



The  
Daphne  
Review

Spring 2017

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*lovely, lovely*

lovely mirror, are our eyes bright yet?  
the same blue as murky oceans  
the same shine as rust.

we sprinkle glitter and powder  
over our eyes, and call our image  
a masterpiece.

like how our mothers never had  
enough to eat during the january  
winters, and hid roses under their  
beds.

their room:  
the scent of lavender;  
their bones:  
a geographical map.  
where their ribs and collarbones  
never connect anymore.

lovely mirror, do we glow yet?  
we lay in silk, and sleep in velvet  
our skin is rougher than a diamond  
and softer than snow.  
cold; like we're vampires  
insomniacs; nocturnal.

lovely mirror, are we beautiful yet?  
our skin is dotted black and blue  
from ultraviolet rays  
the clouds don't protect us anymore.

we inhale the car exhaust smoke  
carbon, like the graphite we use  
to colour our nightmares  
oxygen, like the poison we breath  
it kills us  
*it's killing us*

lovely mirror, i hear edith's voice  
like siren: bewitching  
and haunting.

*je vois la vie en rose.*  
*je vois la vie en rose.*  
*je vois la vie en rose.*

no, we don't  
not anymore.

Karen Ahn

*The Highline*



*On Chaos*

some people  
deserve to live their lives  
in chaos

blessed are those  
who make peace  
with the world

the ones that  
walk through the sun  
it is time

to destroy the moon  
everything you can touch  
destroy it all

but save yourself  
for last  
destroy

Chloe Kang

*Silence*



## *STORM*

We stood in the rain until our socks were soaked and our hair was dripping  
onto our clothes,  
until the thunder stopped and the lightning slowed into a faint crackle,  
because we knew.

We knew when we stepped through that door,  
the door with the golden handle and white panel windows,  
that we'd be so much more broken than we started.

The lightning had ripped holes in our skin,  
the thunder banging against our angry chests,  
our angry hearts.

Oh, our angry hearts.

Flames chewing at the inside of our cheeks and through our bones,  
our brittle bones.

We fought vigorously,  
pulling at each other's words,  
ripping at each other's throats.

You tripped in the mud and I couldn't save you,  
I couldn't rub off the dirt that stuck to your jeans,  
like the words you can't take back,  
the stains would last forever.

So you never bought a new pair of jeans,  
I never bought a new love,

I never forgave you for your unpleasant songs.

We once ran through the rain with colors hanging over our heads,  
smiles pressed to our cheeks.

We now run in opposite directions,  
our fingers far from each other's bed side,  
a storm we didn't plan to weather.

A storm,  
our storm.

## *Infatuation*

She brushed her dolly's hair everyday. The soft, golden tendrils of artificial hair slipping between her deft, petite fingers, the plastic hairbrush combing through it slowly and carefully. The doll had baby blue eyes that sparkled when the sunlight hit it, so delicate and crystal-like, so precious. She dressed it in a frilly lavender dress, with lacy socks and white shoes, finely polished. She cared for her doll as if it were her child, and carried it around on her hip like a baby, occasionally tipping a milk bottle to its plastic salmon lips or kissing it on its smooth forehead. She was deeply and truly in love with this doll. And she named it Anne-Marie. She was a 30-year old woman, with a doll named Anne-Marie.

This woman, psychotic as some called her, but normal in her own eyes, spent all day caring for and playing with this artificial child. She had no family, no friends, just her dolls. This woman was so lonely, that a single word never passed her elastic pink lips to another living human for years. She lived in a wooden house in the middle of nowhere, with a broken stone walkway and a dusty mailbox, untouched by the hands of any mailman. She looked just like her doll, tying her blonde wig up in pigtails each day and pushing cerulean contacts overtop her faded green eyes. It wasn't until I came across this special wooden house, to realize what really happened inside.

Ten years ago, I worked as a company spokesperson, dressing up in a bright red polo and carrying around a clipboard door-to-door to advertise our product, children's toys. Specifically, baby dolls. It was a brisk Autumn evening, and I had finished going around blocks and blocks of houses, selling at least 20 of our toys. My goal was to get at least a few more houses, so I drove my polished silver car down the cracked road on the search for more eager people to sell to. It wasn't until I was miles and miles into green fields and empty land until I realized something:

I was lost. I squinted my eyes and peered down the road in search for a building, a house, any kind of standing structure indicating human existence. It had begun to rain, the thick sloshy rain that covers your windshield and slams against the roof of your car. At this point, I won't lie, I

## Danah Eltahawy

Was terrified. It wasn't until hours later that I came across a large wooden house. The lights were on inside, so I assumed someone was home. I exited my car, grabbing my clipboard, and a box containing our model doll. Slowly walking up the stone pathway, I lifted the vintage knocker and banged onto the door. It slowly creaked open, revealing a stunning woman with blue eyes.

"Hello." I started. "Would you like to purchase one of our dolls?"

I held up the box and her eyes widened.

"My, my, that is a fine dolly, d'you mind if I take it out of the box and examine it?"

The question startled me, but I nodded slowly and she slid the doll out of its cellophane and cardboard packaging. She read the doll with her eyes, carefully skimming her fingers across its pale, freckled skin. It seemed like forever until she handed in back and sniffed her fingers. "Polyvinyl chloride, standard doll material. Beautiful eyes, I've got to say. But nothing special. Why don't you come inside and I'll suggest some possible improvements?"

At this point, I was too entranced in her gorgeous face to sense any possible danger so I eagerly nodded to get out of the pouring rain.

The first thing I noticed when I stepped inside were the bright pink walls. The strong scent of bubblegum and sugary-sweet candy filled my nose. The whole thing seems so...artificial. It was like something out of a dollhouse. "Please, take a seat."

She brushed back her sunshine-like hair behind her shoulders. I slowly sat down on a purple armchair, then yelped in pain. Jumping up, I spotted the blonde doll laying across the seat. She let out a chuckle.

"Oh Anne-Marie," she laughed, swiftly picking up the doll from underneath me and placing a kiss onto its cheek.

I shuddered, backing away slowly.

"I'm sorry, she always seems to be wriggling out of my grip and *crawling* away," she said, as if the doll itself could move. I gulped and nodded, sitting back down. "How about I get some tea? Then we can discuss the doll." She exited the room and I looked around. Then I saw it.

Bins upon bins of dolls, stacked to the brim. Messy piles of tangled

## Danah Eltahawy

hair and broken plastic limbs. Buckets of doll clothing and accessories, drawers of tiny shoes and hairbrushes. The whole scene was disturbing, why would this middle aged woman have such an attachment to inanimate objects? Interrupting my thoughts, the woman entered the room carrying a large pink tray with three shiny teacups. She placed herself in another purple armchair and set the tray on the round table in the center of the room.

"I thought we could have a tea party!" She smiled at me, tilting her head to the side.

"Mm, I'm quite fond of tea," I mumbled, taking one of the cups and holding it in my lap.

"As am I."

She took the other cup, but left the third one on the tray.

"Extra tea?"

"No, it's for Ava. Ava, come here!" She yelled.

Nothing in the room moved. My hand quivered a little as I brought the teacup up to my lips, unsure of what was happening. The woman lifted her hand and patted the air, as if she were touching a little girl's head.

"I made your tea, darling." She said sweetly, holding the cup out to whatever imaginary figure she was seeing.

All of a sudden, the cup crashed to the floor, breaking into tiny shards and scattering across the thick carpet.

"AVA," she screamed. "GO TO YOUR ROOM!"

I set my teacup down and grabbed my clipboard.

"I should be going now.." I muttered.

She slowly turned towards me, her hands shaking violently.

"We never discussed the doll, and your tea is untouched. Sit back down."

I cleared my throat.

"Ma'am, I really must be heading out, it's getting quite late."

"Oh sir, I believe I may not allow that. You see..."

All of a sudden, the lights flickered then clicked off.

"Power outage. Streets are too dangerous to drive on now. Where were we?" She brushed off her floral dress and sat back down, lighting a candle on the table. The dull yellow light cast shadows on the walls. "Now, I

## Danah Eltahawy

was thinking this."

She lifted the model doll.

"Maybe fix her chin a little." She pulled a sharp razor out of her pocket and dragged it along the doll's face. I backed away slowly.

"Her eyes are small. Let's make those bigger." She dug the blade into the vinyl face and sculpted away at the clear orbs nested within the plastic. My back gently hit the wall with a thud.

"And finally," She sliced the knife down in one motion, taking the poor doll's head with it.

"Unfixable." She mumbled, dropping the doll to the floor on top of the broken ceramic.

"U-unfixable." She repeated, over and over.

I ran to the door and she lifted the razor once more.

"Sweets, where are you going?"

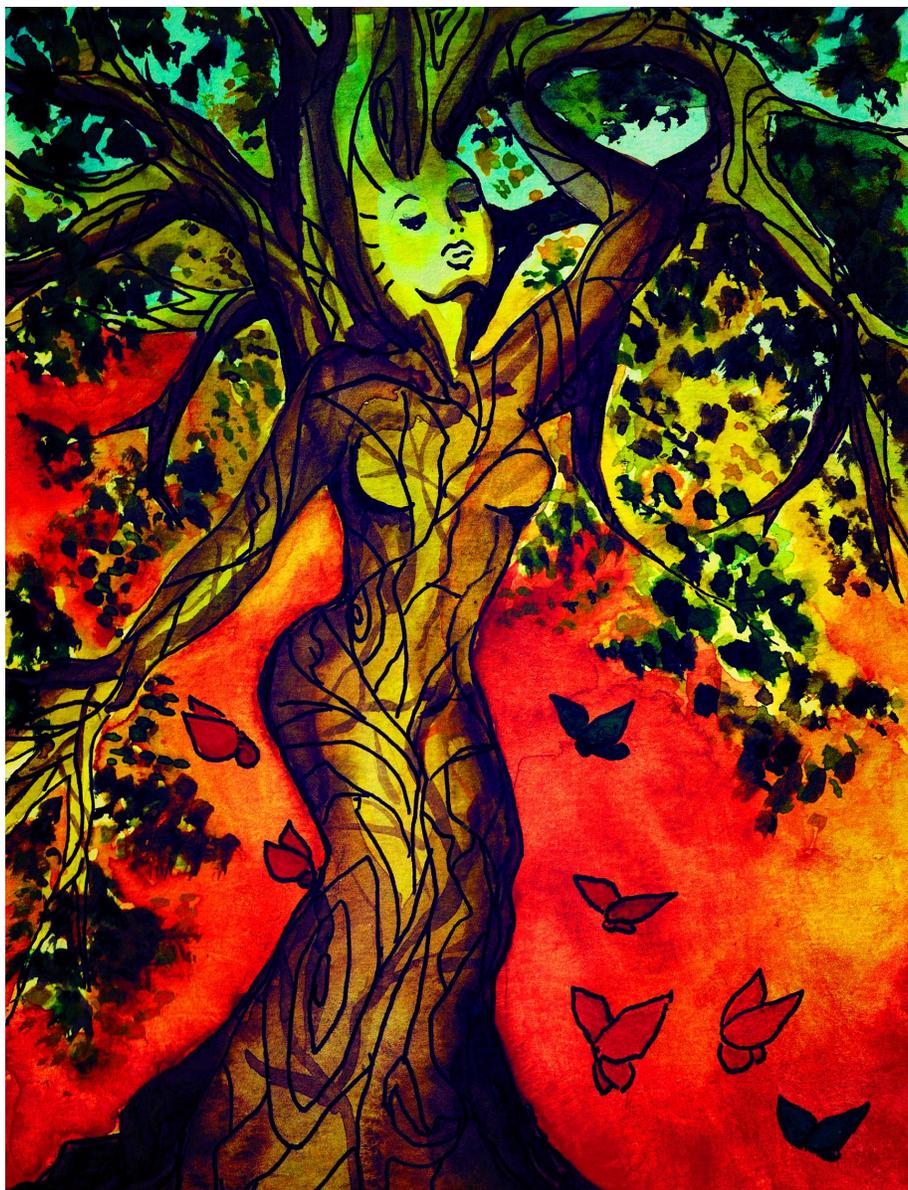
She grabbed my hand with force, almost yanking my arm out of its socket. The candle went out, and her hypnotic blue eyes lit up in the darkness.

"Don't you want to be apart of my collection?"

And everything went black.

Betsy Jenifer

*Nature Lady*



## *Affinal*

*(adjective) 1. related by or concerning marriage*

You sit there, staring at the table. You are always there, staring at the table.

My hand goes out – and meets the massive emptiness of a few inches. My fingers tremble with the immense vastness of the few centimeters between my hand and your arm, but your arm remains motionless, fingers petrified in a loose fist that rests on the table. My eyes wobble just the slightest – but you don't notice, for your eyes are fixed on some place that is invisible to me. And so I can only stand here, my hand fixed in the air the incalculable remoteness of two centimeters away from your arm.

I stand for a moment, deliberating on whether or not to touch you. Then I release my arm and it plummets to my side, ploughing through the air current. There is a little thump as my hand hits my side – a little pulsation, a little unsteady heartbeat. But your heart doesn't pause for even a millisecond, for it is intent on something beyond me, beyond everything. My hand swings for a moment, and then the pendulum runs down and it lies motionless at my side. But your hands have no clockwork to run down: your hands are computers, running on endless streams of binary, where the slightest error is merely a slight error, not a great malfunctioning.

There is an absolute silence, filled only with the white noise created in my mind – then someone turns on a lawn mower. The motor wails, its voice rising in a mournful crescendo until it peaks and is abruptly turned off, only to be resumed a moment later. I stand, feeling my heart reverberating in unison with the moaning of the lawnmower. But your face remains unmoved, unconcerned with the somber song.

For an instant, I am frustrated by your apathy; I want to force you to move, force you to live and feel and understand... Anger pulsates through my body in little waves, and my hand jerks up to awaken you from your slumber that is not slumber – but I stop myself. My hand is arrested as it has almost reached you – it is so close that I can feel the tip of one of the hairs of your arm. I move my finger just an atom to the right, and the hair brushes against my fingertip, bumping over the grooves in my fingerprint; the tension of the hair builds –

## Juliana Castillo

then releases, like a slingshot, and your hair snaps back to its normal position. But you do not notice the motion of one hair on your arm.

The lawnmower stops and there is an earsplitting silence that is filled by the shrieking static of my mind. But you don't seem to notice; your head doesn't seem to be filled with screaming.

The anger has evaporated, leaving nothing but dried fragments of what was once a river, and in its place is a colossal, hollow yearning. But you merely sit and stare at a point that I cannot see, listen to a song that I cannot hear, feel a thing that I cannot comprehend.

I reach out my hand and touch your arm.

## *Ripped Pages*

It's nice to know  
Where we stand  
To know that i put you first  
Only to be put last

My mom said  
It's good to know what page the  
Other person's on  
But it hurts when you're the one ahead

You were  
Barely on the first page  
While i was  
Already finishing the book

Why did i put up with this for so long?  
i'll never know the answer  
i was willing to help you catch up  
If only you would've let me read aloud to you

But the more and more  
You treated me like an option  
The more and more  
You went losing me

Sorry isn't enough anymore  
Because i've noticed  
Those sorrys are empty  
Like hollowed book

# Jada Ramirez

The many restless nights  
i spent trying to put this tragic book aside  
While you were without a worry  
Peacefully sleeping

i should've known from the first  
But i guess  
i just didn't want to believe it  
i wanted to believe the story i was reading was only fiction

i don't expect anything more from you  
It's sad to say but  
This book is getting old already  
And it is now a book worth burning

You made me forget my own worth  
You never saw me as a priority  
So i felt unimportant  
i guess i'm just a chore to you

I'm not going to sit around anymore  
I'm better than that  
I will not fight for someone  
Who never appreciated My efforts

It is My time now  
And I know just where to start  
I'm now writing My own story,  
And you're not in it

*I deserve better.*  
*I deserve to be valued.*

Janice Roh

*Industreal*



*Nine Verses of a Batter's Home Run*

*i.* Sunlight reflecting off the shattered glass on the boy's blue duvet  
blindingly attacks pale walls where laughter once resonated between.

*ii.* A broken trophy case tasting more like defeat than Cleveland 1899  
stands where, before, it had been proudly observed like a monument.

*iii.* He remembers the screaming crowd and the booming stadium—  
red dust floating up and settling on mustardy hot dogs like a condiment.

*iv.* The game had been lost somewhere and someplace between  
the first time he had kissed her and the last time he had touched her.

*v.* How he had traveled to all the bases desperately chasing for her heart  
yet the bases were merely diamonds, the batter merely a player.

*vi.* How reaching each base brought him closer to what he thought was  
bliss—  
the smoothness of her sunny skin, the redness of her salted lips.

*vii.* It was a better prize than the shiny trophies he stored so preciously in  
his  
unkempt room along with secret letters and ripped envelopes.

*viii.* Night carries oversized dreams and whistling winds through open  
windows  
when morning seems eternities away and the game still a feat to be won.

*ix.* The field was haphazardly kept—all uncut grass and cracked diamonds—  
so the ball never could quite reach its final destination.

*The Breeze is Back*

is back

it dances between the creaks of the floor boards  
that dare it to stay away

it hisses to the closed door  
that warns the breeze to disperse

it grows colder  
it forces itself into the warm room

it sprints towards her  
forcing chills to run up her arms  
the frigid wind clutches around her legs like a boa constrictor  
it seizes her life in that moment  
and gains more bitterness within itself

the room freezes over  
revealing her breaths of panic

a tear drags down her face  
evolving into an icicle  
she feels the little hope, that once surrounded her, slither away  
everything felt numb  
breathes that were once released by her  
have halted

## Sydney Crosby

the breeze moves onto the creaky floor boards  
back towards the useless door that now allows it to pass through

the icicle drops from her face  
the same time her door unlocks  
and the warmth returns

she manages to respire

she stares at the handle knowing  
the breeze is always welcomed out  
yet nothing can banish the brisk breeze in the beginning

Yoona Sung

*Courage*



Yoona Sung

*Look*



## Karen Ahn

Karen has been heavily influenced by cartooning and collage, which she has integrated into her illustration style. She also aims to incorporate narrative within her illustrations. She is currently pursuing independent research on queer Italian performance art after having spent a year abroad in Viterbo, Italy. She eventually wants to reduce the negative stigma around homosexuality in Italy, and she hopes to work for an LGBTQ+ organization dedicated to improving gay marriage rights in Europe.

## Juliana Castillo

Juliana is a 13-year-old emerging writer who resides in Wilmington, Delaware. She finds inspiration in the convergence of words, people, and metaphor. She was the recipient of the Willamette Writers Kay Snow Writing Competition First Prize, and her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Canvas Literary Journal*, *Chautauqua Literary Journal*, and *Moledro Magazine*.

## Mitch Tomas Cave

Mitch is an 18-year-old emerging poet and student living on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia. This is the first publication of his poetry.

## Sydney Crosby

Sydney is a sophomore at her high school, home to the Center of Fine Arts program. She is on her school's varsity cheer team. She loves to write poetry and script. She loves to curl up during a thunderstorm and write in her journal pretending it's her own, personal blog.

# Cerissa DiValentino

Cerissa is 17 years old and lives in New Paltz, New York. She has been writing since she can remember. Writing has always been her passion, it has helped through many rough stages in her life.

# Danah Eltahawy

Danah Eltahawy is an 8th grade student at Maumee Valley Country Day School. She loves reading and writing uniquely chilling tales! Danah is an active member of the Young Writers Guild at Maumee Valley and a published author with *Teen Ink*.

# Betsy Jenifer

Betsy is from southern India. She loves literature, music and art among other things. Her writing and art have been published or are forthcoming in *Foliage Oak*, *Page & Spine*, *Polyphony H.S.*, *The Tishman Review*, *Sugar Rascals* and *Off the Coast*, among others. Betsy was also the inaugural first place winner of *The Daphne Review's* Web Art Competition with her work, *Into the Universe*.

# Jennifer Meng

Jennifer Meng is a high school student from Ontario, Canada. Author of several short stories and poems (most of which are private), she loves coffee, books, and wandering just a bit too much.

## Chloe Kang

Chloe Kang is 15 years old and a Sophomore. She likes to watch various genres of movies and go to art exhibitions in her free time. When she grows up, she wants to be a special effects technician for various movies.

## 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.

## Cindy Song

Cindy is a 16-year-old writer who attends Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, Maryland. She has loved creative writing ever since elementary school, and it still remains one of her biggest passions. In her free time, you can find her brainstorming new story ideas, playing the viola, or watching her favorite TV shows.

## 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).

# 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](http://www.thedaphnereview.org)