing and Deaf worlds. Becky was also raised within a fundamentalist religious household. Her atypical upbringing and complex life experiences influence her unique perspective on life. She lives with her husband and three dogs in Northern California. In her free time, she loves to ski, sing, travel, read, garden, and practice spirituality.

IVAN SMASON is a poet and licensed clinical psychologist in Los Angeles. Previously, he's worked as a staff psychologist at the Sonoma Developmental Center in Eldridge, and he's also a JD graduate of University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento.

REUBEN VALDIVIA was born in Hollywood, CA and raised in East L.A, spending childhood summers in Mexico with family touring Pre-Columbian ruins. Reuben moved to Southern Humboldt in 1983 and stays on 100 acres. Reuben created a utopia with a little cabin along the creek. Utilizing gravity water systems, solar systems and free micro-hydroelectricity. He grows his own food and medicine.

MY VIDA EN GUATEMALA

Magory Morales

NASOUA XIONG was born and raised in Thailand, but she is Hmong. In her words:

“My family and I are refugees from the Vietnam War. We were given an opportunity from the IDM (International Organization for Migration) to move to the US. I have been living in the USA for 17 years now. I have five children. My oldest three were born in Thailand. The others were born here. In 17 years of living here, I spent 16 years caring for my children and one year studying English as a second language. I started ESL classes in August of 2022. I didn't know ESL classes existed until a friend of mine introduced me to them. I felt nervous at first, but I was ecstatic to learn English finally. My friends were already good at speaking English, and it made me feel ashamed that I couldn't hold conversations with them. Now I can understand and communicate more with the English speakers around me.”

MY LIFE IN GUATEMALA AND THAT OF MY FAMILY WAS STABLE, WE had our own business and we were doing well. At the beginning of 2013, the nightmare began: notes with threats to our business and calls with threats demanding money to let us work in the business. Everything got worse because the numbers were increasing and they let us know that we were being watched. Our decision was made because they called us telling us that if we didn't keep paying, they would kidnap our daughter to show us that they weren't playing. All of this happened without our family knowing. Within a week we sold everything that had taken us years to make, and the same night we left home we told the closest family what was happening to us and that same night we had to leave our house. It was a very difficult trip because it was an uncertain destination and full of great danger, without the security of reaching the U.S. and we were anguished, especially our daughter knowing that returning was a death sentence for everyone. Our daughter cried and all the time she asked if we were coming home because she missed her family. The trip took 28 days and the last ones were very difficult. Our money ran out and we only had to buy a little food for our daughter, we only drank water at a bus stop. A family saw that we only bought food for the girl, they approached us with food and 40 dollars, and that helped us reach our destination with my family. The first year was difficult. Even though I knew I was safe now, the feeling that someone was watching us made me hide when I left my sister's house. Today, almost 10 years later, fear is just a ghost, we are safe and we feel free in this country that allowed us to go back to work for our dreams, and recover what one day they forced us to leave behind.

WE DIDN'T THINK MUCH ABOUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING

Lucerito Carillo Varelas

WE DIDN'T THINK MUCH ABOUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING, JUST THAT we lived better, and of course it was a risk to start our lives from scratch. Our biggest fears was entering an unknown world with a new language. Traveling alone was what terrified me the most. I only came with many dreams and goals to fulfill, I had only lived in Mexico all my life. In the course when I arrived and I met beautiful people. I spent like \$770 to get here.

Arriving for the first time at my sister's house that I had not seen for 6 years was beautiful. The next day they had a meal where all my family came together that I had not seen for years. Adapting to the type of food and the new language was quite a challenge.

My sisters and sisters-in-law helped me a lot. Even going to the store was a challenge because I didn't know what to say, I miss Mexico. Of course I miss my mom too much, her food, and her moments with her.

I really liked being in this country because I started a new life, I am learning English and new things. I got my first job in a pizzeria, which was undoubtedly a beautiful experience.

I feel happy to be here because my life is better. It has taken me a year to adapt to the new lifestyle, my biggest challenge is to learn English in its entirety because I know it will give me a lot of personal security.

For my future, I want a stable life, have a good job, create my own family and fully learn English.

THE YEAR I CAME TO THE USA

Na Soua Xiong

THE YEAR I CAME TO THE USA WAS APRIL 2004. WE WERE REFUGEES, and we fled from Laos to Thailand. As an immigrant, there were many opportunities, so we decided to move to the US with the help of IOM (International Organization for Migration). My travel to the USA was very difficult. I didn't write or speak English, so I had a hard time looking for my flight. During the check ups for the flight, I was scared and nervous because it was my first checkup. First few days in the States were weird for me because the time zones are different. I would sleep during the day and be awake at night, getting used to the times were hard. I received help from the people at the Public Health Branch, and they took me to my doctor for health checks for my family. I also had some relatives that spoke English. They helped me register for Social Services and green cards for my family. I really like it here because of the opportunities they provide for us, and the laws of the US are beneficial for immigrants like me. The buildings were very comfortable to live in. I was very excited that I got to come here to the US. I am now going to school to learn English, and be able to help my family.

YOU ARE ALIVE

Tylyn K Johnson

This is not a poem for the buried,
nor those who have returned to ash and dust,
nor those whose stories are ending
in the clutches of the sea.

These are simple words for the living.
Please, keep on living without apologies.
If you live with “I’m sorry” stuck in your mouth, remember your pride.
Please,
for me, for you, for those that
will be born after us.

This is for all of you;

who speak forgotten languages
who inherit cultures far grander than our
knowl edge of the universe
who wear the clothes of history and modernity
who sow hope into your communities by way of
your authentic living
who would raze a world that excludes the people
of the margins

You all are alive.

You are here, in this world, changing the foreign earth into the
motherland.

That is enough.
You all are enough.

These words are for you;

who carry the ancestry of the African diaspora
who breathe with a Queer heart
who move with a disabled body
who ache from the battles of mental health
who search for a better life in a new country
who survive abuse
who escape the tragedies of your homelands
who believe in marginalized Gods

You are alive,
and that is all that matters to me.

THAT'S HOW I REMEMBER YOU

Zoila Vazquez

That's how I remember you.

San Miguel Allende

Small town, surrounded by

Mountains where I was born.

Your houses of adobe and roof tiles,

Your huts of reeds and palms.

Your streets like white

and rocky swings.

Peasants with typical

White clothes, hat and machete

go to work.

Women carrying their pitchers

with water on their heads

poor and humble,

people and in their faces, peace.

The calm and cool waters of

Your river, but like a brave

Bull in the rainy season,

your bellows reached my ears

when I was a child.

Your silver nights of full moon,

When our grandparents or uncles

Told us the same stories,

which did not bore us, or

on dark nights telling scary

stories by the light of a candle

or oil lamp.

Oh what beautiful moments these

when the whole family gathered

the fireflies turning their

lights on and off playing

like children.

The birds leave their nests,

the cubs their burrows.

That's how I did it,

I flew.

The present that I live today

will soon be past.

I don't know the future

I only know what the expectations

will bring me.

"I live in a land that is not mine

which I have learned to love"

Beloved San Miguel Allende,

I don't want to come back to you,

so many years have passed

that nothing is the same any more.

"You are my yesterday that

already happened, and
so I will remember you.”

BOONTLING

Ivan Smason

Broke, without so much as a dollar
A preacher and a medical doctor
Left Boonville’s brawling tavern, The Bucket of Blood
And walked toward a local spot known as the Bald Hills

Along the way they spied an Outsider (someone not from
Boonville)
And his hot young girlfriend or wife or something
Doing it, like rabbits, in a desolate area

A man with a gun told the Outsiders
To scam, or else he’d arrest the man
For impregnating a woman in a desolate area
And the woman for being a prostitute

The laughing Boonville boys (the preacher and doctor) then
went
To Cloverdale to Zachariah “Zeese” Clifton’s’ place
Where they got some coffee drinks and some money

Now with some money again and feeling rich
They borrowed a strange vehicle to drive to Philo

There they entered The Angry Cyclone
Where the barkeep recommended

That they try the new fine whiskey

After much whiskey drinking and talking Boontling together

The medical doctor said to the preacher

“That’s some good drinkin”

To which the preacher responded

“That really is some good drinkin”

SO I HAVE A FEW TATTOOS

Sarah Godlin

How seriously one must take one’s flesh

To save it from the artist’s needle,

And keep blank space between wrinkles and liver spots

So that shiva might be observed traditionally.

And also, I guess,

to retain the right to be buried among the others

Whose company

can’t

be enjoyed anymore, anyway.

TAMARIND TREE (EXCERPTS)

Roberto Rojas

THE CLOUDS SCATTER IN THE SKIES AROUND THIS GIGANTIC PILE OF soil in the shape of praying hands. The river moves with the wind and lets you see the shiny stones under the water. Fishes get together and swim towards the current to avoid getting caught from the birds flying over the tamarind trees.

The white-painted house has a big patio with river stones on the floors. The north side of the patio has a large garden with all kinds of plants and beautiful roses. The patio also has two wooden benches around the soil where there are a few plants of lavender. In the mornings the birds came down to dig in the loose soil and look for their food. In the afternoons sometimes the birds hide under the roof shingles to protect themselves from the rain.

The next day there was a lot of wind and it started to rain. A tamarind seed soaked by water and pushed by the wind found itself lying in the loose soil in the garden. The soil embraced the seed and gave it warmth during the storm. The full moon watched over its sleep at night. The sun greeted it the next day. The bird's feet stepped on it while looking for food in the ground.

After several weeks inside the earth, the tamarind seed sprouted to life. Something green was trying to reach the heavens but at the same time claiming the new space that belonged to it. Its hands were extended and its feet remained inside the earth since it was already part of the plant kingdom of this World.

Time passed and the tamarind plant's leaves were leafy and its trunk stronger than a bush. The wind stopped being a risk for it and its shadow already covered the big rocks in the

garden. It was beginning to bear fruit but not enough to be eaten. Since the tiny fruits were a representation of the abundance that will grow one day.

As if its leaves were moved and fell. The tree did not complain or get angry. It didn't have bad feelings and only it gave its best. It didn't get offended by unpleasant words or grimaces. It knows only how to give love. It gives shade without asking for it. It gives fruit without asking for it. It is unbreakable and strong in the rain, in the sun, in wind, or the cold, and throughout time. It is its destiny to grow and caress the sky as well giving the best of it....

The tree was without leaves. Some brown leaves announce the winds of autumn and their broken branches moved by the wind. It looked dry and no longer gave such a beautiful shadow. The trees didn't fall and held up with an unbreakable spirit. No more sour fruit was saved by the tree unless not for this season. It did not cry or complain because it was a tree. There is no sadness, remorse, or vengeance for anybody since the hate never existed in it.

When spring arrived, her leaves moved from one side to the other as if it was dancing a coordinated waltz. Its trunk grew more than twice the average. Its fruits hung like rattles. The Light passed through its leaves creating a natural stained glass window on the floor. The tree's shadow was covered like a big cloud. The sound of their leaves rang like an angelic melody....

There were no dry leaves under the tree or broken branches. There were nice river rocks surrounding the trunk of the tree. The earth was wet every two days. Its fruits fell and soon disappeared. The fruits were not uprooted anymore. The branches covered the patio with their shadows and moved with the wind like ocean waves. The birds colored the branches of the tree next to its fruits. The tree was loved without it being requested or gained. The tree doesn't shine in the sun. The tree shines with the sun.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The sunset came. The skies were cloudy and windy, but the heat of the afternoon was still felt. The warm colors of the sun lit up the skies as if they were on fire. It was noticeable like an April afternoon. The tree moved from one side to another whipped by the wind while its fruits fell from the tree as a hail-storm. The birds flew under the warm color of the sky while a chirping noise was heard from far away. The warm colors of the sky began to turn into cold colors. The dark veil covered the horizon and some small stars started to appear. There was a great sound as if the sky was splitting in two and the earth was sinking into his being. The trees shook abruptly with the earth and the water overflowed from the river. A gigantic column of smoke and fire came out of the volcano. The skies began to rain rocks of fire and the houses started to be covered by fine gray dust. ...

That night turned red. The warm colors devoured all the houses and the nature surrounding, the living and nonliving things too. Red fireflies were seen in the sky. The noises of crying from the trees were heard. The red colors won over the green tones and later turned them into gray. The river of heat covered the city. The clouds of smoke with grinding glass covered the skies like a veil in the city. The warm colors came to hug the tamarind tree and suffocate any life from it. It was transformed to become one with the world....

After the colossal disaster, there came a sensation of peace. The three seeds buried in the soil gave a new hope. Love was born. It was born to give everything without anyone demanding it.

Personas is published each May. Submissions are open annually from October 1 to March 15. We accept writings and art in any medium which consider or embody multilingualism. Please label submissions "Personas Submission" in the subject line and include a brief bio (of less than 50 words) in the body of the email. Include the submission as an attachment with no name. Email to jonathan-maiullo@redwoods.edu or hand or postal delivery to 333 6th St., Eureka, CA 95501. And, of course, thank you!

Personas se publica cada mes de mayo. Las presentaciones están abiertas anualmente del 1 de octubre al 15 de marzo. Aceptamos escritos y arte en cualquier medio que considere o incorpore el multilingüismo. Etiquete los envíos como "Envío de personas" en la línea de asunto e incluya una breve biografía (de menos de 50 palabras) en el cuerpo del correo electrónico. Incluya el envío como un archivo adjunto sin nombre. Envíe un correo electrónico a jonathan-maiullo@redwoods.edu o envíelo personalmente o por correo a 333 6th St., Eureka, CA 95501. Y, por supuesto, ¡gracias!

Personas tau luam tawm txhua lub Tsib Hlis. Kev xa tawm yog qhib txhua xyoo txij lub Kaum Hli 1 txog Lub Peb Hlis 15. Peb lees txais cov ntawv sau thiab kos duab hauv ib qho nruab nrab uas xav txog los-sis muaj ntau hom lus. Thov sau cov ntawv xa tawm "Personas Submission" hauv kab ntawv thiab suav nrog cov ntaub ntawv luv luv (tsawg dua 50 lo lus) hauv lub cev ntawm email. Sau cov ntawv xa mus ua ib daim ntawv txuas nrog tsis muaj npe. Email rau jonathan-maiullo@redwoods.edu lossis xa ntawv xa mus rau 333 6th St., Eureka, CA 95501. Thiab, tau kawg, ua tsaug!

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Toyon Multilingual Literary Magazine publishes distinguished literary and art work, with particular interest in promoting environmental and social justice. We seek diverse voices from around the world and welcome submissions in all languages.

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