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the literary journal of victoria
university in the university of
toronto

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Aya Tsintz- iras

* acta victoriana: 1

editor's foreword

Acta Victoriana is a bridge between old and new, a venue for student words and images, and a special part of the Victoria College community. Since 1878 Acta has reflected the belief that the arts hold a crucial place within a university and contribute greatly to the student experience. This journal provides a link between the past, present and future: we carry on this creative tradition with new work each academic year, glad that this will continue the following year, and the following.

It is with these ideas in mind that I am very happy to present the 2010-2011 edition of Acta Victoriana.

Thank you to Victoria College and VUSAC for their support. Thank you also to the editorial board who enthusiastically and tirelessly chose the work you see here. Finally, thank you to the contributors whose work is beautiful and important, and to those writers and artists who continue to send in their work year after year. Without them, this tradition would not continue.

I hope you find inspiration within these pages.

Aya Tsintziras
Editor-in-Chief
2010-2011

*acta victoriana: 2

*acta victoriana: 3

A Joke*

*graeme myers

*The Day Before**

**jeannine pitas*

One night at a bar
an old man told me this joke

In México
there is a place,
whose name I forget.

It's not far from the border
and it's where
God has died.

He went there not so long ago,
maybe five years, maybe ten,
and he never left.

He lay on the floor
of a rotting shack
in the Sonoran desert
when I found him.
I asked, "what's wrong God?"
and he said:

"I'm alone
and I am afraid."

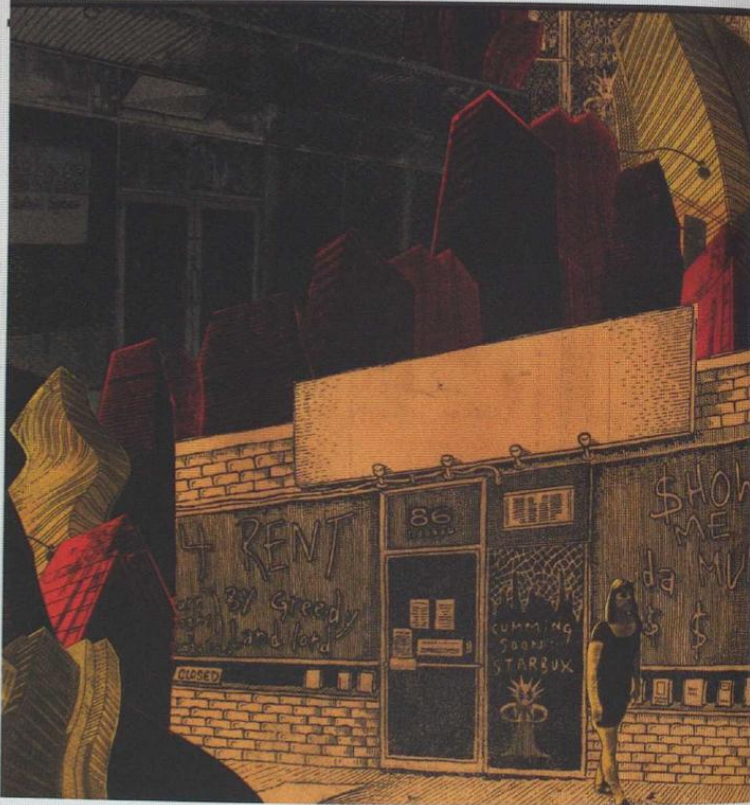
One by One*

*eric williams

Fall is fading. December 1st. Tell yourself it's just another day. Tell yourself there is nothing to fear. Think of this as a few weeks' vacation. Maybe it really is time to retire. Maybe you just won't go back to work afterwards, you'll take a bus down to Florida instead, finally go fishing off the Keys. Make these plans. For now, drive down the country roads you loved as a boy, once dirt, now paved over. Look at the leaves, most long fallen. A few stubborn ones keep clinging to bare branches like a child to her father's hand, fearing those first steps, already knowing she'll never fly. Watch them flutter, shake, be shaken. This is what happens. Don't ask why.

Ode to a Suburban

*brandon gray



*acta victoriana: 8

*acta victoriana: 9

Bathroom Kingdom**

**jonathan scott*

The shower curtain's gaudy daintiness;
shelf-doilies and fat round soaps with
fat little angels on them, unlathered;
seashells in an oversized glass goblet ill-at-ease
in the corner by the shower and
seashells on the windowsill too;
that little egg-thing, vaguely oriental,
more ornamental than ornithological,
mostly just weird;
all this and then some.
Thank God for blackcurrant antibacterial handsoap.
What motley hands might haunt this golden knob?

*acta victoriana: 10

*acta victoriana: 11

The Enormous Room*

*andré babyn

What does it possibly mean
to sit quietly, contentedly even
alone with thoughts
eluding capture by
the subconscious butterfly cave? –
skimming out as flies swim
behind my eyes
just beyond trickling light rays
of inner victimhood and
monstrous, infantile outer
rage
of serious inadequacy;
retiring to the original question hidden in the
last, lost words of
lost boys' last jaw kingdom,
 over the hills
 and far, far away –
 spinning through clouds:
 ecstatic monotony, repeating upon
 cascading emotions
under childish love triangles
only truly emerging
when I am king
with an apron cape.

*acta victoriana: 12

I could never get far enough away from her, and that's why we absolutely could not live in a home with walls. With walls all around me, even in a large room, who could say where she was? My mind would be restless thinking of all the ways she could be encircling me. So we rented a larger apartment, two hundred and fifty thousand square feet, the high-vaulted floor of an old bubble wrap and plastics packaging factory, all of the heavy equipment and molten plastic mixers removed and sold at auction by our landlords, 'KX Poly-Carbons,' before we moved in. None of the zoning laws had been changed, and the area was no longer suitable for industry (thanks to various NIMBY-statutes recently instituted by town council) and since those same councillors were dragging their feet through the re-zoning process, convinced that KX P-C had more loose cash available to speed up the relevant bureaucrats, we were able to occupy the resulting grey area while each party waited for the situation to resolve itself, a process that cost us relatively little, and that we knew might have taken several years.

Because we could not possibly have furnished the whole apartment, owing to its enormity, we arranged the room in stations, and in between them were vast deserts of chipped, brown tile. We were not slipper people, but we were forced to wear slippers, because the tiles were cold and dirty (occasionally our feet found small, rusted screws, jagged shards of glass, torn pieces of soft plastic lining that would stick to our skin), and shoes were out of the question because of the tremendous echoes they made against the tile.

We had the living room station, the bathroom station (surrounded by oriental screens about four feet high), the exercise station, the dining and kitchen

*acta victoriana: 13

*Matroyshka**

**jennifer kucharczyk*

station, the bedroom station, the cat's litter box (the cat, too small on the horizon to be seen by the naked eye, was always off stalking some factory mouse or suburban vole), the wardrobe station, one for each of us, my office station, her study station, the conservatory station, with two patio chairs facing away from each other (underneath the block of windows shattered some time before we moved in), etc. etc.

In our home without walls, I put my office at the furthest point from all of the other stations, so that I could be alone. My wife was never any larger than the moon waning far off in a purple sky, except when we ate or went to bed together. I came to think of her celestially, and by that I mean that she was just another celestial body, like the ones I could see from out the factory windows (The Sun, the Moon, my Wife) and so I eventually forgot about her, from habit, and for the first time since our marriage I was truly comfortable.

The nesting doll,
I'm the nesting doll
Four sizes inside of you.

Or is it you encased in me,
The rings of a cut tree,
Forming my ancestral core?

We are made of the same wood.

You raised the woman
Who meant Love to me.
There was honey in her name,
In her smile, in her knits.

You repainted the doorway white
After the villagers painted it red
With lamb's blood in the Easter night
While she slept. The bastard child,
Your granddaughter, my grandmother.

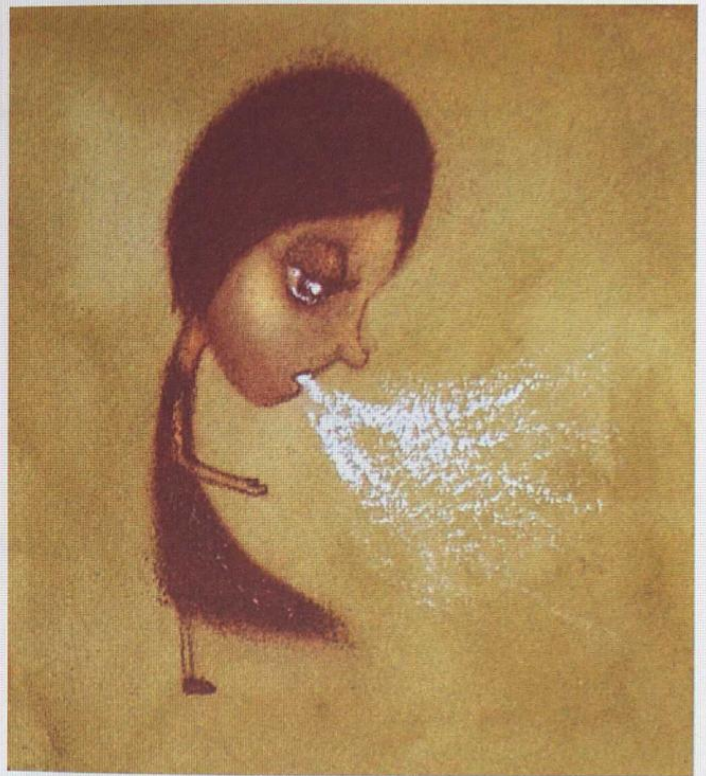
Tradition can be so ugly.

You should see:
They make dolls as salt shakers now,
And novelty earmuffs,
And USB sticks –
Something I couldn't even begin to explain
To your Holodomor ears.
But you would be consoled to know
That there are no neighbours here
Painting with blood to mark an out-of-wedlock birth.

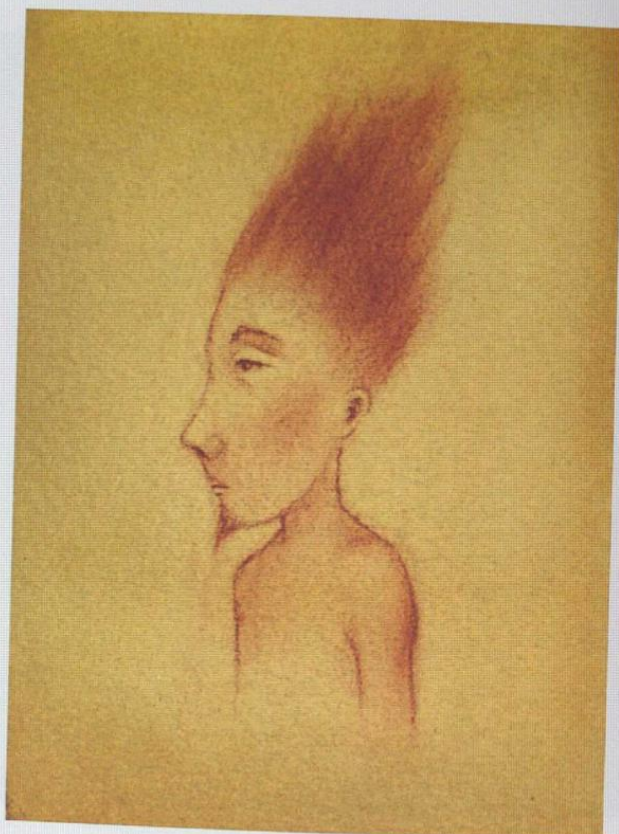
Did you desire to emigrate?
Would you have desired that newness if you knew
This was the future of your traditions,
Those both beloved and despised?

One, *Two**mary ma

*acta victoriana: 18



*acta victoriana: 19



*acta victoriana: 20

Out Along the

jeff dupuis

Stacy said no to the road trip first thing. She was still angry at Mom and refused to come to the phone and speak with her. She tried convincing me that I should be angry with Mom too, and that her being older meant she understood things better. But after two years, I missed Mom and forgot all about being angry.

"Mom's going to take you away and never bring you back," Stacy said.

"No, she's not, we're only going away for a few days. You don't know anything."

When Mom phoned, her calls were short, usually just before bedtime. She'd say she missed me and Stacy, I'd ask where she was and she'd always have a different answer. Staying with an old friend in Oshawa, maybe at a hotel in Hamilton or a bed and breakfast in Tecumseh. She liked dying her hair - "changing her look," she called it - and I always wondered what colour her hair was when I talked to her, holding the framed picture of us that she had placed on my bedside table the night she left.

Halfway through the second week of summer break, Mom came to the house in a blue compact car. I had assumed she'd have a minivan like the one we used to take on family road trips. She opened the door and stepped out of the car, the sun making her blonde hair golden. Stacy's door slammed shut; the sound echoed through the house.

"Are you ready?" she asked through the screen door.

Dad piled my bags behind me, straightening up slowly and looking at Mom through the door. She smiled, raising her hand in a half-wave. Dad nodded at her and looked down at me.

"Jamie, have fun, okay? I'll see you in a couple days. I love you, bud."

"I love you too, Dad."

Mom rolled both windows down once we got off the highway. Country air ripped through the car. Her hair flew backwards, snapping like a flag without the

*acta victoriana: 21

Highway*

noise. She looked over at me, her eyes hidden behind sunglasses, smiling. Cows and cornfields surrounded us, nothing but green farm land in the distance, divided into squares.

"Where are we going?"

"It's a surprise," she said, looking at me, pulling her sunglasses down to give me a wink.

We were going north, and then we turned east. I knew we'd been driving away from Lake Ontario and now the sun was above, arching behind us. I kept checking the compass on my watch covered by a plastic bubble. Mom slowed down as we entered a little village with a sign that said 'Locust Hill.' There was a small stone church and a cemetery, then a long, sloping hill that dipped onto a bridge over a river and back up again. There were some old shops on the side of the road, and a post office, but it was mostly houses. Mom turned into a gravel driveway next to a pastel blue house with a garage at the back made to look like a barn.

"We're here," she said excitedly, opening her door and stepping out quickly.

By the time I got out of the car, Mom already had my bags in her arms and nothing of her own.

"Isn't this great?"

She struggled to grab the small metal handle on the white screen door. She pulled it open and the spring at the top groaned. Mom gestured that I go in first, then walked in behind me, the door slapping wood as it shut. There was a fat man at the dining room table smoking a cigarette.

"Hey, this must be Jamie," he said.

"Robert, I thought we agreed, no smoking in the house when Jamie's here."

The man put out his cigarette and shook my hand.

"I'm taking Jamie upstairs to see his room. Dump that ash tray and come

up and join us, will you?"

The man picked up the ashtray and walked into the kitchen.

We went from a tiled floor to a gray-carpeted living room, then around a corner and up a flight of stairs. The house looked much newer on the inside than on the outside.

"Here we are," Mom said, pointing.

The room was sky blue with a single bed, night table, dresser and computer desk. Next to the keyboard was a stack of games and software I'd told Mom I wanted for my birthday. I hurried over and looked through the pile. Mom sat down on the corner of the bed.

On top of the pile was the full version of Doom, then the Deluxe Edition of Where In The World is Carmen Sandiego, as well as a bunch of shareware versions of games.

"Jamie, look at me, please."

I turned around to see her, the packages held against my chest. Mom was holding her sunglasses in her hands, folding and unfolding them.

"Robert and I want you to stay here."

"Don't worry, Mom, I am staying."

"No, Jamie, what I mean is, we want you to come live here with us."

"You mean until school starts?"

"Maybe longer than that."

"But I don't even know Robert," I said.

"You'll get to know him. We'll be like a family."

Her eyes, blue like mine, filled with tears. I clung to the boxes in my arms, confused. Robert walked through the door. He saw Mom crying and looked at me, then back at Mom.

"I thought we agreed," he said, "that we wouldn't say anything to Jamie for at least a day or two."

Mom looked up. Her eye makeup ran down her face, smearing over wrinkles, and her skin reminded me of a navy blue version of the dried riverbeds you see in National Geographic. It hit me all at once that Mom got old over the last

A Sense of Caves*

*andrew mcewan

two years.

"I know," she told Robert. "I'm sorry."

Robert knelt down on the gray carpet to face me. I was a half-foot taller than him and he looked stupid on his knees.

"Son, I know this is confusing, it is for all of us. Just stay here a couple days and see if you like it."

I nodded.

Robert took Mom by the arm and walked down the hallway to their bedroom at the other end of the house and closed the door.

I could hear nothing except cars racing along the highway. There was an uncomfortable feeling hanging in the air, filling up the room, so I decided to leave.

Outside, the sun baked the grass; at least one out of every three blades was blonde, not green. Locusts leapt up at my feet, half-flying a few feet away. There was a big garden and a chicken coop in the yard. Train tracks ran along the back of the yard, narrowing it into a point at the end.

I climbed the rusted wire fence onto the tracks. They stretched south as far as I could see, with forest on either side. I looked at the sun, then at my compass and started walking. On the keychain that Dad had given me was a purple plastic triangle with a quarter stuck in it, which I could pop out to make a phone call in case of an emergency.

The city couldn't have been more than two hours' walk, I'd call from a pay phone and have Dad pick me up. I walked slowly over a bridge with wide gaps between the boards. I could see the Rouge River flowing under me. Dad could call Mom too and tell her I was okay. Halfway across the bridge I heard the train's horn blowing in the distance. She'd probably be worried. Or mad. I could hear the ding ding ding of the railroad barriers at a road up ahead. If I hurried, maybe they wouldn't even notice that I was gone. The front of the train was now in sight, chugging away.

Charcoal*

*stephanie turenko

Consonants of sheer crag scrape
the mouth – hands stretch to discern the weight
of walls where strong legs push with each length
of cord, each lungful of breath sent into the crater.
I rappel the vertiginous print where page-turns
build false floors, help to forget the steady
fall to the bottom cover of firm

ground where all is dark, and the mouth – so far
from my eyes. No sense of caves

makes sense in caves.

*The Devotees**

**courtney arthur*

We discovered charcoal
And crushed the soft blackness
Onto our naked backs
With our young thumbs
We did not think about the sand
That would scratch us
To remove the new skin
We just kept smudging
Preparing for the ritual

**acta victoriana: 28*

**acta victoriana: 29*

Cat Snake

*Breathe deep, intones
their tanned, toned, spandexed
priestess.*

Easy, they think, their joint inhale
the swell and crest of that time-honored wave,
their exhale its retreat – just as she said.

*Yes. Breathe into your limbs,
your eyeballs...*

The arc-browed yoga moms and the bulbous
nine-to-fivers can only wonder
at the strange poetry of this command:
but try as they might, their breaths can't
seem to get up past their collarbones.

*Now reach up with your pelvis as we flow
into downward dog...*

The mirrored walls catch the clumsy proliferation
of glutes in a combined thrust to heaven:
a sea of buttocks,
devout, vacuous.

*acta victoriana: 30



*acta victoriana: 31

Possum in a Shell



emily smit-dicks

*acta victoriana: 32

Candy Hearts*

*kira dorward

It was eight forty-three on one of those listless Canadian March days that make one think that winter never ends, the snow never melts, and that nothing interesting ever happens.

The weak winter light filtered through the blinds of the room and stirred Alexandra from her restlessness. She was cold, covered only by her bathrobe because the boy sleeping next to her was wrapped up in her sheets. He had pulled her into him, his arm wrapped over her, leaving her trapped between him and the wall. She relaxed for a few minutes, enjoying the feel of a human body in this most intimate of positions. In this way she forgot just whom it was lying next to her; it was just a place she was looking for.

Their night was littered all over the linoleum floor. Clothing crumpled and laying where it fell. She had shucked hers like a snake shucked its skin, moving on from something else.

She remembered the night before like a dream. It seemed to have all taken place in a warmer light. She had been sitting in front of him, drinking her rum and coke and not looking in his direction. On the way to the party he had picked her up when she'd fallen in the snow. At the party, and this is where things started to become hazy, all she remembered was somehow meeting his mouth and his whiskey kiss.

"Maybe you guys should go somewhere else," said a friend of hers. "This isn't even our party."

They hadn't realized they'd been the focal point of the room.

She'd forgotten her gloves as they hastily put on their coats and boots. That had been a difficult process, as groping was not conducive to the assembly of winter wear. But her hands weren't cold on the way home. He'd held her hand and pressed it. She looked out of the window of the taxi and watched the people they passed on the way.

*acta victoriana: 33

"I had my eye on you," he said, as he came up behind her, their naked bodies touching for the first time. He couldn't see it as he kissed her neck, pressing his palms into her shoulders, but she smiled. She smiled because she'd known it all along. She had known he was coming home with her before they had even left. She knew she could have him if she wanted.

The most intimate parts were the ones she couldn't remember. What she did with her body didn't seem all that important. It was just the body of another that held some meaning; knowing someone else in the carnal, the most simple, of ways.

He wasn't very good, that much she knew. But she appreciated how he curved her into him, her toes curling over his at the end of the twin bed. She liked how his body warmed hers, the dormitory room under heated, as the winter day brought in light so pale and bitter.

She stretched and the boy grazed his hands along her tensed stomach. They didn't talk. She barely even knew his name, yet he had known the most intimate parts of her. There was nothing more to say.

She sat up and looked at him, this boy she barely knew, and traced the outline of his ear. He turned towards her and avoided her eyes, head on the pillow. "I'm sorry," he said. "Looks like you brought the wrong guy home." His thin lips closed around this admission. Lips that couldn't kiss her the way she wanted to be kissed. Lips that pressed themselves against hers, wanting to satisfy. Their mouths didn't work in sync.

Sighing, she rolled him over and straddled him, pulling him up so that her chin grazed his forehead where she gently kissed him. He wrapped his arms around her torso and pressed his face into her breasts.

"Do you know what it is to be tired all the time?" he asked, imploring her to accept his explanation. He sighed into her chest, and she clutched the hair on

the back of his head. "We'll just have to do this again when I'm sober."

He squeezed her a little harder, bending her backwards towards the bed. "There will be a next time, right?"

Alexandra smiled a sad smile. She wished that this boy was someone he wasn't. No one in particular, just maybe the better parts of the men she'd known. He felt so vulnerable to her, like she could crush his feelings with her whisper. In response, a response that promised nothing but left lingering possibilities, she kissed him softly on the neck and worked her way up to his ear, the way she knew he liked. His seemed to accept this as an answer.

She watched him go. As he dressed, he occasionally glanced back at her, obviously unsure of what came next. She took in his skinny body, still a boy's physique, feeling a slight disgust at how it contrasted with her curves. He buckled his watch, which he'd left on her night table. She recalled him taking it off the night before, methodically removing it even in the throws of passion. Somehow this endeared him to her. It was a simple, manly gesture.

He took one final look at her. He seemed to be asking her what to do. Then he mussed her hair as she lay, still, on the bed. There was an awkward silence.

"See ya," was all he could come up with. But the truth was she didn't know how these sorts of things were done either.

She wasn't sad when he left. She was just alone again.

The day was growing on. There was more sun, but it wasn't any warmer. Her friends were waking up now, wanting her to tell them how it went with the guy. They laughed when she said he couldn't get it up. She was as embarrassed now as he had been.

Later, cleaning her room, she found a scattering of little red Tylenols on her carpet. When she talked to him next, he said he'd been so drunk he had confused them for candy hearts.

Gravity *

*emily kedar

*strike**

**alanna lipson*

If I step too close
your whole
body,

a different gravity

threatens
my own,
throws me
off kilter
my moons run wild
scatter
like marbles

mind swells
with a foreign tongue
a hunger at the core
hot

the wet fire of a planet
tidals toward you
how can such a weight
set upon a body
so small
a smudge of flesh

near you I'm huge,
everything
orbits
around my light

but if I come
too close--
you carve me
dwarfed comet caught
in a separate circuit,
small

small stone.

**acta victoriana: 38*

**acta victoriana: 39*

*number five: camp bison**

**alanna lipson*

Three weeks deep in garbage. The heat
sidles in and slides its warm, greasy fingers
over the city. Passing by Christie Pits,
I wrestle with the curdled air, and wring
out my skin once home.

The taped-over public bins soon become
altars of disrepair, ringed with heaps
of pilgrim trash: prostrate apple cores,
styrofoam, napkins, dimpled gum.

Four weeks in, the swell of downtown refuse
billows from driveways and lawns:
the ikea furniture is out, and empty bottles,
split-lipped suitcases, mottled sheets.

Everybody's waiting, inside,
for the strike to dismantle. Tomorrow,
maybe, the trucks will come. The houses
squirm with maggots and fruit flies.

*Future Animals**

*andrew mcewan

The old correctional facility's been closed
for three-plus decades. Beige tiles
long deserted the beige walls: an asbestos
wound festers in the staircase.

Fat thumbs of air ply the broken windows
of blue and yellow cells. Thin brown mattresses
erupt over floors. Paint peels
like sunburnt skin from more paint,
from the obscene swell of plaster
torn from a trunk of brick.

Fuse boxes wrenched open
gleefully expose
themselves, dangling their red
wires and dribbling rust.

And in the gymnasium, along
the bloated remains of floorboards,
and the rubbled reduction of porcelain sinks
the moss gorges in the corners.

Roadside Madonna*

*jeannine pitas

Future animals will walk in the places
we walk now. You and I will be long gone.
Our conversation will fade.

You talk about the difference between
polyphony and antiphony, how voices
either sing simultaneous or alternate.

I say it's not like that, for we
are not voices, anymore than future
animals are the intention to speak.

But they are, you argue, they are
the idea moving to your lips right now.
They will come, like you have spoken.

What if the singers change, I ask, like
we will be replaced, and a second group
takes up the song as the echoes fade.

No, you say, it will not be like that, the first
group will sing again, and we will still be walking
here, talking in the voices of future animals.

Reproduce by Splitting

*emily estelle belanger

There was a time
when the deities spoke directly to us,
their words on our lips,
their hands entwined with ours.

A time when our love,
our chores, even our fighting
was a dance for the gods
who moved us.

But then, the music stopped,
and they stood up and left
even though we
begged them to stay.

We built you, roadside Maria,
crowned you in flowers and caped you in blue
with the hope that you'd
convince them.

But for all this time
no one has come,
and still you stand at the roadside
waiting.

And whenever I pass by,
even though your cloak is chipping away,
you still stretch out
your arms

and as you place
your hands in mine
for one moment I forget
that I'm waiting in vain;

we both forget
that we're stone

*acta victoriana: 46

*acta victoriana: 47

#3*



*acta victoriana: 48

*The Actor's Space**

*emily kedar

*acta victoriana: 49

I have surrendered
my familiar body and come
to you with a wilder weight:

the spine a reed obeying
the wind, or here
our quiet breath.
The bones of my feet shift
beneath sudden lion's legs,
my fingers unfurl, emerging
from arms made of night air.

Amidst these shifting images,
your eyes guide me.
I cross the room to meet you,
and bound by breath
we begin to circle
one another,
two almost animals.

Rushing, churning,
round and round
the room, the distance
at the center
holds us, a field
charged by magnets--

we electrify the space
between your lungs and mine

*acta victoriana: 50

until we arrive
naked into a moment hungry
for our nakedness.
Here, the scene can play itself out...

Your pupils are not for seeing
but for being seen.
They dip into yourself
like valleys,
and now I hear the brook
that murmurs at the base
of the mountain,
the deepest, clearest waters.

Our bodies were made for this,
to be such creature vessels.

I try to pour my joy
into language:

my words are cupped hands
scooping at your stream,

Maybe you feel the ripples
I've made like a tongue
on a throat, like teeth
on a collar bone--
you step away.
The moment tumbles
onward, seeking other silence.

*acta victoriana: 51

We are startled back
into our own tired limbs:
two small bodies shamed
by this empty room,

and I find my normal shadow
waiting by the door.

*Evening, Early Summer**

**adrian mercer*

*The Domest- tication of Bread**

**bruce meyer*

cutting across the point,
the wind peels
back the flames
like a mother's comb

giving up,
lawn chairs list
on the uneven ground,
voices propel across
the lake,

black flies push against recovered
stillness

stars begin to check in
and we add more wood to the fire.

**acta victoriana: 54*

**acta victoriana: 55*

I believe that bread was never wild,
but there was a time it grew on trees;
or rather, hung from branches temptingly,
hot and enticing with the aroma of God,
aching for butter, its innards steaming.
This, we said, was divinity in sustenance.

Some said it needed wine, a red
to wash the bitterness down. Others
declared that water was the cure,
the Spartan pride that gaolers have
for their answer to hunger and our ills.
When it wasn't there, we understood loss.

Clever ones said they'd make their own,
raise the grain, eat of the earth,
but the truth of bread was slain with a bone
and when skies grew empty, so did our souls;
so we invented the very means of knowing.
When knowledge failed, we learned to question.

Could find its scent throughout the house,

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the air wafting with a call to praise –
the women singing as flat loaves rose,
the men waiting because love is a hunger
and children pressing against the door
asked if miracles could happen sooner.

This is how we brought joy to our lives –
not that we need what bread could teach us,
but because it was something so familiar –
celebration that pointed the way to dreaming,
the need that woke us to find ourselves,
and mornings we prayed and loaves ballooned.

In every loaf there is a message hiding,
though in truth we never pause to read it.
You can taste it when the bread is gone.
It is a simple statement about desert lands,
how in baked horizons when the feet are sore
there is water in stones and tomorrows in sunsets.

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Contributor's Notes

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courtney arthur (supposes that she's always wanted to write really earth-shattering things, having grown up in Toronto's mildly oppressive suburbs. Now a fourth year student majoring in English and Comparative Literature, she has found that the experience of living downtown in a hodgepodge of similarly confused, articulate people has brought her laughingly back down to earth.)

andré babyn (lives in Toronto. He is the 2010 winner of the Norma Epstein Award for Creative Writing and is the current editor of the Hart House Review.)

emily estelle belanger (is a fourth year student at Victoria College. She is outta here!!!)

jeff dupuis (is a freelance writer in his final year at the University of Toronto, specializing in English. He works a day job and occasionally reviews books for Canoe.ca. Jeff trains in the martial arts and periodically indulges in bad, straight-to-DVD action films.)

kira dorward (is a third year History specialist at Trinity College. She is the 2010 winner of the Hart House Literary Contest and currently serves on the board of The Hart House Review, as well as interning at The National Magazine Awards.)

brandon gray (is a third year student studying English and Philosophy. His interests are not listed on Facebook and they are not listed here, either.)

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emily kedar (is a fourth year student at Victoria College studying Drama and English. Emily's life is governed by her insatiable love for language. A practicing poet, working actor and developing dramaturge, she strives to continually sharpen all her creative tools. Most recently her creative interest lies in the dynamic dialogue between artistic disciplines. She is currently directing an inter-medium collective show about the relationship between order and chaos in artistic practice.)

jennifer kucharczyk (is in her final year of her undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto, majoring in Historical and Cultural Geography with a minor in Cinema Studies. She is fascinated by the cultural identities that rise from our spatial relationships. She has workshopped with Albert Moritz and owes a great deal to her friends and peers who have endured her nonsense-fuelled narratives and mixed metaphors.)

alanna lipson (lives in Toronto.)

andrew mcewan (is a Vic student, former Acta Editor-in-Chief and current Hart House Review Poetry Editor. His work has been awarded the Alta Lind Cooke Award and the E.J. Pratt Medal for Poetry. He has a chapbook published by Cactus Press titled *Input / Output*.)

adrian mercer (is in his final year at the University of Toronto. He is interested in how Canadian identity is shaped, particularly regarding the dominant wilderness theme in Canadian literature. He is also intrigued by the role of Canada's federal system as a long-term barometer for national and, more importantly, regional mood. He is very grateful for the chance to drive old habits from dormancy. Some day he would like to write a book about baseball.)

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bruce meyer ([Vic 810, BA Hons English and Renaissance Studies] is the author of 31 books, most recently the memoir *Alphabet Table* and the poetry collections *Dog Days* and *Mesopotamia*. He earned his in English MA from the University of Toronto and holds a Ph.D. from McMaster University. He is the inaugural Poet Laureate of the City of Barrie and Professor of English at Georgian College where he teaches in the Laurentian University BA Program. He won the Pratt Medals in 1980 and 1981 and the Alta Lind Cook Award in 1981 and 1982. He was co-editor of Acta's centennial issue in 1978. A full-length study of his works can be found in Volume 282 of the Dictionary of Literary Biography.)

graeme myers (was born in Toronto and is majoring in Literary Studies and Spanish.)

jeannine pitas (is a second year Ph.D. student at the Centre for Comparative Literature, where she works on 20th century Latin American and Polish literature. Some of her favourite poets include Gioconda Belli, Wislawa Szymborska and Raul Zurita. Her translation of *The History of Violets* by acclaimed Uruguayan writer Marosa di Giorgio (1932-2004) was recently published by Ugly Duckling Presse.)

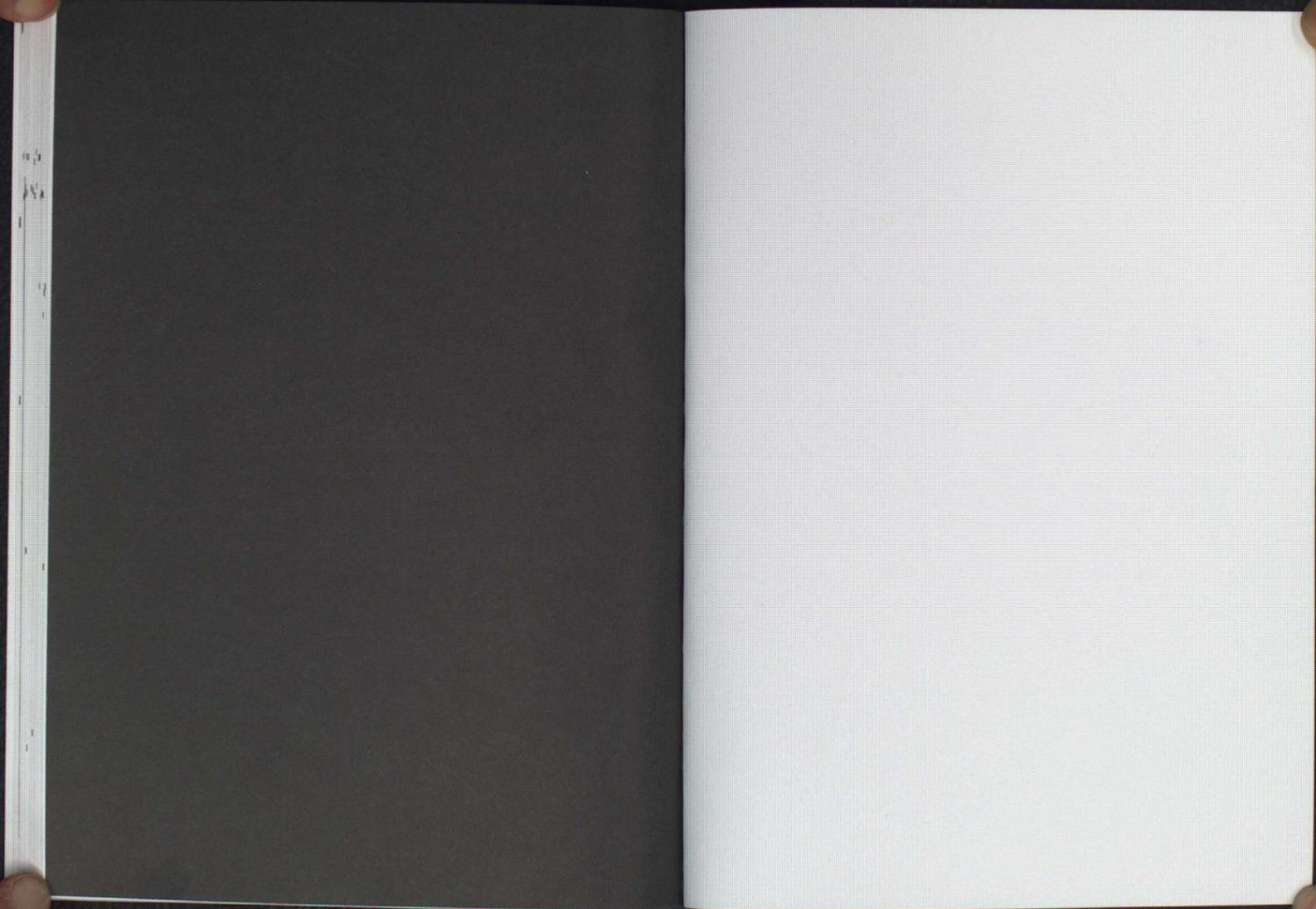
emily smit-dicks (is majoring in Philosophy and Visual Studies, with a minor in English at the University of Toronto. She has participated in group shows at Whippersnapper Gallery, Art Metropole, and Art School Dismissed. She has been selected two years in a row for the U of T Celebration of the Arts. Emily is currently an illustrator for The Varsity and The Strand, secretary for the Fine Art Student Union, Co-Secretary of the Hart House Art Committee, and a work-study outreach assistant at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery.

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stephanie turenko (is a third year English and Semiotics student who loves to write poetry and take photographs. She is also part of an art collective called Kosa Kolektiv.)

eric williams (studied History and Religion at the University of Toronto and is now studying Illustration at the Ontario College of Art & Design. He has recently had his illustrations published with Xtra! Magazine, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and The Varsity. In his spare time (spare time?), he enjoys perusing record stores, fondling old art books, and planning that fantasy marriage to Bjork.)

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