

HEAT



03

SUMMER 2022

ISSUE 03

ISSUE 03: HEAT

Pressure, passion, anger. Heat sprouts in our chests, travels through our blood stream to the tips of our fingers until it is all that we know. Burning cheeks, clenched fists, hammering heart that threatens to burst. As summer fast-approaches, we want to know how you feel heat. What makes your jaw tighten? What makes you salivate? What do you desire so strongly that the flames might swallow you whole?

See how heat can be both power and destruction.



CONTRIBUTORS

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BURN THE FIRST HOUSE DOWN

Victoria Mbabazi

if i really love you the poem
will run before it conquers
well fuck that i'm sick

of running i'm not taking
shelter if our love is gasoline
i'll put it to use look

what i've done i believe
in warmth as creation
our house comes burning

down i'm over reminiscing
i can't keep dreaming of fire
i've started manifesting

i've set it all in flames
I've found the match stomped
on the back of my foot

i can't love anybody
with our foundation still
intact i'm over

returning to a home
that's determined to crumble
the soil has become

radioactive the vultures
have started to unionize
i'm over this

tradition this love
was never worth rebuilding
this time i love me

too much our home
searing the landscape
i can't be sorry

JUST US 2
Taylor White



PULAU PERHENTIAN, 2019

Kyra Lawler



i'm not sure where my body ends
 and the air begins
 suffocation has never been so sweet
 i used to long to be something
 other
 to be fluid to dissolve to melt
 into something more beautiful
 perhaps the molten red of the sunrise
 when the dulcet chants roll in from
 across the water
 or the egg-yolk yellow of a hornbill's beak
 snapping up fruit tossed by children
 even the mango peels decorating the path
 fragrant from the punishing heat
 as sweat pours down my brow
 an ache surges in my ear
 when i dive into the sea
 i merge with the turquoise waves
 speckled with vivid hues of the coral
 as i swim deeper
 the ache becomes unbearable
 the doctor says it's an infection
 he makes another comment
 he also wishes my body was something
 other
 to be less to be lighter to dissolve
 into something more palatable
 so i take the pills
 as the ache lessens another one builds
 this time in my gut
 it's raw irritated spiteful

 i am as angry as the molten red sunrise
 my incensed chants can be heard
 around the whole island
 when the hornbills screech and snap, so do i

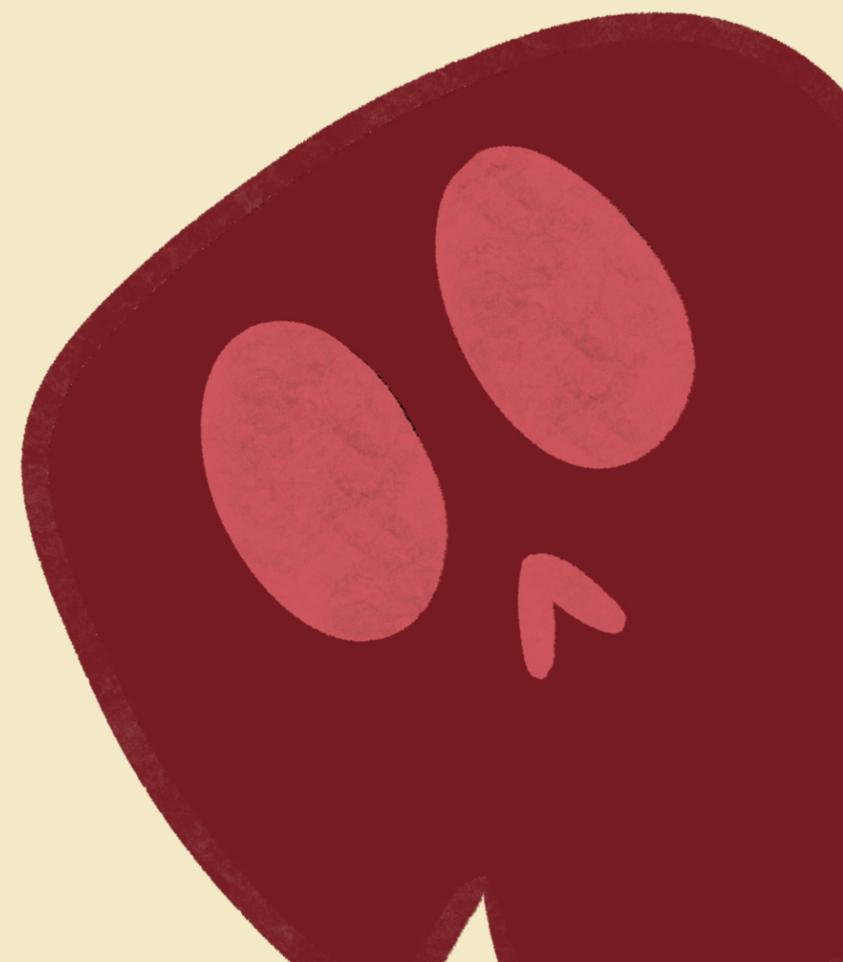
 and when the juice from the mango
 drips
 down
 my chin
 onto the soft folds of my stomach
 i promise myself
 i will not be less i will not be lighter
 i will not change not for anyone

THESEUS

Matthew Walsh

My ex-boyfriend sends audio clips and videos of his ass singing karaoke from a room in his Vancouver home, visceral insight from the lips I had once kissed and bit, comforted by him and a cloud of clonazepam that I would hold under the tongue until it, too, completely disappeared. My present self alerts the supervisor of cashiers when there is a breakdown. The grocery code for mango works no longer for anyone, like myself, the fruit is tired. The feeling of true happiness is a hard, unpacked notion I try to examine while I scan the juice cooler to choose for myself just an Ethos bottled water. I look for a Kombucha with poetic intent to go home with, Rise Hibiscus. The summer that has passed away brought me what I desired, new spiders to eat the fruit and black flies out of my life. A reminder that choices are fine would have been excellent to accept earlier for someone who now regrets never taking the chance to make porn for the bear community. What a joke to even consider how it could hurt my future career opportunity when I could look back for eternity at myself being held for twenty-seven minutes and nine seconds. The sex closet of the bath house is where I meditate with the most success. I love to concentrate on the blue light that seeps under the door, making me feel alive as a David Lynch character. I love that there is no DJ tonight, and emerge from the sauna, its nauseating smell of absent men and wet towels, all resplendent under blue, hypnotic light reminiscent of deodorant commercials, I believe little parts of me are still living in places left behind in my search of wellness, because why can I see the man so clearly still who entered my life through the door of the Pumpjack in Vancouver, BC dressed unintentionally as Tuxedo Mask, red rose single in his hand, dress shoes fresh and shined black and looking for someone who may never be present. I really miss hook-up culture. the anonymous kiss and smell of pine tar. Skinny dipping in the Pacific 4 AM on a Sunday with Jeff is the kind of religion longed for and missed but it is hard to know what will matter and why regret is immune to ephemeralism. The rooms in the bath house are the size of closets and the fact is perhaps why I feel drawn strangely to the little spell they cast over the version of me who likes to be seen a certain way. I leave the door open

partially so the hand that hesitates to push it open may never see me writing poetry at three in the morning biting my lip over bad metaphors for the liminal space of the taint. I find the dark room there intriguing, it puts me in a certain mindset where I may never figure out how to leave, reminds me of the myth with character from classical antiquity, the head and tail of a bull. I was never brought to a glass store if I recall correctly, but did make love in an automotive shop that made mirrors and saw myself from the angles, various and yet some profound. The bathhouse on Carleton in Toronto had a pool I found hypnotic in the dead of night, the green glow of water, the closest I'd come to living in a mansion. I left there, most dawns, feeling beautiful, under the streetlight and reminded of a sexual awakening watching Velvet Goldmine, realizing that I was a life long Toni Collette fan. Desire is wet and trembling, a moth caught in the light bulb dew of night. I loved so much walking home from the bath house, feeling fresh and clean.



THESE ARE THE FAHRENHEIT NIGHTS

Ivor Daniel

and the book that I am reading is burning

all day I can not speak the same
tongue as my body
except when immersed in the early sea

so thirsty all the time
so salty

going slow as a heatwave sloth

I drink red wine from a suffering fridge
that complains each time I open it.

now I am the small hours
stupefied febrile

*fébrile comme l'insomnie **

fever come inside me

and through the apartment wall
someone is snoring
loud as psychotic cicadas
in sapped unsleeping palm trees
these torrid riviera nights

in the morning you will tell me you have hardly slept
although in bed I listen to your even breath all night
it seems

and then we swim

first thing.



21ST CENTURY DREAM OF MONKEY KING & THE GOLDEN-HOOPED ROD

Eric Wang

of a palace in the clouds

they cordoned off chunks of heaven to build

a courtyard garden filled with immortal peach trees

the barks of which are inscribed

with names of billionaire donors

& in the dream i wield a big stick

which i carry like a tune

cause i can't sing for shit my throat

too unruly & fit for no real king, no royal

all that governs me is thirst its forms how my throat

clenches like a fist & sometimes my fist

aches like a heart & o my heart gets so jealous

of my fist it desires to beat

the purple into a capitalist's eye

how pretty un-prettying the enemy

sometimes i think i'm beauty's archnemesis

i keep asking what it wants

& who bought the rights to it

what it is is i want a beauty that shatters

that rhymes with *concussion*

and *fracture* of the *orbital socket*

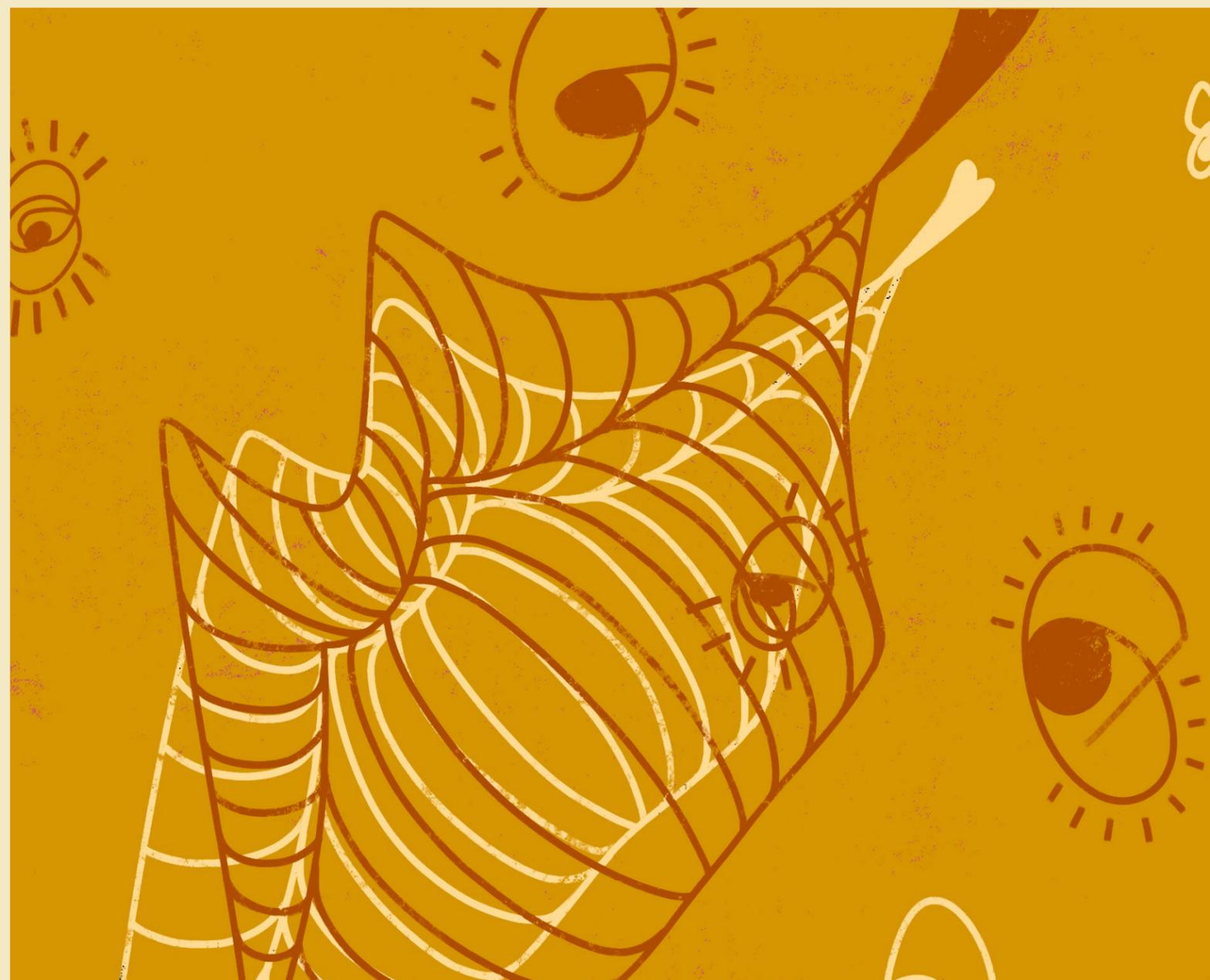
that home run swings celestial CEOs

into orbit i extreme makeover the heavenly palace

into rubble i spare no idyllic this or that

in the dream i tear the peach trees up

by their picturesque roots



TWO MEN KILL A BABY

Noah Farberman

What an awful movie premise
 What would the plot even be?
 Would it be one of those — This is how they
 do it — films or more of a — I can't believe
 they did it + fallout — flick?
 I think I would watch it
 Because I haven't seen it before
 Because killing a kid in a movie is sort of a
 taboo

No surprise that my favorites are linked by
 loss of innocence (Hereditary 2018)
 Or the struggle to preserve it (Little Miss
 Sunshine 2007)
 I will be hopeful — I believe — that it's Toni
 who keeps me watching. She's — not
 nothing — to me.

(Is there a better performance than
 Collette's grieving howl?
 Could two men come close — to killing it?)

You're terrible, movie critic (Muriel's
 Wedding 1994, Muriel's Funeral 1997)

TORONTO MISSED CONNECTION: SOMETHING FISHY

Genevieve Lang Dalby

Friday, April 18, around 11 pm. Posting this for the dead red snapper from the Loblaws website.

I was searching for quarantine groceries, but I think I found love.

I came across you several times;
 in the ice cream aisle,
 the vegan aisle,
 and the frozen vegetable aisle.

Your shiny corpse stuck out amongst the french fries and popsicles. A red mirage in the dessert section.

You were the first person to make eye contact with me in a week. I was too shy, and I scrolled past. Maybe it was the fever, but you made me clammy all over.

And even though you're a dead fish floating on a white background, I couldn't pull my eyes away from your vacant ones. I think I found myself in those grey, glossy pupils.

I was wearing old stained sweatpants and smudged glasses. You were deboned.

If you're interested, let me know. I don't usually like fish, but I wish I put you in my delivery order.

Hoping you swim into my life again.

THEIR FIRE HEATS THE AIR AROUND ME

Lauren Frechette

The stars spat me out one evening early June.
In some of their circles,
they would liken me to a breeze.
But the air of me seemed more like shaky breath;
quietly slipping from the lip that lay between
the warm flush of two plump-rose cheeks.

They say that air feeds fire,
but they don't know these flames.

Leah came as the rising sun;
as the heat, the light, the beauty of summer.
In her delicate out-turned palm
like the sun of which she came,
she gives her warmth to watch you grow.
I was her first flower.

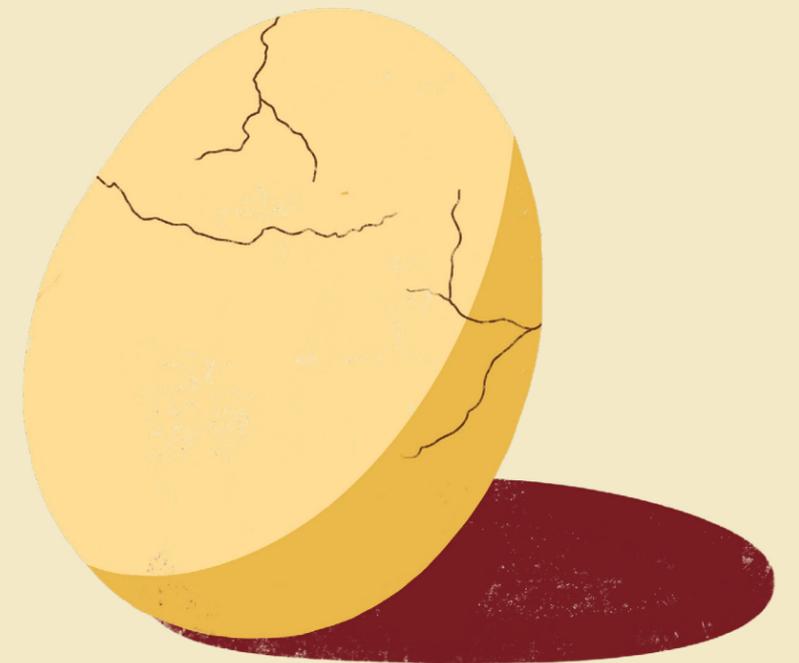
Maddie arrived as the incandescent snap of lamplight;
that luminous tangerine glow of comfort,
the kind of warmth that turned house into home.
Like the season she preceded, she sings of joy and spirit.
With outstretched arms she welcomes all
and in her cozy embrace, she holds us together as one.

So when the air around me shifts from breeze to gust,
and I find myself flung across the map
cold, far, desperate- I look for a flame.
And they are there
like the great fiery beacons in the White Mountains of Tolkien,
two bright signals of hope
they call me back.

They say that air feeds fire,
but here I watch as Maddie, passion blazing a trail in front of her with no end in sight,
makes a whole room erupt in laughter
feeling the heat in my smile-stretched cheeks as she continues to shine.
They say that air feeds fire,
but in this kitchen,
notebooks full of recipes to nourish decorate the countertop, and I watch
as Leah kneads care, even protection, into dough with her lovely warm palms.

They say that air feeds fire,
and yet,
Leah heats the oven and bakes her prayer she dressed as bread
Maddie opens her circle to you, smiling as she begins another rant that will be met by
laughter
and in more ways than one,
fire feeds air

For my sisters



BIOGRAPHIES & ARTIST STATEMENTS

Victoria Mbabazi's work can be found in several literary magazines including Rejection Letters, Minola Review and No Contact Mag. Their chapbook "chapbook" is available with Anstruther Press and their chapbook "FLIP" is forthcoming this spring with Knife Fork Books. They're currently living in Brooklyn, New York.

I made Just us 2 to display that everything is heat. Physical touch, the heat of the moment, love and lust, it's all heat. We can either fan the flames or snuff them out.

- Taylor White

Kyra Lawler (she/they) is a queer creative living in Te Whanganui-a-Tara, Aotearoa. She's a nanny / dog parent / and aspiring stay-at-home person. She won second place in the Upper Hutt Libraries' Poetry Competition 2021 and you can find her work in Voleger, Sour Cherry Mag, Issue 7 of Overcommunicate, and on the upcoming digital platform Bad Apple.

Matthew Walsh is a poet from Nova Scotia, and their first poetry book These are not the potatoes of my youth, came out in 2019, with a chapbook to follow from Anstuther in 2021. They are @croonjuice on Twitter.

Ivor Daniel (he / him) lives in Gloucestershire, UK. His poems have appeared in A Spray of Hope, wildfire words, Steel Jackdaw, iamb-wave seven, Fevers of the Mind, The Trawler and Roi Fainéant. He has poems forthcoming in Ice Floe Press, After..., Re-Side, The Dawn-treader and Alien Buddha.

Eric Wang (he/him) is a writer residing in Scarborough. His work can be found in/ forthcoming from Guernica, Contemporary Verse 2, Best Canadian Poetry 2022, and elsewhere.

Noah "Noah Farberman" Farberman is a Toronto writer and comedian. Noah has been published in Storm Cellar, Rabid Oak, Raven Review, Perhappened, ISSUE 3 and ISSUE 7 of long con, Pioneertown, ISSUE 1 of Block Party, and elsewhere. His work has been anthologized by Applebeard Edition and he is a finalist for the 2021 Arts and Letters Unclassifiable Contest. Noah studied Creative Writing at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus.

Genevieve Lang Dalby (they/them) is an emerging queer writer from Toronto. With an acting background and a Specialist Bachelor's in English from the University of Toronto, Genevieve is working on their first comedy screenplay. Their autobiographical screenplay, Father Dearest, was recently published in long con magazine.

Lauren Frechette (she/her) is 22 years old and a first year student in the Creative Writing program at OCAD University. With her work writing poetry, Lauren has learned to better navigate the murky waters of trauma, reclaim her voice, and most importantly, to acknowledge the quiet beauty in everyday life. You can find her on Instagram at @laurenfrechette



BLOCK PARTY

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