

Section III: Creative Writing

Evening Air

By Nicholas Antoniak

Evening air settles thin on the quieter side of a second hand's flirtation with three. Eyes, choosing to abandon dreams, are left alone on mattresses dressed only in single white sheets. In the night, the windowsill of 412 frames a face and titles it 'Perplexed'. Look at its gaze. How it moves between the swing set and its rust soaked skin. The radio tower resting on the pinnacle of the towns stone and dirt, and the light emanating from buildings not yet succumbed to sleep. The rays make the pavement glow an early shade of dawn. The face, belonging to Simon James Kingston, produced jointly by Amelia Thorne Kingston and (the late) Robert Dave Kingston lowers the corner of its lips a barely discernible amount. For a moment, you'd think it was about to cry.

He lent down, arms encasing a wiry frame. Felt as though a grip any tighter might have shattered her brittle bones so he was tender, and though it was his hands that rested on a spine covered by nothing more than skin, he did it mostly to comfort himself. Past the opaque window and murky blinds pulled tightly shut, the world had almost fallen still. Brittle winds, the only things that moved, rushing through alleyways, touching upon the rusted lids of old garbage cans before continuing into a night that seemed held by nothing more than the tones of grey, which coloured its skies. Slowly, he began to say goodbye.

In October, dull light broke beneath the doorway fracturing listless sleep. The months had passed in heavy, quick strides and Simon James had not gone with them. Dishes stacked themselves precariously in crooked piles amongst loose change, empty pill packets, and the card his Mother sent last Christmas reaffirming her seemingly unconditional love and belief. The year had gone. Lost itself within the dull hum of the television screen and movements pale, slow and dead. The only thing he had done of note

in all this time was bear witness to a meteor shower from the East. Wrapped himself in cotton blankets as the fading, bright lights fell from the sky above.

On the counter Simon placed his wristwatch, identification, and an apology scrawled on paper ripped from the confines of an exercise book, stained with the remnants of day old coffee. He ventured outside, down the concrete steps and onto the lawn. Standing there, he could've sworn he heard it. Through the earth. Through the gumtrees stationed on sunburnt hills. The freshly cut suburban lawns, rows of perfectly trimmed hedges, TV dinners on Friday nights, and families arguing behind closed doors. Everything that had been left behind on the nights when the raucous noises inside his head had stopped him from seeing them. They sang.

A woman passed your house later that evening, stopping to appreciate your neighbours Petunias on her way home from work. She had always admired their deep shade of purple. Glancing up, she noticed the stillness of your four walls. Shrugged it off as nothing. Didn't know. Couldn't have. She hadn't seen you pack belongings into a bag. The way your left hand twitched apprehensively as you turned the key. The final look you had taken, to say goodbye, and the way a face pressed against the cold glass of a train leaving for the furthest station on the map.