

Alloy

Literary Magazine
Spring 2025

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dearest readers,

It is frequently thought that criticism is profoundly more intelligent and valuable than praise. My four years with Alloy Literary Magazine has only solidified for me that this is not true. To love something, to appreciate it, to articulate its beauty – or to simply say “I like this!” – is the most valuable thing of all. As you look through these pages, I encourage you to feel the solace that good, beautiful art can provide us. To me, this is the goal of an undergraduate literary magazine. As editor in chief, it has been my greatest joy to see the vast talent of Emory undergraduates and be able to provide a space where it can be put out in the world.

This is my favorite part – when the year comes together into a final body of work. When flipping through Alloy, what always strikes me is the sheer amount of intentionality that is contained within the pages. Words are not accidental – neither are commas, neither are brushstrokes, neither is the click of a camera. As you take in this year’s copy of Alloy, I encourage you to remember this intentionality.

It would be remiss to not thank some of the fantastic people who have helped me throughout the years. A huge thank you Raegan Allen, who greatly influenced my time on Alloy as an underclassman. To Nico Mestre and Jason Kraft, who I started attending meetings with in August 2021 – thank you for helping me get over the intimidation I felt. And thank you to our executive board members, who help Alloy run. And of course – to my brilliant, vital, InDesign-savvy managing editor, Averett Hickey, whom I cannot imagine the year without. And to you – our readers – for picking up Alloy and spending time with our amazing contributors. Please enjoy this year’s edition of Alloy Literary Magazine.

With love,
Eleanor Byers

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SWEET PEA *Greyson Morey*



LET ME IN YOUR MAGAZINE

Nathan Rubin

talk your silly talk
bow your head, lift that sly hand
tell me I belong

ROADSIDE

Priscilla Gomes

There, yellow light, soul of flower,
Honeybee type with black stripe graffiti,
Blacker than the blue of the sky
That still tries this late at night.

It diffuses bitter and out,
Drifting through branches of oak.
A tired impact to streetcars illy parked,
The pit where I fall at his shift in tone

And beside

Bike chained via closed loop,
Glint dulling where I've pulled,
Cracking as outgrown cement winces like ginger
At the bending arch on my metal nude.

See the floor-fought prayer,

How I scrape
dirty muck
off shoe.

PROMISES

Kiran Narula

you promised me the stars, so i sliced open my palm.
you spread strawberry jam in a clean line

across yours with a smooth butter knife. we shook on it.
as if i were the match and you the striking board, the shock

set me aflame. for you, i boiled and blistered,
i burned to the bone. it was february, but it had yet to snow.

my eyes melted in their sockets and spilled onto the pavement.
you thumbed the hollowed craters. you said, i can fix this.

i was unfurling like yarn, like you were the cat
with the claws and the yellow eyes. tossing me in the air,

leaving me undone. i said, you're a liar.
you said, don't raise your voice. i used to be quieter

than you. you had to draw a sound from my stomach
like reeling in a fishing line. a fresh catch. a hint of seafoam

still when i spoke, coral you crushed
between your teeth. you didn't like my voice at all, it turned out—

you chewed it up after you dug it out. but you had promised me
the stars, the summer, a house by the water

where it smells the way i sound, like salt and seaweed.
but in the end, my eyes pooled around my feet like candle wax,

and i bleed sugar now, and you never gave me anything at all. it
is always february.
the air is still. in weather like this, i could grow strawberries.

SKIN ONLY

Carly Aikens

Flexed into perfect thirds of changes
I fell into the key lace hung off her chair and the spectacle of her
braid
dancing in the corner of the room
Swallowed my breath heavy
and tried to kiss her face through the string waves

There's something so much more ancient about her than that
stupid harp
because there's a lagging bite in the right swinging slug of her
voice
There's a gap in the next note that I get stuck in every time
I believed in its force on me:

she walks it down and lets me know with a twice down smile I
think I only see

I watched it sink and bob
then clear the seven feet between me and the fall of my eyes
back down to the hardwood
She doesn't care about the world I'm in

and she jumps it and tips over onto the cracks
I think I look funny checking the big fat watch on the hand where
my eyes land
because I am her muse and she keeps taking less than she
should
I don't want to be left by the time she notices

MELANCHOLIA *Callie Guo*



GRAVEROBBER'S LAMENT

Averett Hickey

Breaking open the last silver
Casket, we smelled rot and called
The blonde boy runt. The casket's curse
Unleashed: seven years of drought. The land
Became unrecognizable. Among the dunes,
We rolled screams into cigarettes, smoked
Our fear slow like brisket over an open fire.
Our blonde boy, scarred by seven years
Of solitary thirst, set himself against return
And fled from us. We chased his silhouette
Like rattlers after a hare, caught
Nothing but the ache of desert sun.

TIGRAWAY

Hlina Temesgen



5-D CHESS, OR APOCALYPSE IS NEARLY HERE

Neeraj Palnitkar

Remember that boy, the third-grade
bughouse champion. Be kinder to him.
Send his bishop
to B5. He will thank you later. Stop thinking
about what to say
at your mother's funeral. That timeline
is miles away. Move your rook
sideways and watch the sky
turn to stone somewhere. Watch the cold
wind unlatch. An old man in the park
says he's played against you in ten different
lives. You have lost in all of them. The myrtle trees
are blooming. That means it's
July. That means you're in check. Your future
self would know what to do. Let him lend
you a hand. Here, a pawn, in some world
it's you, passing through multiverses of premeditation
and potential. When you slide your queen
forward, you slide a hundred ways
through a hundred lifetimes.
To hell with it all.
Throw the whole board out the window and watch
this world shatter like glass. Mold
the shards at your feet into
a new one. This moon could be made of ashes
for all we know. In seventh grade
you read a story about chess tournaments
and rewards. Forget the moral. Forget
the salted plums. There is not much
time. Call this life a stalemate. Listen to the one
song that always makes you cry. Tell the old man
you will beat him – you already have
at some point.



GRANDFATHER MOON *Greyson Morey*

DAME JULIE ANDREWS

Carly Aikens

My mom and I have watched *The Sound of Music* nearly every year at least twice a year, probably since I was born. Some sort of alarm had to go off in my little infantile brain to let me know that nothing was ever gonna top this. The hills are factually alive with the sound of music and they definitely aren't missing the divine prophecy of filling my heart with that sound.

As of now, I'm looking at the version of *The Kiss* by Klimt that lives in my drag queen-themed calendar. Glitter from it pours onto my desk and itches like hell on my collarbones when I get slumped over. I'm thinking of calling my mom to let her know that I've been listening to "Edelweiss" with something stuck behind my sinuses that makes for a perplexing issue of being unable to sneeze or cry or pray. But I did just leave home a week ago and that might be doing too much.

The Sound of Music is 5 months younger than my mom and 39 years older than I will ever be. Which makes me a little more uncomfortable than it probably should but I'm choosing to shrug that off for now in favor of more pressing matters.

I'm swatting away at a Google Gemini ad to watch Julie Andrews in a Technicolor vision. She's floating through the Bavarian Alps in a cinch-waist convent dress with her hands on her heart. I can feel a cloud on my face through my pillow and hear my mom humming along.

ELLA MAE BEGAY *Alex Kauffman*

murdered women

—

missing

missing

missing

and hasn't been heard

from since

missing

missing

missing

missing

missing

missing

64-year-old Ella Mae Begay, who was

reported missing	
------------------	--

has not been located.

stolen,

the worst thing

to happen.

missing,

missing

The numbers

climb each month.

they are not going to be seen.

face on a missing poster

hangs on

the walls, often by people she doesn't know wondering about her safety.

who are also

Begay was last seen at her home

one of her daughters lived about

fifty yards away.

She

was

an accomplished weaver of traditional Navajo rugs

the victim of foul play

homicide

of interest

remains have not been located,

missing.

missing

missing

This is a developing story and will be updated.

her family still hasn't been able to bring Begay home,

begging for answers.

Indigenous families

preserve a space for absent loved ones.

it wasn't her legacy to be stolen or to be murdered

missing and murdered

missing,

missing

SELF-PORTRAIT WITH LEAVES *Jason Kraft*



YOUNG LOVE

Nathan Rubin

It's all because of that fucking blunt. I was at Tina's rager last night and all I wanted to do was talk to Cam. He's *so* hot, and he's got this limp because one of his legs is shorter than the other one, it's adorable. He even wears one of those shoes with a 6-inch platform to level his legs out. People make fun of the limp, but it makes me feel like I have a chance. *Had* a chance.

So anyway, I walk into this party without an invite because I'm wearing this thrifted purse that everyone in school is jealous of. Especially Tina. I'd been making mysterious comments about what's inside of it so that people would think I have drugs, but all that's really in there is a thesaurus and an ugly coin purse and three loose cough drops. That's because I lied about thrifting it, too. I stole it from my grandma's closet the day of her funeral. She hated me, always told me I sat like a whore, but I waited patiently for the day she died so I could steal this purse.

So I walk into this party and I find Cam in the backyard standing in a circle of some of the most indie kids at school, just where he belongs.

Where I'll belong, soon. Where he'll finally know my name. I'm done being the middle school freak who eats her lunch alone because she took too many pills once. High school is for new beginnings. And pills are cool now.

Anyway, one of them is wearing her underwear on the outside of her jeans, leaning in this really casual way against the wrought iron fence, which can't be comfortable. Another is literally wearing chainmail, like a fucking knight from the middle ages or whatever, but it looks fucking cool, somehow. And Cam is standing there with his one regular sized shoe and one huge shoe, holding this big fat blunt in his thin, pale fingers.

I'm like, shit, these bitches won't even care about my new purse. And I've never even smoked a blunt. I've only had a few edibles, and one made me throw up, but we're in fucking high school now, we're getting *old*, so I take a deep breath. I walk over as nonchalantly as I can and extend my arm like a princess so my hand sits right in front of Cam's face. Without saying a word, I stare him right in his dreamy blue eyes and watch his pupils dilate. He hands me the blunt and I take a deep, full breath of it before passing it to the left.

I whip a 180 and speed walk — in a chic way, the way that says

I'm leaving you bitches in the dust, you're nothing — back into the house so I can let out this huge fucking cough. And I'm like thank *God* no one can hear me because *Trap Queen* is playing so loud, and I smile because I know my ass looks good in these jorts, and I know Cam was staring at it as I walked away from him.

That's when shit starts to get blurry. I'm leaning against the kitchen counter but the flashing LED light strips are making me feel epileptic so I stare at the ground and start dissociating like some asylum patient. Someone bumps into me on the way to puke in the sink and I look up and like, almost everyone is gone already, so I must have been just staring at the ground looking like a freak for *hours*. I look over at the microwave clock: it's 2am. *Fuck*, it literally has been hours.

I try to find the front door to leave but Tina is so rich and her house is like the maze from *The Shining*, and then I feel like I'm in *The Shining*, running away from some ugly loser with an axe. So I start screaming, because I'm about to fucking *die*, and then I'm on the ground and Cam is standing over me and his mouth is moving but I can't hear him because now *HOT TO GO!* is blasting on the speakers. And suddenly his giant shoe is scaring me so I start screaming again, and he leans over to help me up or something but he's totally the killer, so I start thrashing around like *NO, I DON'T WANT TO FUCKING DIE!* But nothing happens so I chill out and sit up and now there's like ten people standing in a circle around me.

I check my arm and my fucking purse is gone, but I see that Tina has it, and she's looking at me like I just stabbed her dog or something, but then she says *you didn't thrift this bitch its from Shein* and I say *what* and she shoves it in my face to show me the logo but I can't read it because I'm so fucking high. And then she spits something hard into my face and it's a cough drop, and she says *and this isn't molly why were you acting like it was molly in your purse* and I all I can think to say is *Fuck you grandma*.

I need to be somewhere else so I just curl into a ball like a fetus and sob, which is not chic at all but it makes everyone walk away because they're probably weired the fuck out. So I just lie there and stop crying because I'm a baby again, back in my Mom's stomach, and I love my mom so much, and I need to tell her that, I've been so mean to her lately, but then I hear Tina say *get her the fuck out of my house* and I start to cry again.



MOON GODDESS GARDEN

Nicole Cordasco

COAST GUARD

Davis Swann

Saint Sebastian, I love you
when I'm in our opium
den, staggering in emerald
haze and keeping my eye on
hinterlands out the window –
hinterlands of our entwined
lives, uncharted spaces that
I'm afraid of. You still me.

I love you on the line where
torso meets hips: all doubt dies
on that horizon. I want
everything you are, even
the thorn and beige – you're the one
who rebars my body, and
keeps my love from streaming out
the fissures in my thighs.

I love you on the golden
rush, Mr. Forty-Niner,
when your delicate footsteps
flower everything. The lack
ebbs when you laugh with me, when
your shoulders shake your mountain
arms and I look to their pale
sinew and the hands they bear.

I love you for the deep warmth
of those horse-birthing hands, how
when you cradle my skull they
keep out every sound but your
heart's thump – palms over eardrums
like animal skins, leather
from my honey to keep my
sanctity on the inside.

I love you for each secret

you keep from me, with your legs
sprawling into my life, your
image bringing rain clouds. Now
my path is changed, I orbit
you and it makes me blood red,
a little Jupiter, a
moon emulating your hue.

I love you even when you
leach me of my color, show
me I don't matter, remind
me who I am. Because your
body is the temple where
my hope is resurrected –
ship-sinking means nothing once
you have brought me back to land.



爷爷 and 奶奶's Farm Mandy Sun



BALLAD OF THE HOPE (FUL/LESS)

Neeraj Palnitkar

The first American song my parents heard was
from the 80's. They are lucky, they think, this is
the new country. She could
carry a tune—

music.

goo goo,

ga ga.

the baby—maybe a gold necklace,

high blood pressure. A new worry

They won't miss this in America.

My father scratches at tarnished film, searching for another hit.

on the black-and-white TV that played Bollywood movies
not so long ago. My mother wonders what songs she could bring

never

my father knows too much

All they hear is *radio*

radio

My mother wonders what she can give

my father says he can pass down his ill temper and

passes in and out the door like a stray cat.

My mother turns the volume down and lets the music fade away.

HALF A JAW, SCATTERED LEAVES *Jason Kraft*



THE WISTFUL COMPANION *Caron Lee*



LAUNDRY DAY *Greyson Morey*



OTHELLO: I LOVE YOU LIKE I AM MIRABAI AND YOU ARE MY BLUE GOD

Abia Fazili

I loved you for your body is what people say.
They are not wrong. At night, I would wait

for you to come next to me in bed, and as
you fell asleep, you became a comma like

a sleeping cat does. I loved you for that cat-
like softness and how you would uncurl

when I came closer. What people say is that
you are an animal, and my need for you is

only animal too. They say that if you are a cat,
you are a black one, but I cannot be

superstitious like them. Not when Mira's lord
is half lion and half man. Not when you bring

a blanket over the chairs we sit on in daylight
so we can kiss in the dark. Not when you

tell me of the wars of your ancestors and
your hometown as we sit in these chairs.

I am laying here because the black of your
chest and your hair is turning blacker,

until it is blue, and it is turning me
blue too, until I am dyed dark with you,

and all the other colors have washed out.
So yes, my need for you is animal,

a soft animal and sometimes a hard one.
We are animals in these bodies, fucking.

MAN IN THE FOG *Nathan Rubin*





HOLLOW HALLOWED MARROW

Kaitlyn Richardson

I think I have bird bones.
Hollow hallowed airy bones,
I fill with the things I let inside me.
The things that fill these bones,
Let into these holy spaces,
Baggage in the cargo hold of my marrow.
The whistle they let out when they
Snap, their fingers twitching to
Unsheath my periosteum. This
Body's turnstile, a new York subway,
Repercussionless. They jump the gate
And gain access. To tag with sour
Paint, the bird-bone weight-bearing
Beams, etched with names I've forgotten.
Get out. Fly. Get out. Fly.
She's forgotten how.

SWAN LAKE *Catherine Yan*



SIT-DOWN DINER

Evan Bazel

I do not remember
offering my hand to the roses.
Three holes opened in my palm
leaking throbbing strawberry milk,
large and viscous
enough for the vacuum
to pick up. Rosebuds flowed
twenty feet and two years
from where I'd leap and loose a tooth
searching for something in the air.
The remainder tasted like coins, ached
like concrete.

Grandma does not remember.
She hobbles about
that poplar coffin apartment
legally blind and looking
without knowing
for what she put down.
Her son sees
a ninety-year evergreen
gutted and at dinner we mock him
for fretting over
the other side to memory.
Somewhere in between rooms
she rebuilds Wieliczka
with steady, demented strokes,
segregating the population by religion.
Her passing rings like an order is up
at a sit-down diner, a sound
looping itself around tree stumps.
I order pink Yoohoo
but the waiter doesn't write it down,
just watches me
grope for Wieliczka
in the crevices of the booth
cushion.

DO YOU

Isabelle Cuellar Ferreira

recall the shape of 5:00 AM, the blinking dash in the computer room? Or sneaking sips of wine you thought was Pepsi from Papito's sparkly purple princess cup?

We used to have such limber necks, we used to take the headrests off the seats to lay back in the car and look out through the wind screen. We used to be all muddy, all the time.

Now, I am looking up, and I see clouds form like the smiley-face-shaped fries we ate as kids. And I miss when I helped you build your Lego sets (I did). Remember

the footlong salami sticks we used to buy?
You would eat yours, forget, and then eat mine.



PILLS, PILLS, PILLS *Tiffany Liu*

APPETITE

Sarinah Reichle

came suddenly, after that week at last had passed. For days I'd been mindless and sick to my stomach, peevish, picky like a toddler, nursing this weird grief, my bruised pride. Then, very late one night, I found myself sitting under the kitchen lights, eating chips and salsa, chocolate cake and ice cream, two bananas and an orange; I couldn't get enough. After breakfast one morning, of toast and eggs and fried potatoes, my attention caught for minutes on the fat slices of blood orange drizzled with honey, I blinked twice and looked up around me, and then realized I had come back to myself.



BOLOGNA SPIDER *Jason Kraft*

VARIATION ON A PARADELLE

Averett Hickey

The soft animal of my body has fucking had enough.
The basil on my kitchen windowsill is wilted.
My body is soft as wilted basil on the windowsill.
Has the animal had enough of my fucking kitchen?
My body is soft as wilted basil on the windowsill.

He came to me like a mudslide after heavy rain.
At least the devastation made way for more newness.
He made me heavy like mud, for rain to slide away.
After the newness came more devastation. At least
He made me heavy like mud, for rain to slide away.

There is nothing wrong with my fatigued body.
I am already assembling into a fresh life.
I am there, fresh with fatigue. My wrong life
Is there, waiting for a fresh body. My wrong life
Is assembling into nothing, fatigued already.

The rain made me soft, fatigued. I am of the animal
Body; my life is devastation. He had enough of
Fucking on my wilted body – nothing more
To slide into, at least. After assembling a heavy
Newness, the wrong came away like mud. There is
Already fresh basil for the windowsill.

THE COWS IN THE PASTURE

Kiran Narula

Stand in a heap. they grunt and moo and huddle for warmth and wait for wheat. the cows in the pasture stomp their feet and talk about what is beyond the fence; they yearn for grass so green it is black. let's go there says the oldest, and he charges at the fence and shatters his horns. he bleeds and bleeds and the rest lap up his blood with their tongues and say i told you so. they lay next to him and grunt and moo and wait for him to heal. when the man comes (and the man always comes) he says where'd your horns go, buddy? and then the hornless cow is stunned and dragged and hung and slit. the cows hold a cow funeral knowing they are next. the grass is gray and still blood-stained. the cows lick their babies' heads and flick their tails from side to side and cry and cry.



CHIDERA *Catherine Yan*

AMERICAN HISTORY ON A GLOOMY ATLANTA AFTERNOON

Evan Bazel

Then, a Wednesday greengray grounding.
The quilted clouds take a seat in this chair
made to resemble birch, softly,
like tiny wheels grazing tarmac.
Not the tensing, not the holding my breath
until you believe. I put down the American Spirit
blues and cuddle the rain atop the treeline.
Or maybe it is some other
kind of embrace, like the kind you give
your parents after you slaughter them.
I remove my feet to crawl
along of the bed of bodies
lining the turtle's ruptured shell.
A cumulus sat beside me and said
"Put down the cigarettes."
A landmass knows more than time.
Georgia didn't have to believe
that Sherman would come, or had ever been there.
The ground is made of red clay.

LOWER, SLOWER

Swain Lee

Last night, we drank in her mom's home gym seeing who could lift more and care less the Popov Premium Russian Blend was once a top-shelf liquor now it's contained in plastic I never told you the first fight I was in was with my childhood friend Vinny at the Jetty this morning I dined on cheap vodka and a half-frozen Uncrustable I bathed in Dawn dish soap we smoked from a pipe carved out of a cucumber by the creek where I used to go as a kid I think I still was one I mean sometimes I would take a nap in my car in the driveway after school and I'd wake up just after the sun had set it's like I just needed time to pass as fast as possible fading in and out of consciousness hoping that one day I would barely remember my own name and now there's this crushing feeling that it's all fleeting or maybe it's already gone when I was ten I thought twenty year old me would be such an adult but then you have to do your laundry or whatever and whoop de doo what a fucking plight it's not like this is anything especially when you grew up surrounded by so much scary shit and you only kind of get out of it but the truth is I think I've been devolving since grade school, finding new ways to avoid sleep. The world gets bigger and bigger and I find myself growing more gluttonous. Maybe when you get that tired, everything looks like a bed. The assumptions are right. I keep getting spam calls. I can feel my fear growing. My windows won't open. Now is the time for the answer. My counters are sticky.

Just one question.



FALLING IN LOVE *Callie Guo*

COVEN *Katie Clark*



TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Barkot Belay

I'm sorry, I think we're not hearing each other. I think you might have mistaken my meaning. When I said I loved you I didn't mean that I wanted to kiss or fuck or cook each other breakfast. I don't want to tangle my legs with yours and put my hands in your hair. I think about your hair and your hands and the shade of your eyes when the light hits them, but not like that. Sorry. I can see how you might have gotten confused. I said I love you and you heard something like, I want to be sitting at the table eating a croissant when you pad barefoot into the kitchen. I'm sure you're very pretty still rumpled from sleep, but I don't want to see it. I don't want to be in the kitchen. My point is that I lie awake at night and I think about writing a play for a regional theater, where one of the lead actors had a star turn as a corpse on a cop show, and I want my stepbrother to come watch—it doesn't have to be opening night, he's got stuff to do, I get it—but sometime, at least once, and like it more than he expected to. I want them to make it into a movie. I want you to know none of this, and dig up a DVD from the bottom of the bargain bin at Walmart, or a garage sale, or the shelf of a secondhand store. When you come into this fantasy you are watching it on the couch with someone you know a lot better than me, and you are seeing the kitchen I locked myself out of to prove how much I love you. You are seeing the croissants and the story I used to tell myself to fall asleep. In this story, you are always the one at the table having breakfast; I am always the boy who doesn't own house shoes, standing in the kitchen like it's become foreign territory. You know the one. That says more about me than it does about him, or you. The story is not hermetically sealed. I would like the prison-style plexiglass window I put up to be a little less shitty, because that is not what the play was about. You don't come in until the DVD and the couch. Probably in a million worlds you never went shopping for the abandoned kill-shelter DVDs and the story goes on without you.

It's really not out of spite, understand. I would like this poem to be about the tree in the yard that blossoms for a week every spring. I would like to talk about the way you hummed along with the static on the radio whenever there wasn't reception. I would like to tuck flowers in your hair and walk along a canal and look at people's dogs. It's just that I've written it already, I've blocked it, and the boy is always standing in the doorway. You understand. The boy isn't me; you can tell because he sleeps with the door open. It can be you at the table, if you want.

PASSERBY *Eliana Pollay*





OCTOBER FLASH FICTION CONTEST

*Sometimes our bodies do not belong to us. Sometimes they
belong to someone – or something – else. What does it
mean to be spiritually possessed?*

FEEL LIKE A WOMAN

Alex Kauffman

It was a completely innocuous day when I was possessed by Shania Twain. My eyes had just barely cracked open, my mind still swimming in the thick haze of sleep.

Man, I feel like a woman – the thought split open my skull and dropped itself inside. I jerked into an upright position. My body was not the same body I fell asleep in.

My fingertips just barely brushed over my skin, my arms, my legs, my stomach. My skin felt different, it didn't feel so suffocating. I was a woman. I hadn't been one in years. I could feel Shania lurking just beneath my smoother skin, somewhere deep in my bones and blood. She had always lived inside me, ever since my mother bought that CD and played it on the drive to school every day. But now, Shania felt closer than ever before. A dim breath left my lips. I prayed, Shania, please, guide the way.

Shania used my legs and propelled me to my bathroom, where my hands found reprieve in a long-abandoned makeup drawer. Shania did my face up real nice. Slashes of dark eyeliner sliced through a dusting of pink eyeshadow. Rouge tinting blossomed on my lips and cheeks. My eyelashes drooped, doused

with expired mascara.

I donned an outfit complete with a profusion of feminine ornaments, including lace, sequins, and a peter pan collar. I was replete with femininity. My chest swelled with pride. When I looked in the mirror, I didn't see Shania's beautiful face looking back at me, no, I saw my mother's. I was a woman. I was my mother's daughter again. I was resplendent.

After a long day of womaning femalely, I clasped my hands in prayer and thanked Shania for blessing me with her presence in my body. I told her I didn't mind sharing, and she could stay for as long as she wanted. Amen.

The next morning, I was not quite a man, but I was definitely not a woman. I knew Shania left me, that duplicitous bitch. Fuck you, Shania.

My body had been thrown into jeopardy, racked with chills, sweats, shivers, and sniffles. My temples thrummed, my arms and legs trembled achiness, my skin clung to my frame. My body was a razor, everything sharp and serrated.

I haven't been a woman since. I haven't been my mother's daughter.

WINTER ART AND POETRY CONTEST

*The ground is covered with snow, and the world has fallen
silent. How does it look? How does it feel? Cozy, creepy, or
something else entirely?*

Neeraj Palnitkar

CONTRIBUTORS

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Carly is a second-year NBB & Cultural Anthropology major from South Florida. She enjoys attempting book clubs with her friends, rollerskating, and going to concerts.

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Barkot Belay is a first-year from Bethesda, Maryland. Aside from writing, their chief passions are combat sports, trivia, watching birds, and taking walks in the middle of the night.

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Nicole is an Earth worshipper, studying Interdisciplinary studies, hailing from the town in New Jersey where The Sopranos was filmed. They love to garden, cook and eat with her loved ones, swim, dance, lay on the ground, hug trees, make abstract art, talk to animals and commune.

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Catherine is a first-year student from Beijing, China. She hopes to draw and paint more this year.

LETTER FROM
THE MANAGING EDITOR

Dear Reader,

As I close this year's issue of Alloy, I am reminded of the day that I first discovered this magazine existed during my second year at Emory. I still remember the thrill of learning that there was a space on campus dedicated to sharing the creative work of students, and how excited I was when I learned that anybody could join this community just by attending a general body meeting. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know all the students who attended our general body meetings this year, as well as the exec members I have had the pleasure of working with over the last two-odd years.

Alloy is not just a magazine, but a community of many wonderfully talented Emory undergraduates. The diverse pool from which we receive submissions is something that I think makes Alloy truly special. At club fairs and other community events, we remind potential submitters that we take work from students of any major, with any level of experience. Putting together a magazine that feels representative of Emory's student body is a difficult task, and this endeavor would be impossible without our great group of folks who are truly passionate about art and literature.

The magazine you hold in your hands is a finished product that reflects an entire academic year's worth of hard work, both in assembling the magazine itself as well as creating the community that sustains this work. I want to sincerely thank you for taking the time to read through our magazine. As I look toward the future, it is my hope that this magazine and the community that makes it possible will always exist on Emory's campus.

Sincerely,
Averett Hickey

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submission Information

Submit all work as separate attachments to:
alloy.submissions@gmail.com

Please send each piece in a separate document, naming each with the title and genre of the piece (e.g. prose, poetry, art, photography). Art needs to be in 300dpi universal file format. Writing must be in Word document format. Author names cannot appear anywhere in the document. There is a limit of ten pieces per contributor. Contributors must be undergraduate students at Emory. AI-generated content is not accepted.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Alloy is published once a year by students at Emory University. Submissions to Alloy are accepted from all undergraduate Emory students. Students who are interested can attend weekly meetings where the staff evaluates and discusses submissions anonymously. Opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial or general staff. Issues of Alloy are available at various locations around campus.

COLOPHON

Hardware: Apple Macintosh
Software: Microsoft Word (word processing), Adobe InDesign 2025 (layout), Adobe Photoshop 2025 (image processing)
Publisher: Emory Document Services
Typography: Alloy is set in Agrandir Bold and Roca Light, Regular, Bold, and Italic.

WEBSITE

<https://alloy.home.blog>