



The Daphne Review

Fall 2016

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Solapur

i go to Solapur; i feel roots digging deep
into the soil, caressing pools of saline water,

a trove of history. lenses sparkle with the bane
of age, misty spirits rise from a mass of

congealed blood. time never elapses; rather, it feels
like i travel faster than the speed of light—for time

goes backwards. the candles on that raspberry
cream-pie curtail in number, until the frosting

is a naked mess of pink. the roots go deeper, deepening
like a dentist's drill, until they reach the nadir. i cease to

exist, i feel generations come to life in lines of Marathi.
i had never imagined that she could have black hair,

that she could sing a nightingale's lullaby; the sky looks
younger, the stars akin to innocent babies. the moon

shines a soft, hopeful glow. if only those clocks didn't exist,
could she retain her youthful purity.

Clara Hong

A Room



Counting Silences

1

i'm not too good with numbers
with determining the force of which the earth tipped off its axis
with finding new raindrops to apologize to
so i sit
re-arranging tissue-paper memories to make a masterpiece of a
story
and whether i came from a weed or from the mud or from the sky
i need you to know that every flying thing inside of me wanted to
land on you

2

four twisted feet later
me, a traveler dressed in black
you, a destination wrapped in skin
discussed journeys

3

you called after i'd just tucked in my fear,
watched how it had outgrown its blanket again
watched it lying on a mattress of spilled poetry
you sighed twice, i think
i'm not too good with numbers

Janice Roh

Locked



About This Work:

"This is a drawing of buildings that represent the boundary of women and men. Each building on the left represents places that men visit the most and on the right side buildings, it represents the shops that in most cases women visit. This shows that there are only two sides, women or men. I thought, however, that this not the only way I could characterize a person, so I choose to not draw anything between those two types of buildings. My goal is to show that there is more than just being a woman or a man and you could choose to do anything without the matter of gender."

Seowon Yang

Boundary Line Between Men and Women



Rabbit Hole

Jump

You're far enough away to see that the forest is haunted, but close enough to let it mesmerize you. The trees have spidery arms and ginger-root fingertips. The rabbit hole is at the end of a secret passageway into the woods. The sky is the color of an old paint can: streaked with thousands of colors, scrubbed to blue-gray with crisscrosses of stratus clouds. Wreaths and dryads beckon with webbed fingers; roots of trees slither beneath the dirt. You're scared to go alone. Then a rabbit the size of a teacup prances through long, stringy strands of bluegrass and offers you a special invitation. How can you resist?

Two strawberry blonde braids shackle your hair to your head. You're all buttoned and collared in a prim cotton dress, bird's egg blue. Your arms, white as sugar, want to be scratched. Your woolen tights are dying to be shredded by tree branches; your dress wants to bathe in mud. You're a bored little girl with itching feet. Go. Run.

The hardest part is the jump. You reach the hole in the deepest, darkest corner of the woods, and watch the teacup-rabbit disappear into the mess of rock and soil. The trees have brushed you with sap and voices swarm you like bees. Do it do it do it. You peer inside the hole. The darkness smells cold and sweet, like peppermint. You lean in deep, smell, salivate. Fall.

The rabbit hole is at the end of the hallway, behind your middle school cafeteria. The "W" of "Women's" is peeled off. It has a swinging door, and inside, the tiles are cold granite. It's an ordinary girls' bathroom: a row of stalls, flushes that barely work, sinks clogged with hair. It smells like urine and vanilla Softsoap. Can you live with the smell? Can you live with the fluttering in your stomach that will never, ever go away, even when the colors of the floor and the smells of the sinks become as familiar as your bedroom? Because this can be your new home. Everyday at 1:00, remember your appointments with Omen's Room. It's empty at that time of day; it's waiting for you. Your fingers want to feel your uvula and leave crescents in the back of your mouth. Your knees want to rest on the mint green tiles, knotted hair and bubblegum wedged in the cracks, as your right hand explores your throat.

Priya Thomas

Your tongue is too pink and soft; it wants the friction of scraping against your teeth. Your whole body is bored and wants to free fall. You just have to take that first step.

Fall

At first, it's all darkness. The tunnel into the earth is narrow; your body scrapes against soil and stone. The beginning is slow and a little claustrophobic. You squirm your way through the dirt, space opening up every now and then to let your body drop. You want to see the fantastical creatures the haunted forest promised you; you want to see ghosts. Where are the mad hatters? Where are the smoke-puffing caterpillars and white roses? Where is the purple vial of Shrink Me that makes you small; where is the pink frosted cake that makes you tower over the world?

You're almost there. In three seconds you'll feel it-3, 2, 1. Takeoff. The ground opens up and you're flying; Cheshire cats, pink-slippered fairies and butterflies with transparent wings flutter all around you. This is the fantasy world you read about in books, the books you always ached to jump inside. This is where the Twelve Dancing Princesses waltz away the heels of their shoes. This is Sleeping Beauty's dream: the world she lived in during those one hundred years of frozen time. This is the land after the pricked finger. Love your scars; love your callused knuckles that one day will bear a diamond ring. Love your splintered lips that a handsome prince will kiss awake.

The fluorescent lights in the cafeteria will nearly blind you. During those first few weeks, all you'll want to do is cover your eyes like a little girl and pretend there aren't rats padding through your stomach, scuttling through the spaces between your ribs. You'll burrow your face in a sweater stiff with dried perfume, because you're obsessive-compulsive and want everything to smell nice, like honeysuckle and beaches and sandalwood. You'll smell the cocktail of sticky-sweetness on your arms 'till you can't breathe, then get up and stand in the lunch line just to smell the frying-pan grease. Then go back to your seat; try to fall in love with your perfume and hate sun-spotted cheese and popping oil and mosquito-bitten bananas. Fail. Pile your plate with plastic packets of Smuckers' raspberry jelly and carve out

Priya Thomas

the seedy red rectangles with your fork. You'll suck on them like candy, let them slide down your throat in solid pieces like Jell-O, then shovel them out with your finger and spit them out in water tinged blue with Clorox. You'll slice the leaves off of strawberries and chew them up fast and silent like a guinea pig, teeth chomping furiously before your brain catches up with your mouth. Then back to Omen's Room.

You'll play video montages in your head, of bodies the world likes to look at. Bodies smeared on storefronts at the mall, flat shiny bodies ribboned in lace and satin and strappy lingerie. Hard, sculpted bodies in running shorts and push-up bras, slick with sweat. Rail-thin arms drowning in angel sleeves, elastic stomachs that look like stretched paper. The lipstick smiles. The glowing faces, so happy to be attached to their pretty little bodies. Prettyhappyhappyhappy.

They are amber and white and honey brown, peach and gold and dark chocolate-black. They have soft sprays of freckle and feathery eyelashes. Pale faces curtained in silk, dark faces rimmed in kinky curls. When you were ten years old they summoned you from Vogue and Elle and Marie Clare, movie screens and outlet malls and highway billboards.

When teachers asked you what you wanted to be when you grew up, you didn't say, "a supermodel." When your father asked you if you wanted to be a doctor just like him, you didn't say, "No daddy, I just want collarbones that click like knitting needles and veins like purple labyrinths and a triangle of air between my thighs." And maybe it didn't start that way. Maybe you began just like any other girl, with dreams of braceleted wrists and delicate little feet inside braided sandals, and the kind of fragile limbs that people have to handle with care. You wanted your body to be breakable, like your heart. Because you had the kind of heart that broke all the time, for the littlest things--your pencil wasn't aligned with your notebook, your hair was parted crooked, you forgot to get dressed in multiples of eight.

And because you hated your broken brain, you wanted to love your body like the shiny ribboned girls loved theirs. You wanted to tell yourself you could do anything. You could be in bathing suit ads, you could be Jasmine in Disneyland, you could be the cover model of Runner's World. You could pluck the strings of your neck like a guitar, you could have a bird-cage of ribs with nightingales singing inside, your backbones could be wings beneath your cardigan.

Priya Thomas

So here you are now, slowly falling. Doing what girls do. Waiting to fly.

Fly

You fall into a room with no doors, only a keyhole in the wall. You drink your magic medicine until you're small enough to crawl through. This is crossing the portal. This is the sweet, burning pain of wings sprouting from the rungs of your spine. This is seeing figments of your dreams splash real and thick as paint across the sky: butterflies with sugar cube heads and buttered-bread wings, door mice in silk dresses, jabberwockies with whiskered fish-heads, and wooden rocking-horse flies. You swim across a pool of your tears and wash up on a white-sanded shore, where fairytale creatures rush to wipe your eyes and comb your hair. You stumble into the Red Queen's courtyard, where flamingos are used as mallets on her croquet ground. You become one of her courtiers and paint her roses red, all day, all night. She lets you stroke the red feathers of her Jubjub bird and live in her beautiful castle; just don't let her cut off your head.

You still taste the vomit, but your lungs echo when you breathe and your stomach is a silver-wired aviary. Nothing but wind and fluttering wings. Your head is plucked free of thorns, the edges of your thoughts are softened like glass scraped against rock. You are like the inside of a seashell, hollow and delirious from the dull roar in your ears, quieting the rest of the world.

But soon you feel dirty; you dream of bubble baths in your throat. Afterwards, as you stare with glazed eyes at bookshelves in the school library, feigning interest in the titles as if to somehow set other people at ease, you feel the slow stream of bubbles down your chin. You duck your head and shield your face behind DVDs, frothing, frothing.

You are eleven and ready to be rescued. You let your parents drive you to the hospital. You let doctors stitch you inside a cotton swab, erasing points and angles, 'till everything but your thoughts are nursery-soft. You're spoon-fed off of cafeteria trays, obediently chomping up a rainbow of pills every morning.

Your last night in the the hospital, your body doesn't fit in the bed. The mattress groans beneath you like a frail lap you've outgrown. You cocoon yourself into a spiral, knees tucked into your stomach, head pressed between them, straining for pockets of warmth between gossamer sheets.

Priya Thomas

The blankets fall clumsily from your limbs like arms too fragile to hold you. You spiral tighter and tighter, strangling the blankets between crevices of your body. The vents blasting heat above your head do nothing to dull the sharp whips of December air across your legs. You lie limp and slippery like mud in the sheets, heat dissipating in the empty spaces.

You slide out of it and crouch on the floor. You stretch your scrubs over your knees and close your eyes so you won't see your calves soak the floor like spilled coffee. There are no mirrors, but your fingers act of their own accord. They scramble down your stomach, pluck at your forearms, your neck, the backs of your knees. Cup pieces of yourself in your hands, squeeze and stretch them like caramel. Everything is soft and foreign.

When you're discharged, your body temperatures are erratic. The silver cable chains of necklaces people give you in post-hospital gift boxes are icicles around your throat; hours later the pendants slip in your sweat. Your dimensions are unclear; your edges sandpapered down to blurry curves. With no sense of substance or proportion, you pervade the air like smoke. These are the days of long, roundabout walks through the neighborhood. Forbidden to move faster, forbidden to move anywhere but in circles, you spiral yourself into a vacuum where nothing, no friend or doctor or relative, can penetrate.

And then, like a pepper plant, you grow. Your cheeks ripen and fill with seedy brown freckles, your hair reddens, and your veins squiggle thick, healthy stems through your arms. You pick up your feet and find the lines where your body meets the air. You know where you stand, you control where you move, and, at last, you have the freedom to choose where you go. You unspiral like a fetus and resume the life you paused in sixth grade, when your lungs filled with fluid and you used a faithless friend to drain them.

Crash

The Red Queen finds you painting her roses white. You couldn't help it; you ran out of red paint. The Red Knights urged you to rebel, to sneak a drop of white from their secret stash of paint cans and make your mark. You love the queen, but like any restive child, you want to test the boundaries.

The Queen, you realize, does not love you. She sweeps into the garden, outraged, and slams you into the dirt. You have failed the test; you

Priya Thomas

don't deserve the castle, the bread-and-butterflies, or the mushrooms that make you fit in keyholes. You have squandered her gifts and wrecked her garden. Off with your head.

You will hit the ground a thousand times. First it will feel like letting go. You'll realize the falling wasn't falling at all; the whole time you were clawing the air with your fingernails. You know what's coming next, and half of you is screaming, pleading with yourself to stop. The other half is bouncing on her tiptoes, ecstatic. She pulls you to the fridge and whispers in your ear to open it, promising she'll hold you through the night when your body revolts. This half wins.

Open the freezer and find the carton of Safeway Vanilla Ice Cream. Grab a serving spoon, make ice cream snow globes, fat as your head, creamy and white and frozen. Have a snow ball fight with your mouth, chuck the spoonfuls down your throat so they splash in your stomach. Lick the crystals off the lid, scrape the melted cream off the bottom of the carton, empty it. Make cookie dough and slurp it off the spatula. Bite the spatula and eat that too. Mix the flour and sugar and butter with an electric mixer and stick the spinning beaters into your mouth. They'll spray chunks down your throat and shred your tongue. But you're stillhungrystillhungrystillhungry. Eat everything in the house: graham crackers, Raisinettes, bananas, Hershey kisses, mayonnaise, ice cream, cookie dough, smoothies, brownie mix, premade frosting, freezer waffles drenched in maple syrup, eggs dripping yolk down your wrists, cheese scalded to the top of your gums. Eat the spices, the condiments, the Nestle powder. Stuff yourself like a moose head and hang yourself up on a wall.

The night will pass, and you will pay. Spend the next month crying and repenting and trying to free fall again, but now gravity is working against you. It suckers you into the ground. It's harder this time, but you manage to climb backwards up the rabbit hole. You'll fall and fly and fall and fly. And crash, again and again and again.

There is only one thing left to try: listen. Not to the voices in your head; the people insisting that there's an outside world you've been missing. It feels like digging yourself deeper underground, but you cling to their promises that there's light on the other side. You grit your teeth, you follow a

meal plan, you pretend your brain isn't broken, you pretend to have ambitions like Real Girls: straight-A's, college, graduate school, a job. But Real Girls like to talk. They talk about everything you've been trying so hard to vacuum out of your head. They've all mapped their bodies like you; they know every coordinate. They flaunt their self-hatred like makeup; at meals they perform the same soliloquies of shame and regret. But somehow they're still alive, still breathing, still happy.

You are not a Real Girl. Your body is no longer yours to sculpt and chisel; you are a shriveled plant that needs to be watered, you are a spreadsheet of numbers. You are made of stethoscopes and EKG stickers. You are trying to feed yourself with Real Girl poison; you are swimming against a vicious tide that used to sweep you up like a mermaid. So you make up new things to do: make patterns in the crook of your elbow with nail scissors. Decorate your arms with the sharp ends of your earrings and run your fingers over the dots like Braille. Your body is coated in soft, downy hair that you shave off in the shower. When the razor nicks you, the blood makes you smile.

Wake

When you wake up among the smashed teacups, try not to step on the broken glass. Hold your skirt in your fingers as you tiptoe through the rubble. The Red Queen must have ambushed the Mad Hatter's tea party while you were sleeping. You step around the spilled coffee, the chopped-off chair legs, the bloodstained tablecloth. There are no rabbits or Cheshire cats. The tie-dye pigments are drained from the sky; the trees drink up the whiteness like curdled milk. If anyone was reading your fairytale, they've stopped. Your book is closed, the characters are dead. The landscape curls into itself like cat ready for sleep. It's time to go home.

Julia Pope

Mother

on the patio she lounges
enjoying the zephyrs
of an autumn morning

her shoulders, wrapped snug
in a ragged zentangle-printed shawl
mask the freckles collected
like tally marks for every day
of skipped sunscreen

her breast, a petal of hibiscus
plucked at by her youngest child
grows drier as sucklings have spaced
now, he stretches the length
of her extended arm

her eyes of shaded emerald
beam a distinct brightness, vibrancy
when the light shines upon them
shadow creeps out from beneath
her lower lids, forming contrast

her hair, untamed, shows traces
of silver gradient, glistening
from roots to top, strands slowly fade
lacking pigments, replaced with whiteness
unraveling, an ephemeral bloom

Joseph Felkers

QUANTUM WOLFGANG

These notions dance about my mind, they are Pauli
Excluded electrons waltzing all alone—in
these shapes chemists label with letters: s, p, d, f.
I prefer to call to them by their name: spherical,
dumbbell, clovers.

I like watching ice melt. After I learned about
first order decay, Fiestaware got romantic. I
don't care if this is lead poisoning my neighbors,
I should have been leached by it a long time ago.

Portrait of a Crane

That summer, it rained almost every single day.
You quietly set our soggy, ruined shoes
on the back porch, peeled away apple skin for me,
the sharpened blade indistinguishable from your fingers.
I remember brittle jerks of the wrist, feathery touches
through my hair, rhythmic. That summer
you began to reek of something more than a blank canvas;
that summer you taught me the stiff flicks of blue-black
brushstrokes
that dampened and blurred in the downpour
when we held the papers out to dry. I watched
your long legs untangle, damp with heat. Thick, black lashes
of ink around the curves of your calves, dips of a brush
in the sharp arch of an ankle. A tilt of your neck, and I knew-
you could not linger here once I knew how to paint you, and the
soft kneading, the sweeping, the life spun by your lithe hands
would cease
to become white noise. You had a journey long before
I mattered. So you crept away; the blots of ink
dripped uncompromisingly around your frame, the most
unforgivable outline.
That summer you turned into a crane
and flew back, you symbolized, somewhere else
you were youth, you were not obligated, no one haunted
your dreams. I could not even
whisper a goodbye.

The Abyss

Here in this abyss I lie, tied with ropes that I have sewn
Strayed from plan, I must admit; Brief was this meant to be.
The gaze, once loving, now besmeared with spite,
Snags me to a fall; Misery seeps and sinks past calluses.
Doubt slithers o'er the glimpse of light, rises to the brim–

I trudge– trudge through the vacant vast, the lightless
Land of gloom, the breezes of my silent bawls
I run– run through the shredding jeers, the gnawing
Memories and deafening throbs, the blinding glares
I turn, face the dark, swallow the unspoken.

Caress my shivering arms, crumple the sickening sighs
And let the soundless scream ripple, oh, Oh, I Can't– But I
Drop and fall. I crouch: shrivel up like a leaf, yes, those
Drifting in November gust, ripped under the streetlight with
Smudges from careless footprints, lost in midnight sweep.

Back in this abyss of mine, drinking blankness, breathing
Sorrow, another passing day, more hours to writhe and more.
Tip-toe through the tackling taunt, dust the doom, say hello.
Hasten past the hiss-filled haunt, walk the way, show the smile.
Another day, just another day, grasping drab-painted simplicity.

Clock spins 'round in the abyss, seasons blend and slide away.
Yet one day, reeking woe, slumbering on, tucked in shade,
You shout down this bleak crevasse, ask me why I'm here.
I think for long, stutter on, but none explains the reason why:
Why am I here, O why am I here, down in this abyss of mine?

Caroline Lee

Rage over the wasted time; The ire tears the rope to two. I go
Climb on the caging boulders, past the grief, the consuming
Morbidity– the scent of mirth above abyss–
I am free. Abyss below hums and mocks, teases on with
Lingering urge: "Come back down, you fit here well!"

But you kick down slews of sand, deem the abyss as no more.
I turn, face your smile, stand stopped by hesitancy, but–
I run– run on, it hurts but it pleases, so I run from the abyss–
I am gone.
The abyss is gone

Yoona Sung

Pressure



Yoona Sung

The Pain of Minorities



Rayne Affonso

Rayne Affonso is a fifteen-year-old student at Saint Augustine Girl's High School on the Caribbean island of Trinidad. Another one of Rayne's poems was published in the April/May 2016 issue of *Pilcrow and Dagger*.

Richa Gupta

Richa Gupta is a high school student from Bangalore, India. This is her first submission to *The Daphne Review*.

Clara Hong

Nayeon (Clara) Hong is seventeen-years old and a rising junior at Rabun Gap Nacoochee School in Georgia. She likes listening to music while painting or drawing. In the future, she hopes to work in an area where she can combine the arts and mathematics.

Joseph Felkers

Joseph Felkers is a rising junior at Catholic Central High School in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His work appears or is forthcoming in *Tunnel Magazine*, *Third Eye Poetry*, and *The Noisy Island*, among others. He also is a current mentee with *The Adroit Journal*, as well as a reader for *Polyphony H.S.*

Caroline Lee

Caroline Lee is a rising junior at The Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Although originally from Seoul, she spent most of her childhood in the crowded streets of Jakarta, Indonesia. She deeply loves the half-suffering, half-pleasure of long-distance running in cross country and track, as well as writing in all genres, playing the flute, consuming coffee, and going on adventures with her one-year-old Pomeranian. At The Hill School, Caroline currently attends, this poem was selected as one of the winners of the annual Alexander H. Revell III '43 Writing Contest, but it has not been officially published in any form.

Julia Pope

Julia Pope is a writer from Massachusetts. They are currently a junior at The Pingree School in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. Pope has been previously published in *Teen Ink Magazine* and has received nine Editor's Choice Awards for both poetry and visual artwork. Pope is also on the literary staff for *Pegasus*, The Pingree School's literary magazine

Cindy Ren

Cindy is a seventeen-year-old student currently attending Highland Park High School in Dallas, Texas. This is her third submission to *The Daphne Review*; her work was featured in our last two volumes. She has also published with the online gallery of the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards website and was nominated as a semi-finalist for the National Student Poet Program.

Janice Roh

Janice Sunhee Roh is a rising sophomore at the Seoul International School in South Korea. She is fifteen years old. In her free time she enjoys eating good food and listens to a variety of music. She plans to improve in her photography and Photoshop skills to apply them to her future art pieces.

Yoona Sung

Yoona Sung is a rising senior at Seoul International School in South Korea. Sung plans to pursue a fine arts major in college and finds inspiration throughout art history. Sung's work has been featured in several noteworthy publications, including *Phosphene Literary Magazine* (2015), *Diverse Voices Quarterly* (2016), and *The Claremont Review* (Spring 2015, Spring 2016, and Fall 2016).

Priya Thomas

Priya Thomas is a rising senior at Gunn High School in Palo Alto, California. She is seventeen years old and has been writing since she was a little girl.

Seowon Yang

Seowon Yang attends Cushing Academy. She is a rising senior who wants to study Graphic Design during university study. To her, art is an astounding subject that she would like to explore more, and she feels her constant investment and passion in creation help her to develop as an artist.

The Daphne Review



Founded in 2015, The Daphne Review is an arts and literature magazine that features exceptional work by today's high school-aged artists. We accept original written submissions of any format (essay, interview, poem, short plays) and artistic submissions in any media on a rolling basis throughout the year. Share with us what you can create, and we may share it with the world.

For more information about The Daphne Review, including the submission guidelines and process, please visit:

www.thedaphnereview.org