



WHISPERS FROM THE WOOD SUMMER VIBES EDITION

ARTWORK BY TINA NGUYEN

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Four Seasons

Zorie Cockrell

We have four seasons, four seasons, yet here's the best one
It's a season where the sun shines brightly,
It's a season where water splashes from kids playing in the pool,
It's a season where the most beautiful animals and insects come out from
hiding,
It's a season where you can stay out all day and all night, having the best
time of
your life,
It's a season where your tongue bursts of flavor from eating multi-colored
popsicles,
A season where flowers look the most beautiful,
That season is summer.

Depths

Jack (Katie) Coffmann

Crashing waves and crying birds,
Here I stand, at a loss for words.
Dark blue skies and scorching heat,
Constellations where stars stand in agony.
I stand upon this empty shore,
Looking out for something more.
Ships will sail off in the distance,
Sails filled with ocean breeze,
Fish hide underneath rocks,
Dancing joylessly.
Shells sparkle along the shore,
The waves pulling them into their melancholy depths.

my mama, the sun

lea copeland

my mama, the sun
i can feel the sun caress my cheek
and welcome me with open arms
through my bedroom window
she
feels
something like my mama
southern, warm, kind
she
looks
something like my mama
sweet, radiant, golden
i long for those summer nights
when she floated through the kitchen
pouring sweet tea that's
too
sweet for us
but we laugh and drink it anyways
because mama knows what's best.
i fall asleep on the porch with the screen door open
just so she can breeze through the house
and i can see her southern hips dip over the horizon
one more time.
my mama is the sun.
you smile at her and she smiles right back down at you.

Spring Cleaning

Kaitlyn Gardner

I watch her as she flits around, adjusting the sea of boxes. Feather duster in hand, she tickles the items in her room, one by one. Her dandelion colored dress sways back and forth, mocking her movements as she scurries. She straightens things up and takes things down. The work never seems to cease.

"What's all this for?" I ask, finally revealing myself to be standing in the doorway. She looks up at me, flustered, her mouth parted as she catches her breath. "Spring cleaning."

"Spring cleaning?"

Her blonde pixie cut moves just a tad as she nods. "Out with the old, in with the new. We have to be properly prepared for summer."

"I see." I move from my leaning position against the wall and walk into her warm and welcoming room. Vividly colored flowers hang from the ceiling. The windows are circular and made of sticks. Sunshine pours through the open sunroof above. It glistens off of the light yellow walls. "May I help?"

"I suppose. Thank you." She hands me a box, almost equivalent to her size. She heaves as she sets the heavy package into my arms. Quizzically, I look down at the cardboard frame sitting on my hands. There's a red label placed neatly on the middle of the flaps, sealing them shut.

"Harmful body image?" I read aloud.

"We don't exactly need that coming with us into summer, now do we?" She motions for me to put it in the trash can at the far side of the room, so I do. "There's a lot more negativity to get out of here, and a plethora of positive ideologies to dust off. Do you think you're up for that?"

"I do," I reply. "Let's finish this so we can get outside. This beautiful day isn't going to last forever."

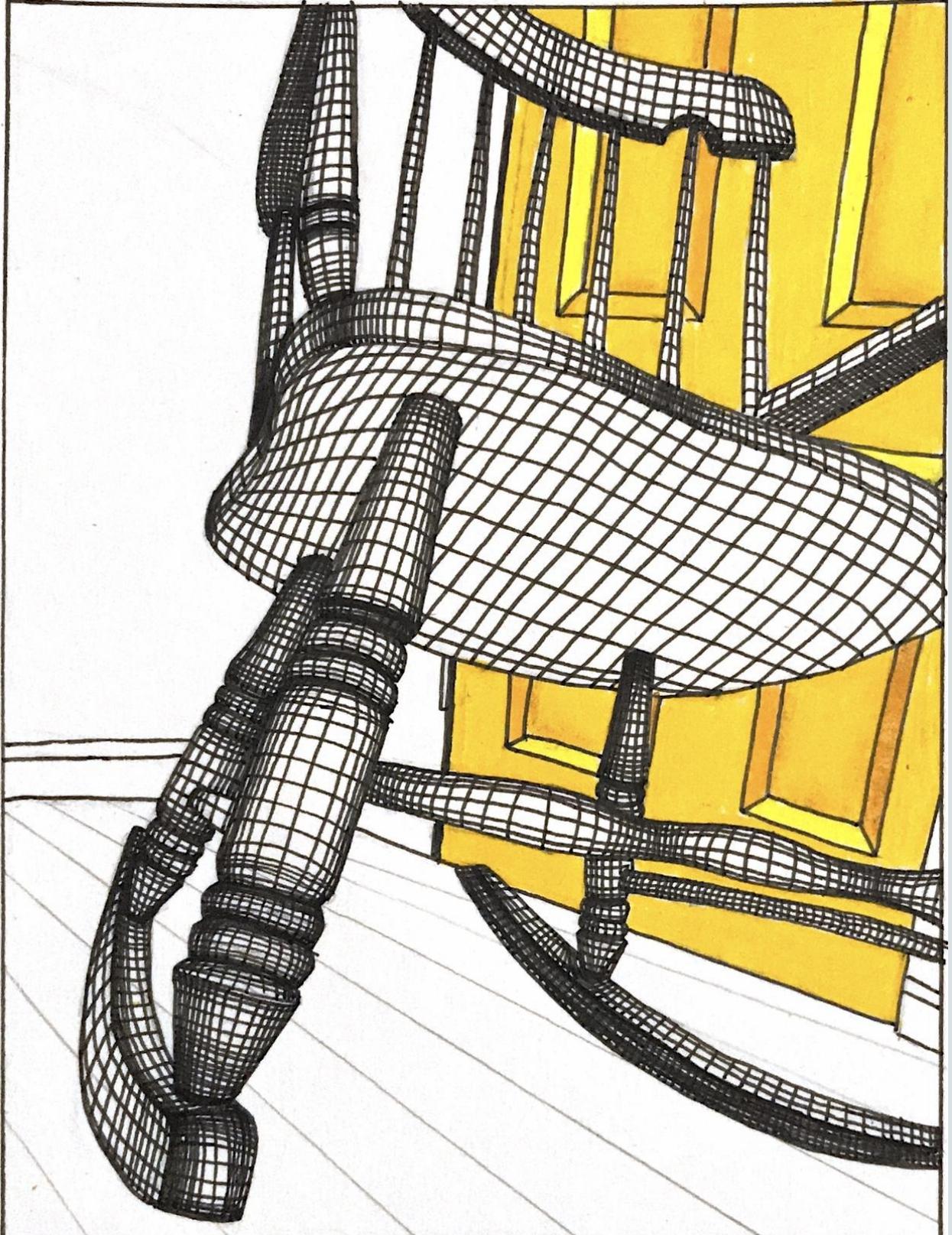
After hours of hard work, full of shoving boxes out of the room and rinsing our hands of pessimistic views, we're finally ready to lay back and enjoy the new season without anything weighing us down. She looks over at me, sunglasses resting nicely on her face, and water glass in hand.

"All that work was worth it, huh?"

"It was," I reply. My hands dig into the sand as I look up at the fiery sun, about to sink under the ocean waves. "I've never felt better."

We sit together in a peaceful silence, watching the glorious sunset. The colors that take over the sky are blissfully beautiful. Fireflies appear around us, glowing ever so wonderfully.

Everything seems to be just as it should be. If this is how summer will be, I never want her to go.



ARTWORK BY NINA CARTER

Summer Senses

Jakayla Harris

The hot sun beating on my brown skin
Cold ice cream soothing my tongue, delighting my tastebuds
Endless trips to the cool waters, my toes are relieved at the touch
Birthdays around each corner, another chapter has opened
Music to make my heart skip a beat, dancing out my chest
Grills open for the year, smoky scent in the sky
Goosey marshmallows on sticks preparing to be s'mores
The bonfire goes sizzle, crackle, pop
New fashionable bathing suits patiently waiting at my door
My summer aroma is in full bloom

The June Rains

Zack Jenkins

Even in the midst of the joyous occasion of the jubilating month that is June, the rain is cold.

Shivering cold.

Unbearably cold.

The moment a single droplet from the heavens lays a solemn kiss upon unshed skin, the spine

jolts alive, as though a bolt of lightning ran through it, and the heart thumps in agony.

The vibrancy of the Sun's seemingly everlasting shine was stripped away as fast as it came, and

it's beautiful canvas that it had painted across the cities, the countries, and vast oceans a-plenty

were soon enough hidden behind a cloak of unforgiving clouds.

Curses and threats are screamed out to the rain, until vocal cords could give no more than dry-

heaved coughs and sobs.

"Why?!" they cried.

"Why now, must you show, with your sickening dark greys and black hues?"

"Why now, did you feel the need, the absolute desire

to dwell over our beaches and picnics, our

backyards and parks, and wrap us into an unwanted embrace?"

Instead of answering back, the rains only worsen with each and every cry of disapproval and

demand to leave their cities, their countries, and their vast oceans a-plenty be.

The clouds roared and growled back, and brought about hurricanes and tornadoes, carrying such

vicious winds that swept the cities, the countries, and the vast oceans a-plenty away.

No beaches and picnics.

No backyards or parks.

No more sunshine.

And, then soon, when the winds died into less than a breeze, and the clouds withered away into

obscurity, there were no more rains.

But, even in the midst of the joyous occasion of the jubilating month that is June,

the vast emptiness is the worst kind of cold weather

Ideal Summer Day

Isabella Monge

I open the front door and the smell of saltwater slaps me in the face
As I walk up the stairs to go over the sand dune, I hear the waves crashing
like cymbals

When I get to the top, I enjoy the view that is all too familiar

The water is light blue, almost reminding me of the Caribbean

The sand greets me as I walk to go set up my chair

Seagulls fly overhead, constantly making chatter and searching for food

I look to my left and see the lifeguards doing their early morning training

The crowds haven't come yet, my favorite time of the day

Beside me, my surfboard begs to be used

I strap on the leash and head out

All my problems seem to be carried out by the tide as I rip through the
waves

No one to interfere with my time with the ocean

I throw up some shakas to the other surfers enjoying today's waves

When the day is done my face is as red as a tomato

Everyone's hair is sunkissed, that beautiful golden glow

We head to a nearby shack to go get crab cakes and shakes

As we walk back down to the beach, the stars twinkle in the sky

People set off fireworks that light up the sky down the beach

It's nights like these where I really appreciate my favorite time of the year

I can't wait to do it all over again tomorrow



ARTWORK BY TINA NGUYEN

summer

bernadette pimentel

Sand tickles in between my toes
Under the shining rays of sunlight.
Melon popsicles melt against my tongue,
Memories being revived.
Everyone living so freely,
Refreshed with happiness and laughter.

A Revived Tradition

Janiyah Shaw

I open up the blinds
They already have the sun leaking through them
I sway to my tunes and turn to grab two frozen waffles
Stuff them in the toaster and head upstairs
My dad chuckles and says, "Someone's in a good mood."
But he doesn't understand
Today is the start of summer
And I get to see my cousin after six years
I get to revive a tradition
I pack the rest of my hygiene and aim back downstairs
Toasted waffles fill my nose
I grab them and stuff them down
I'll probably smell like syrup for awhile
My parents start packing things up
The butterfly joins the waffles in my stomach
I glance at the time
10 o'clock
Four hours
We all get in the car
Then there's the 30 minute drive to the airport
Several texts are exchanged between me and my cousin
We're both equally excited
I go through all the boring stuff
TSA
Waiting for an hour and a half
Giving my bag to a strange man
And finally I'm in my assigned seat
I tighten my seatbelt and tune out the pilot's words
The excitement is just too loud
My mom asks if I'm okay and I nod
And then we lift off
I glance at my phone
12 o'clock
Two hours
I take a deep breath and put my excitement to the side
Not much time waiting is left
I close my eyes and take another deep breath
When I open them, people are clicking off their seatbelts
There goes the butterfly; not much waffles are left

I shed off my seatbelt and grab my carry-on
I rush off the airplane
My parents are having a hard time keeping up
I head to baggage claim and lucky us-
Bags are starting to be thrown already
I look up at the time on the wall
2 o'clock
An inevitable smile appears on my face
It's time
My bag comes launching out the mysterious hole
I grab it and impatiently wait for my parents' bags
The second they have their handles in their grasp
I'm spinning around and walking in curves
Like I know where I'm going
I scan faces like a machine
None of which are my cousin's
Until-
"Janiyah!"
I turn around to unfamiliar-familiar voice
And there's my cousin
She looks more like me than she did six years ago
I run over to her and embrace her in an overwhelming hug
We nearly tumble to the ground
This felt right
This is how my summer is supposed to start
It's tradition

What Summer Means to Me

Jillian Coddington

When I hear summer
All I can think of
Is cacti and the buzzing drone
Of an insect in the trees
I think of archery
In the sweltering sun.
Of week long
Theater camps that were
Full of fun
Of when I would go camping
In certain spots
With several other families
And we'd become one big family
For the week.
Or when we'd have pool parties
With the same families.

I miss these memories.
It's only been two years,
But nonetheless
These memories are no longer.

Now summer is filled
With spending time in the house
And only leaving
For rehearsal and performances.
Don't get me wrong,
The people are great
But I feel like I don't belong.

Summer is just another season
A time meant for fun
And relaxation after a year of school
But to me it's just monotonous
A time to do things
Around the house
And to mentally prepare
For the next year ahead.

Sleepy Summer

Timothy Ferebee

Numb, with your body being absorbed.
As you lay across your bed, and you just quietly ignore.
Your mind is pushed and you don't put up a fight.
As you lay in the bed, your feet turn to ice.
The sound of kids plays throughout the night.
Your voice becomes stone, and your taste begins to seize.
As you enjoy your gentle rest, with the cold summer breeze.
Everything is blank, as you deepen into the night.
Sleeping heavenly without the blink of light.



ARTWORK BY JAKORI MCCANTS

Summertime

Rae'ana Proctor

More sun, and more fun.
Late nights, up until the day light.
No more school!
No more homework, no more tests.
No more teachers to impress.
Lets go to the pool,
So we can stay cool.
Summer tans
Summer burns.
But who cares?
Because it's summertime.

Hot Summer Day

Jonathan Baumgardner

Scorching hot Sun blasts its rays down upon us.
Baking the sand, which steps do we trust?
Rushing to the water, to cool off our blistered feet,
But it is not this family to accept defeat.
We lay down our towels set down our things,
Cooking in the Sun, we hear a ring.
We all turn around, to investigate the sound,
And its the ice cream man, making his rounds.
We rush to the wallet, to pull out some cash,
Ignoring the Sun's lash, we sprint in a dash.
We stop in the grass on this hot summer day,
Dripping in sweat, this is not okay.
The Sun is winning the battle, he's creating quite a stir,
We lay down our swords, and decide to surrender.
This hot Sun is too much to bear, we couldn't even get water in our hair.

Summer Memories

Brylee Ceraul

The cool breeze flowing through my hair as the morning sun rises.
My feet slide across the wet grass.
I close my eyes and imagine you were still here.
I can still feel your arms wrapping around me as we watched the water crash.
Smell your cologne you put on for our picnics.
I can still dance in the parking lot to our favorite song.
Until I open my eyes and you aren't here.
Even though the summer rays are hitting against my skin,
My heart is cold missing our summer memories.



ARTWORK BY ALICIA SOLIDAY

Summer Come, a Haiku

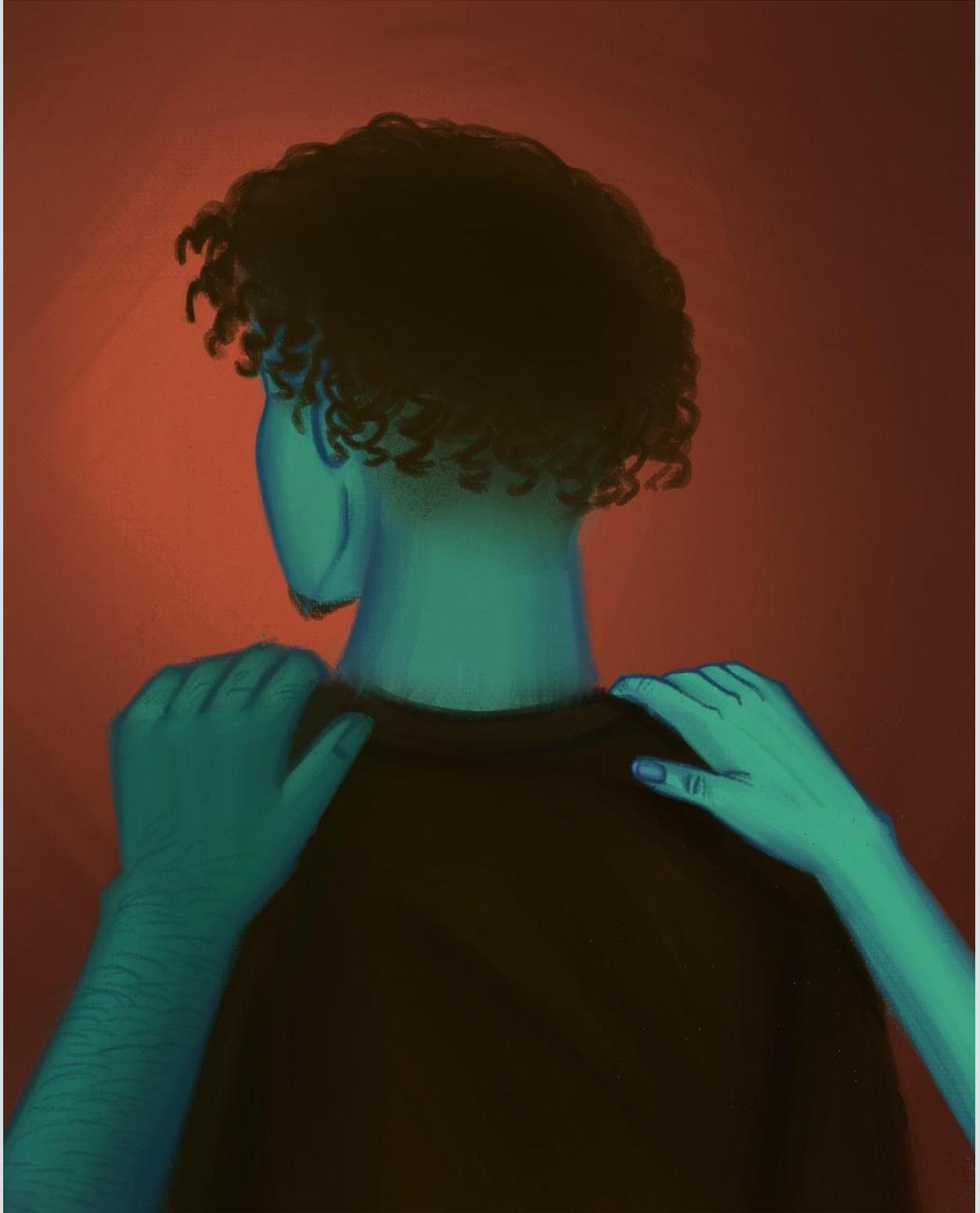
Keyami Collins

melted ice cream cones
blazing sun, searching for shade
fun days on the way

You Are Like The Summer

Makayla Kendrick

Warm like the sun on an August day
Your smile makes me forget how hard it is to get out of bed.
When I see you, all the negative feelings melt away.
No sadness, regret, or existential dread.
You are like the summer
Your kisses are the soft breeze I feel at night
Your hands are the ocean, open and welcoming
Your face is the sun that lights up my days
I want to stay here with you forever
Not a care in the world
Only thing on our minds is our next adventure
Our next memory
I will cherish these days for the rest of my life.
I record everything, making sure no minute goes undocumented.
Because love can cut like a knife.
And I know summer always comes to an end.



ARTWORK BY ΥΟΑΝ ΤΑΜΔΥΟΒΕΥΕΣ

How I Long

Steffanie Powell

Oh, how I long for summer

The cool breeze combined with the sun's rays makes a perfect combination

Freedom is once again in our grasps

The days are longer, but the humid night was even better

Cicadas sang their songs while fireflies danced along

There will always be a childlike glee that comes in the summer

Full of hope for the future to come

It comes in waves like the oceans waves

Gently waiting for newcomers

Oh, how I long for summer

Crooked Sandcastles

Sarah Verbeck

Where the land meets the sea is where I find comfort.
Unique shells are washed up by the gentle waves,
waiting for the little kids to pick and choose them.
What was once meaningless,
now intricate pieces to crooked sandcastles.
These structures may seem insignificant,
as they just get destroyed.
Yet, that's just it.
The waves and the wind allow for growth,
second chances and learned lessons.
To think that we could learn from children.
Let the waves knock us down,
and let the sand pour out through our fingers.
Scattered tools and plastic molds,
all part of the building process.

My Hands

Maya Joyner

As I stretch my hands,
Warmth engulfs my people with a smile.
Rays of sunshine kisses the morning dew,
Happiness is awakened in the smallest things,
And they begin to live like there is no tomorrow.
Making memories to last a lifetime.
This is the reason I stretch my hands.
To invoke the happiness in the most somber souls
To watch the world cherish this moment
To hear them say "Summer is here!"
Oh how I love the reasons to stretch my hands.

Miss Summer, How I love you

Elisaa McAdams

The heat swells and blisters,
The leaves do anything but wilt,
They stretch their long tendrils up and up.
The rain does anything but pour.
My mistake;
When it does, it's unforgettable
The windy Spring has left,
The summer breeze has set in,
How cool the nights are.
The sun hardly ever leaves,
Though, when it does,
You're begging for it back.



ARTWORK BY NEHEMIAH WILLIAMS

A Summer Fling Ends

Shelby Powell

I'm on the road
and on the run,
cause I can't love you
unless it's just for fun.
Just for looks,
nothing more.
But things have changed,
I ask
what for?
Please,
just let the spark die,
Quit looking at me
with that look in your eye.
I know what it means,
I've seen it before.
So I'm sorry,
but I just can't love you anymore.
You won't see me again,
I'm gone for good.
Move on for me...
You know you should.
We've done it before,
Time to do it again.
Leave me behind,
Let the summer fling end.

The Midnight Rider

Erik Davis

The dry Arizona air blew through Paul's brown hair. The sun had long since gone down, the only companion he had was the radio. Summer time in Arizona had a uniquely brutal heat that could only be found in that state. He had been driving for what seemed like days. He felt like it had been an eternity since he was last home in his bed. Don't get it wrong, he enjoyed his vacation. He loved going to New Jersey and he loved getting to see his family again. However, the drive was a relentless one. One not meant for the weak of mind. He took a sip from his Mountain Dew bottle. He hadn't seen another car in hours. He was in the middle of nowhere. A inky black void was all around him, the only thing not covered in this endless ocean of nothingness was his own headlights. He had to keep his eyes on the road. He had to keep them glued to the asphalt. San Diego was a long while away and he had made the mistake of not adding another day to his break. His eyes were getting heavier and heavier. He knew he should get some rest, after all, he could just call out sick but where would he even sleep? The closest hotel wasn't for another two or three hours and who knew if they had a room? His eye lids felt like they were made of lead. He began to wonder whether to dream land until he heard it.

A mechanical scream that sounded like the gates of hell themselves were being opened. A sound no living creature could make. Paul was alert now, Paul was scared now. He looked around to see what could have made that noise and right behind him, he saw a car that looked as though it was shooting hellfire from its sides. Its headlights were a dark crimson. Paul stepped on the pedal as did the car behind him. Although Paul was fast, the car behind him was faster. The front bumper of the car was starting to touch the back bumper of Paul's car. The revving engine of the car behind him didn't sound like anything Paul had heard before. It didn't sound like the revving of an engine but instead it sounded like the screams of torment. Paul pressed harder against the pedal. The car behind him moved to the left and started getting up next to Paul. The windows were all black. He couldn't look in to see who this driver was.

The screaming engine sounded louder than ever. The smell of rubber and sulfur filled the air. Paul swerved in an attempt to knock the driver off of the road, or to at least get him off his tail. It was a desperate attempt but it was the only thing he could do, or at least think of. Then the car hit its breaks. Paul looked back at the car that was now just sitting in the middle of the road. It was a shame that Paul didn't see the cliff.

Summer zone.

Fatima Diallo

This summer feeling.
That summer wind.
Surrounding you almost like a hug.
I live for this weather,
The sun beaming at you
And the flowers are blooming.
I wish it could stay this way forever.
4 months is not enough.
The way the beach is full of life
And laughter.
Picnics at our favorite parks
While the kids play on the swings.
This is that summer feeling.
The one that makes you smile for no reason.
That summer wind,
That makes you never want to leave.
I wish it could stay like this forever.
4 months is just not enough.



ARTWORK BY ΥΟΑΝ ΤΑΜΑΓΟΒΕΥΕΣ

Motions

Martina Jeudy

The sand coats my feet
Bringing warmth to my chilled soul
The grit bringing me back
To the incoming tide
That threatens to wash it all away
I stare into the heat of the water
Watching it twist and turn
With every movement
I've become mesmerized
Losing track of the sun down
I sit on the stand still
Even as the air has found its cool
Watching the tides twist
And turn

Calm Shores

Melissa Downs

On a calm shore,
Sandpipers move to the ocean's pulse
On the edge between land and sea,
Tiny crabs are burrowed beneath
On a rock shaped by waves,
Lichen slowly works their way through
On a wooden post by the dock,
Seagulls chatter amongst themselves
On this calm shore
Life is so much more than it seems

Summer Longing

Jadayah Parker

I never thought I'd wish for sweat,
Or the chirping of cicadas in the evening.
I never knew I'd watch myself slip away,
At the hands of a clock or a class;
But I yearn for the itchy grass,
And the rough sands of the beach,
The bitter plum and peach.
Out in the open world,
I could be there,
I could be free,
I could be happy.
But no- I'm still here,
In my little room,
Drowning in turquoise blue;
Crying over chemistry
And meaningless conversations.
Wishing I could smile again,
Wishing I could feel,
Wishing I could be.



ARTWORK BY TINA NGUYEN

Until Summer

Ayali Thomas

A cold drink in my hand
I'm laying on the sand
My headphones plugged in
And i'm the most relaxed i've ever been
The sun is shining bright
And the other beach goers are smiling
The kids are having water fight
And the moms are calling for food
Teens are laughing and giggling
As they gossip and pry
While the dads greet old friends and say "Hi"
My friends beckon me over into the water
Were swimming and floating and talking all along
Everyone, everywhere is happy
Everyone, everywhere is having fun
I can't wait for summer, 43 more days
Until I can Actually relax in the sun

Sea Breeze

Anthony Valentin

Warm, dry air
Salt smell of the ocean
Chilling in the sun, not a single care
Already ran out of all of the sun lotion
The sea breeze howls
Just as the dogs playing do
Tourists visiting cities and towns
All watching the sky, so blue
My favorite time of year
Although born in winter
Even so, it's still not clear
As to why, ever so often I hear the whisper
Of the summer sun
Of the beats and jams
Of swimming for fun
Of poolside sandwiches, cheese and ham

Summer Days

Briana Williams

As the sun shines down harshly on my back, as I tan on the floaty in the pool moving with the waves. The smell of the food being cooked on the grill filling my nose and making my stomach growl. Hearing the pure happiness in the laughter around me coming from the kids. Out of the blue being pushed off and slamming into the pool feeling the chills run down my spine and all over my body. Coming back up to the surface to breathe and seeing my cousins surround me laughing. People playing marco polo, and jumping into the pool feeling me with joy. Getting out of the pool to eat some chips and drink some juice, while good old school music plays in the background. Happiness is all I feel right now, not wanting this to ever end. Wanting to spend endless days like this with family and friends, feeling the love in the air. Going on car rides being able to roll down the window and feeling the fresh air blowing through my hair. Being able to go to the beach and tan in the open. Going for walks and being able to have water fights is what I live for. Getting a break from school. Not worrying if my grades have dropped because I missed or have missing assignments. Being able to go out with your friends and staying out late living your best life, and making memories with each other, and getting to tell your kids about all the fun things you did as kids. Having the freedom and living the wildlife while also playing it safe.



ARTWORK BY KOBAY CHAVES