

Studio One

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Complete Edition, Studio One 2022

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Studio One
Volume 46

From the Editors

Studio One is a literary and visual arts journal published each spring by the College of Saint Benedict/St. John's University students. Our mission is to give new and/or established writers a forum in which they can present their works. The magazine focuses on poetry, short fiction, essays, and other reproducible visual artworks. Submissions are open to all students attending CSB/SJU and to the general public regardless of regional, national, or international location.

In 1976, a student named Clare Rossini had the foresight to create a new magazine for publishing the artistic works of authors and artists living in the surrounding area. As Rossini wrote, "Art is the life current of the community. It is a source of pleasure and pride for us; it unites us with our human predecessors and successors. Art is no luxury; it is a vital human activity. By publishing Studio One, we wish to support the members of our Minnesota community dedicated to that activity and to make their art available to those for whom it was made." While Studio One's reach has extended greatly since our beginning in 1976, the current Editors-in-Chief have striven to publish a selection that still supports the mission written by Clare 46 years ago. Without Clare's efforts, we would not be presenting the 2022 edition of Studio One.

Studio One would also like to thank our staff advisors, Matt Callahan and Rachel Marston, along with all the faculty of the CSB/SJU English Department, Catherine Rupp of the Literary Arts Institute, Patty Tholen and Palmer Printing, all our contributors, and all those who submitted their work.

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Table of Contents

Cover Art

Salt Lake City Oil Refineries above the LDS Center *Eric Wilcox*

Poetry

Juicebox Girl (After Midnight Moments) <i>Michael Lee Johnson</i>	10
When You Want Me Least <i>Holly Day</i>	12
Goodnight Wish <i>Molly McGowan</i>	13
Warm Water <i>DS Maolalai</i>	14
Where is Beauty? <i>Donna Emerson</i>	16
Swirls <i>Molly McGowan</i>	17
Against White Dogwoods <i>Sharon Kennedy-Nolle</i>	18
Native I Am, Cocopa <i>Michael Lee Johnson</i>	19
Out in the Distance <i>Holly Day</i>	21
Laconic <i>DS Maolalai</i>	22
Rochdale College: Freedom School, I Exiled in Time <i>Michael Lee Johnson</i>	23
The Farm Woman <i>John Grey</i>	26
I Don't Want to Die but I Bet I Do <i>Gale Acuff</i>	28
I'll go to Hell when I die and it be <i>Gale Acuff</i>	29
I don't want to die but I'm not stupid <i>Gale Acuff</i>	30
Y <i>Holly Day</i>	32
Welcome to the Whitehorse Inn <i>John Grey</i>	33

Artwork

Was My Father <i>Mario Loprete</i>	25
Untitled Sculpture <i>Mario Loprete</i>	31
Concrete Sculpture <i>Mario Loprete</i>	34

The Wagner-Berger Prize for Excellence in Creative Writing

A Point of No Return <i>Capri Potter</i>	38
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Poetry and Artwork

Juice Box Girl

(After Midnight Moments)

I'm a juice box girl,
squeeze me, play me
like an accordion,
box-shaped, but gagged edges.
Breathe me inside out,
I'm nude, fruity, fractured,
strawberry melon,
nightshade wine.
Chicago, 3:00 a.m.
somewhere stranded
someone's balcony
memories undefined,
you will find me there
stretched naked, doing
the Electric Slide,
taking morning selfies
upward morning into the sun
then in shutters

closeout pictures
Chiquita bananas,
those Greek lovers
running late,
Little Village, Greektown
so many men's night faces fading out.
Wash cleanse in me.
I'm no Sylvia Plath
in an oven image of death
I resuscitate; I'm still alive.

Michael Lee Johnson

When You Want Me Least

You, who are so different, can't be
expected to agree on anything
with me. I just need you to hold me long enough
to understand what is written on the small tag attached
to my toe, and then you can go.

There are streamers and iridescent ribbons
for you to reflect on
while you sit here with me, in the dark
a newspaper with your name written in black felt pen
over the original headlines
memories of what we could have had
if you had only become the president, or the Pope.

The real memories
are still here, somewhere, as well as
the rest of my heart. You
can wrap them all to go
if you want to forget.

Holly Day

Goodnight Wish

take my hand let's go on an adventure
it won't have to mean anything
bring my head back down to earth
i'll show you i'm better than before
wake me up at midnight
so we can talk together with the moon
hold me sweetly
although i am bitter
for this is my goodnight wish
meet my eyes again tomorrow
i promise i will catch you if you fall for me
but i can't promise i won't fall for you
wake me up at midnight
so we can talk together with the moon
hold me sweetly
although i am bitter
for this is my goodnight wish.

Molly McGowan

Warm Water

like a candy
in wrapping
which slowly
peels itself,
I watch you undress
from our bed.
it's morning – 11am
and you've decided
that you'll shower,
your body soft
with the soap smell of water,
and the soft towelled cover
of the gown you are wearing.

I know you don't like
to have water too hot –
just warm – and I watch you
like a kid with a plate
of chocolates
being passed about.

I am warm in bed,
you are warm
out of it,
and there is warmth
here – your body,
my body,
so warm.

DS Maolalai

Where is Beauty?

The sky lifts her pettiskirts,
reveals a long blue stocking
just above Tamalpa, our mountain maiden, lying on her side,
hair sweeping the horizon.

I gaze on her thick grace.

Grandfather said a woman's true beauty shows in her slim ankles
and length of neck.

I said that's all you could see in 1914.

Then we granddaughter girls stood
in front of the one farm mirror, stretching, lifting the tops of our heads as high as our chins
could reach, measured our ankles with yellow tape, ran around the potato patch,
and measured again.

Our blue sky shifts uneasily now. Grandmother asks if there is enough blue
to patch a Dutchman's britches
and whispers, *Real beauty lies deep inside us.*

Donna Emerson

Swirls

i have forgotten how far
the stars are
being so close to touch, but never to hold
i feel am made of stardust
i miss reaching for the sky
included in the night's ventures
like it is all i've ever known
to be swept from the ground
thrown into an elliptical galaxy
to feel as old as time itself
stars woven into my hair like wool carefully woven into someone's favorite sweater
right ascension and declination leading me from galaxy to galaxy
spiral
looking bright but feeling dim
is it just the galaxy or how i feel within?
following constellations through my telescope
feeling a part of something bigger than myself
i will never stop loving the sky
i will never stop greeting the stars
i will never stop exploring the galaxy through the small windows of my eyes
but most of all i will always be made of stardust.

Molly McGowan

Against White Dogwoods

You got time-out for some petty cruelty,
parked under an antler-rubbed hackberry
off the Veery Trail, while Dad and I walked on,
hardly looking back. For how long?
(I don't remember even the season.) Long enough
to scare the bejesus out of you.
How the woods must have scurried
around your cringing form.
You had to wait.
At age 8, didn't know any way out.

Fifteen years later,
I go back to the spot, no hackberry,
instead white dogwoods, muddied tracks
around one young trunk barefaced of bark.
Since you killed yourself,
the time-out never ends.

Why bloom now, white dogwoods?
Where is my forgiveness?

Sharon Kennedy-Nolle

Native I Am, Cocopa

Now once-great events fading
into seamless history,
I am a mother, proud.
My native numbers are few.
In my heart digs many memories
forty-one relatives left in 1937.
Decay is all left of their bones, memories.
I pinch my dark skin.
I dig earthworms
farm dirt from my fingertips
grab native
Baja and Southwestern California,
its soil and sand wedged between my spaced teeth.
I see the dancing prayers of many gods.
I am Cocopa, a remnant of the Yuman family.
I extend my mouth into forest fires
Colorado rivers, trout-filled mountain streams.
I survive on corn, melons, and
pumpkins, mesquite beans.

I extend my mouth into forest fires
Colorado rivers, trout-filled mountain streams.
I survive on corn, melons, and
pumpkins, mesquite beans.
I still dance in grass skirts
drink a hint of red Sonora wine.

I am a mother, proud.
I am parchment from animal earth.

Michael Lee Johnson

Out in the Distance

The ground welcomes me, even though
I'm still alive, even now
I am just another something
that sends out roots wherever the dirt
is soft enough to receive me. I can feel the flowers
growing under my skin
can feel them struggling to break free
to sing out under the sun.

You can put your own roots out, too
spread out over the soft grass with me,
shake loose your skin
let the earth in. Eventually, we might
grow as high as trees, thick trunks and limbs
twisting around one another in a frozen embrace
blooming in a garden
of our own making.

Holly Day

Laconic.

as a tree
growing apples,

dropping symbols
of sin down
to rot.

DS Maolalai

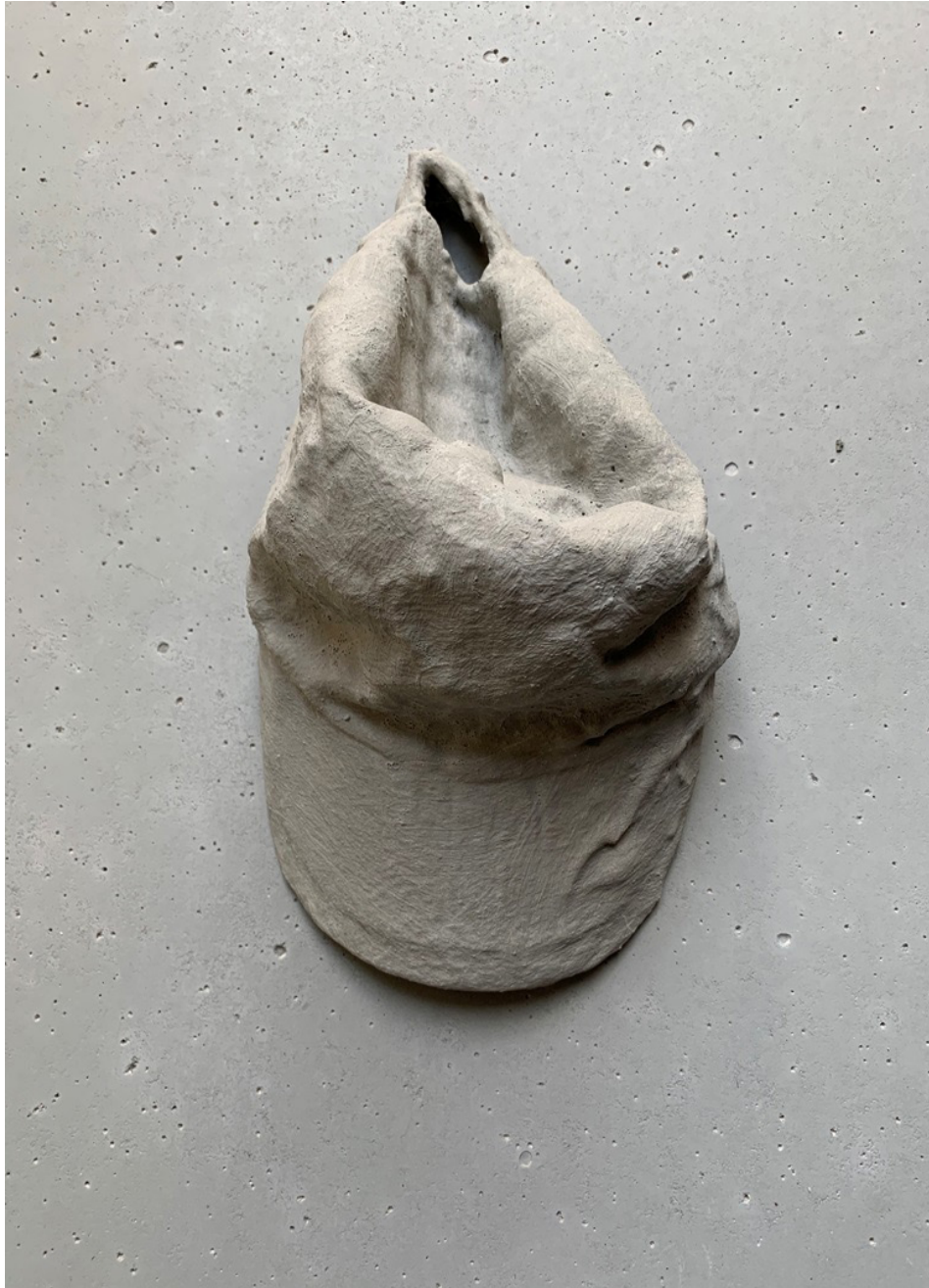
Rochdale College

Freedom School, I Exiled in Time

Chased by this wild, I was a black wolf of time
freedom extinguished me-
I died on borrowed time,
I died on hashish,
I died on snorting cocaine,
I died on the “H” man, heroin,
LSD, acid passed around hallucinated me
into Disneyland without my house slippers.
I nearly jumped 18 floors without hemp,
straight down breaking through plate glass,
Jesus invisible was my invincible Superman.
I nearly died listening to
American Woman, Guess Who,
they feed me downers for my overdose.
I nearly died in a small room
balling an unknown little bitch from Montreal.
All those little pills in dresser drawers, yellow, pink, and red.
I nearly died, Yonge Street, with hippy beads,
leather purse, belt, fake gold chain, and small pocket change.

I went the way I didn't know where to go,
searching for heaven ending at entrance
hells gate, Mount Pleasant Cemetery.
Let me fluoresce, splatter red on the asphalt
of my exiled heart.
Let me follow the freedom school,
Summerhill, England, free love.

Michael Lee Johnson



Was My Father

Mario Loprete

THE FARM-WOMAN

It's not the same.

Sunset is too organized.

The flame rising in the night
is a show for businessmen's children.

The true fire is no more.

The light is merely wind-blown ashes.

She outlived her husband and her strength,
moved into town, first a small apartment,
then a nursing home.

Saying goodbye to her made me wince.

I couldn't sense anything in her
to convince me she wouldn't be dead tomorrow.

I remember a land of endless yellow patches,
the color closest to brightness.

From a plane above,
passengers could see the artistry of farmers at work,
a fabulous quilt, two hundred miles wide, a hundred across.

For years, steadily, through the best and worst weather,
from lush times to when drought had no answers –
quilt was a good name for it.

It kept tired people safe and warm.

She'd often sigh how a way of life was dying.
And now I drive by the old place,
and am dismayed by all the corporate tractors
giving burial their best shot.
Progress is merciless. Her fears have come to be.

Driving by siloes huge as moon rockets,
bigger but fewer towns,
simple gifts turned to big paydays,
I have visions of the edges of her mouth,
smiling out of habit
and the glow of her wrinkled eyes,
stubborn in her suffering:
It pains me to think
that nothing good came of that.

John Grey

I don't want to die but I bet I do

someday, everybody dies or has or
will, even Jesus, the Son of God, though
He came back to life but anyway
died first to do so so the lesson is
to get eternal life you have to kick
and the soul lives forever but not so
lucky the body and in Heaven we
get all-new ones, all-new bodies that is,
which might be interesting when you think
about how dead you'll be but I didn't
make the rules, if there are rules, for living
and dying--I kind of wish I had or
that I could rewrite a few of 'em but
I won't push my luck. Anyway, I'm whipped.

Gale Acuff

I'll go to Hell when I die and it be

my own choice even if God says I can
stay with Him in Heaven--I'm standing be
-fore Him like the other souls to be
judged when it comes my turn and He reveals
that my name's indeed written down in His
Book of Life and that I can enter in
-to the joy of the Lord and like that when
I flat turn Him down, He's made a mistake
I'll tell Him, Thou think too highly of me
and your Only Begotten Son died for me
in error and despite the heat I have
to take I'll be more comfortable down
in the Bad Place. Reverse psychology
is what that's called. I'll make Paradise yet.

Gale Acuff

I don't want to die but I'm not stupid,

I can't live forever, at least alive,
there's that eternal life up in Heaven
or down in Hell but to rate either one
I still have to die and I like it here
on Earth, life that is, life after death, well,
if it's what it's talked up to be then I
may as well just live forever where I
am now and after Sunday School I told
my teacher so but she said Let us pray,
Gale, which I didn't want to do because
the linoleum is cold and dirty
and I have bad knees but then maybe God
will feel my pain and take it to heart.
I know that I do the longer I kneel.

Gale Acuff



Untitled Sculpture

Mario Loprete

Y

The beast inside me is screaming free the
dead thing inside you is still dead
either way, I can't go home

under the light of early sun
violet streaks across the sky
what the hell am I doing

Holly Day

WELCOME TO THE WHITEHORSE INN

This is the Whitehorse,
a favorite drinking hole
of Dylan Thomas.

Come on in.

Have a whiskey.

Imagine it's the great Welsh bard's
seventh for the night.

Sit up at the bar.

Pretend he's on the stool beside you,
slurring words in an accent
as thick as his breath.

Just smile or nod in reply.

You're with Dylan Thomas.

Don't expect lines
of pure poetry.

Be content with a smelly belch.

So what if he's your hero.

Heroes don't spend all their lives
doing heroic things.

Sometimes, they prefer
to just drink themselves to death.

That's what makes them human.

And we only serve humans here.



Concrete Sculpture

Mario Loprete

The Wagner-Berger Prize for Excellence in Creative Writing

In 1978, Patricia and Leonard Percello endowed this prize to honor Patricia's parents, Louis and Mary Wagner-Berger, and to support college women who are interested in writing short stories and novels. It is designed to encourage and reward excellence in creative writing at the College of Saint Benedict.

The Wagner-Berger Prize for fiction is the first scholarship of its kind at the College of Saint Benedict. It is a scholarship awarded annually to the CSB student who submits the most original, previously unpublished short story. All submissions are judged by a committee of English Department members, and the winner receives an award of \$1,000. *Studio One* is honored to publish this year's CSB winner Capri Potter.

A Point of No Return

For much of my life, our marriage was all I thought I wanted. Boring in the way I'd craved growing up in a household of raised voices and short tempers. He was sweet, liked to take me dancing, and he'd always harbored this stupid half-formed dream, of buying land somewhere remote- Canada, Alaska- and living off it. I'd liked our marriage. I really had. It was comfortable. He was good and decent and safe- but that was a relationship that belonged to another world.

If I hated him, truly, properly, I could have just sent him away. I wouldn't have owed him an explanation or a kind word- but I didn't hate him, I just hated that he was there. I wanted to lie, to say that it had been years, that I thought he was dead like so many others- and it would be a lie. Because, despite the distance and time and violence, the image of him, rotting slowly into the earth's embrace, skin and tendons and sinews melting from his bones into grass fertilizer- had just never sat right with me. It had never seemed real in the way it was when I pictured other people- friends, colleagues, ex-boyfriends, college girlfriends. There was something immutable about his memory that refused to allow me to picture him as anything but alive- button down, suit jacket, tie just a little uneven.

I watched as the dogs trailed after him harmlessly as he approached. In that moment, I found myself wishing the stupid mutts would tear him to shreds, and hating Henry for taking the time to gentle them into dumb loving things. I had nothing to separate the two of us but a grass field and a shotgun that had run out of shells months ago. With the distance still between us, I couldn't make out the expression on John's face, but his gait was unmistakable. Long and uneven from where he'd fucked up his knee in college. God, I wish I hated him. Eventually, he got close enough for me to see him smiling. But even then, there was a bit of caution in those eyes of his, just a little bit of uncertainty. He was thin, thinner than what was healthy, but who wasn't these days- and his hair, cut short in marriage had grown out, curling a little behind his ears. "Katie," he said, all emotional- and wasn't that a trip? I felt like he was talking right through me, reaching into the past to a woman long dead.

"John," I replied. I tried to be kind, but his name came out flat- too cool to be mistaken for welcoming.

"Katie," he repeated, more hesitant, a little confused. "Are you?- what's?-" It was some kind of surreal to hear him speak. His voice felt fake in the way of childhood memories, sort of foggy and distant. He just looked so goddamn lost- like he couldn't fathom what I was doing just standing there. And I suppose that's fair, I wasn't sure what I was doing either- he wasn't supposed to be there.

I think we may have stood out there forever, frozen in a shared moment of disconnect if the dogs hadn't both taken off like a shot back the way they'd come. I looked over the hill to see Henry approaching- his big frame made even bigger by the rucksack he was carrying. When my eyes shifted away from his approaching figure, I found that John's eyes had drifted as well, but not to the horizon, to my midsection. I allowed myself a single moment to mourn a version of events where he hadn't noticed, and met his gaze. Henry called out to me before John could ask, but I still tracked the way his eyes widened and muscles tensed- all those messy emotions with nowhere to go.

"Mal?" Henry called out, and I tore my gaze away, raising my hand in acknowledgment. "Everything alright?" He asked as he drew near, mirroring John's tension with his own.

"Everything's fine," John said, words edgy and sharp all over, "This is- she's my-"

"He's my husband," I said, cutting him off.

Henry hummed and met my eyes over John's head. Do you want me to get rid of him? He asked without speaking. I shook my head. Before my own cowardice could get the best of me I turned my attention back to John, "I made food,"

He looked thrown but Henry stepped in to cover for my deficiencies, resting a hand on my shoulder as he said, "We'd be glad to have you, the table's plenty big,"

I studied John's reaction out of the corner of my eye, watching for signs of trouble. The John I'd known wasn't the jealous sort, but as far as I was concerned that man belonged to a different world- one a million miles away from the reality we existed in now. I allowed myself to wonder about the path he'd taken to my doorstep, and what he'd expected to find on the other side. But after a moment, John just accepted and followed behind us. The entire way I could feel his heavy gaze on the back of my neck, weighed down by questions I didn't want to answer, but I knew I had to.

Dinner was a mostly silent affair, broken up only by the quiet scratching of silverware on ceramic. There was one moment though- right at the beginning, where that fragile peace threatened to shatter around the three of us. John had frozen, eyes going all misty as he looked at me, and said, "This is my mother's recipe," and he was right. There was a pleading quality to his voice, begging me to acknowledge our shared history, and I refused.

Afterward, Henry excused himself to let the dogs out, and I hated and loved him in equal measure for the privacy he was allowing us. I still tried to put it off as best I could, but when I went to the sink to wash up, John slid in alongside me.

"He uh- he calls you Malory," he began, like he was trying to break the ice with a joke.

“He calls me Mal,” I corrected, trying to act like my words weren’t sticking in my throat like a dying thing. I couldn’t understand how he didn’t get it, that the day I walked out of our house without waiting for him to come back, I’d killed any future our relationship had. What he’d dropped at my doorstep wasn’t a second chance it was a desecrated and mangled corpse.

“Mal,” He repeated, “What’s so wrong with Katie?”

“Nothing,” I fumbled the bowl I was holding, its base thudding dully as it hit the counter. Without a word, John picked it up and began drying it. “When we left there was another Katie with us,” I said, aiming for dispassionate but missing badly, “It was simpler to go by last names-guess it just stuck.”

He gave a self-deprecating laugh, “Suppose I should be happy you didn’t go by your maiden name,”

I just stared at him.

“It’s just you and...”

Henry,”

“It’s just you and Henry now?”

“Yeah,” I passed him the ladle without thinking, “Other Katie didn’t actually last that long, and Lauren- from the front desk at the YMCA? She’s outback,” I said with a wave, “About six feet under conversing with the worms.” I moved to the knives, “Jasper’s alive- don’t think you ever met him, but if you leave here westward you’ll stumble across the group he’s shacked-up with these days. They’ve converted an old church, got a garden going and everything.”

“Sounds nice,”

His words hung in the air, and nothing rose to take their place. Beside me, I could feel him working himself up to ask the question that was really eating at him- and I found myself almost morbidly curious as to how he’d do it.

In the end, it was more straightforward than I expected, he just stopped drying and asked, “How far along are you?”

I shrugged, “A few months, don’t know for sure,”

“I’m just surprised,” He said, sounding far too self-pitying for my liking, “you never wanted kids when we were-”

“No shit, John,” I snapped. My words were sharper than I meant them, mean in a way he didn’t really deserve but I couldn’t find it in myself to regret. I straightened up and dried my hands. “There isn’t exactly an abundance of contraceptives in the end times,” I said, holding eye contact until he broke and looked away.

John’s voice was strained when he spoke again, “I- I just want you to know- I’m not mad. You had no way to knowing I was alive, and it’s been years-”

“It has,” He halted his speech, face going tight as he pressed his lips together. Behind his eyes, I could see him working, analyzing me like a problem to be solved, an obstacle he could overcome if he just approached things the right way.

“Do you hate me?” he asked.

I just watched him for a moment. Studying the lines on his face and the gray in his hair that he was too young to have. “Why would I hate you, John?”

“I don’t know,” he frowned, “for not being there?”

I sighed, and in an act of half-forgotten habit, reached up and brushed aside a piece of hair that had come loose from behind his ear. “It would be easier if I hated you,” I said, “if there wasn’t any part of me that missed you,”

“But you don’t want me here,” he finished.

“No,”

For a moment I wondered if he would get angry. I watched the tension in his face, the way his muscles twitched under his skin, and the way his gray eyes looked through me and out the back of my skull. I wondered what he was seeing, wondered if he was trying to picture his Katie- picture her crawling with worms, chest caved in with rot. Was that a better conclusion for him than what he’d found?

“I’m sorry I wasn’t there for you,” He said at last.

I didn’t bother correcting him.

He waited until Henry returned, then John rose and put his coat back on- jerky, as if his own limbs were betraying him. Wordlessly, I handed him a small bundle of leftovers which he accepted in equal silence.

Henry fixed James with a careful look as he reentered the cabin. “You’ll be going then?”

“Yeah, I will.” he paused, “Westward?” John asked, without fully turning to look at me.

“What?”

“That friend of yours with the church- westward?”

“Yeah,” I said, “you’ll see the path, it’s traveled enough,”
John stilled, “Sounds nice, might stick around for a while,”
It was an invitation I had no intention of accepting.

Capri Potter

Submission Guidelines

Submission Address

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