HER ROYAL MAJESTY

ISSUE THIRTEEN
SUMMER 2013

“There is much good luck in the world, but it is luck. We are none of us safe. We are children, playing or quarreling on the line.”

E. M. Forster

“Do ya feel lucky, punk?”

Clint Eastwood, *Dirty Harry*

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR : LUCK

The theme for this issue came about simply enough: it’s HRM’s lucky number 13! [Cue applause.] But I’ve been having a particularly hard time coming to the letter from the editor this time around. I think it’s because I don’t know how much faith I have in luck, or to what extent I really believe in it.

I recently completed a survey for researchers at Princess Margaret Hospital who were trying to evaluate…actually, I’m not exactly sure what they were trying to evaluate. It was something to do with how cancer survivors perceive their current lives and how much of this was affected by having had cancer. It’s interesting doing a survey of which you don’t know the purpose, and thus trying to figure out the significance and overarching themes of the questions. From what I could tell, many of them were about luck and control. Whether I saw myself as a victim or controller, as cause or effect.

(I suppose you could say that I was lucky to have survived, and I believe that. In this situation I prefer it to terms like “bravery” or “fate”, because what of the flip side?)

Luck comes from the German word for happiness, and in French, it’s translated as *chance*. Where, along the twisted and deep-rooted etymological tree, did this division in definitions come from? I don’t think happiness and chance are mutually exclusive, but they definitely aren’t the same thing. You can be happy and unlucky, lucky and unhappy. (Or lucky and happy, or unlucky and unhappy.) A Catholic, an agnostic, and a lapsed Protestant were sitting around a table discussing this, and we could all agree that “luck” meant that the powers of the universe are on your side, however you might define the specific powers. If there is some sort of event – a bet, a contest, a race, an illness – in which the odds are either equal or against you, luck is when you beat the odds, win the gamble, and survive. Winning might make you happy or sad, for all sorts of various reasons, but happiness does not equal luck. Believing in luck can take away both responsibility and ego. Perhaps we could overlap the definitions and say that luck is when you get those chance bursts of inexplicable, fleeting happiness?

But is luck something we make for ourselves? Or do you believe in fate?

In this issue are stories about things like meteorites falling in backyards; a fable about a man who gets crushed by the rock he’s been carrying all his life; a poem about Joan of Arc and a monosyllabic prose poem about getting stuck in the métro; a personal essay about relationships to lucky charms; and, of course, a range of beautiful visual artwork. Explore this issue and think about these questions, about luck and fate and chance, whether or not you’ve made up your mind about your own answers.

Harriet Alida Lye
Editor in Chief

× HERON BY GRANT GREEGAN

METEORITE

BY KELSEY FORD

This is Rachel's house, with the wraparound patio and clapboard sides. Her bedroom is the one there, on the corner. You can't see it, but her bed is up against the window. She's sleeping. She has the comforter pulled up over her shoulders and her hands pushed beneath the pillow—deep in a dream about mismatched fingers and the weight of starfish. Sleeping there alone.

Ten minutes ago, a meteorite landed in her backyard. She didn't hear it. A chrondite stony meteorite the size of five fists. When she sees it tomorrow morning, she won't know what it means.

When Rachel was six, she fell off her bike. Her right knee bled. Pebbles embedded in the skin. She cried and waited for someone to come find her, but no one did. The nanny was in the kitchen, scowling at the news reports about Monica Lewinsky. Rachel sat there and watched her knee bleed, watched the red trickle down like thick yarn unraveling, watched it begin to dry. Tentatively, she stuck her forefinger and thumb into the wound, came away with dripping red fingers. She wiped them across her shin and liked the way it looked, to have that swath of her own self across herself. She dipped and wiped again, and then again.

The nanny came outside thirty minutes later and nearly fainted. Rachel's leg was slathered with dry red and she lay splayed in the middle of the grass, caught up in watching the clouds float past. One palm coated with her insides.

Eleven years later, she lost her virginity to a boy so skinny, she could press her hands into his skin and feel bone. They did it in the kitchen behind the sandwich shop where he washed dishes every night between eleven and twelve. She didn't notice the smell of putrid meat until after and was sure it came from her.

The morning after her twenty-third birthday, she woke up with half a tattoo on her ankle. She'd gone in the night before, but her alcohol-thinned blood bled too much for the needle to find its mark. She never bothered to get it fixed. The needle hurt like teeth across her fibula. She learned the bone's name, ticked it with her tongue until she had it memorized. Fibula. For days after, her legs felt like wind-bent weeds.

Now there's a meteorite in her backyard and she's sleeping. There are twenty different ways this could go. She won't wake for another five hours. When she does, and she goes downstairs to make herself tea, she'll look out the window while the kettle boils and think it's a rock at first. It will take her ten minutes to remember that she never put a rock there, and another ten to run through the possible scenarios. The idea of a meteorite is absurd, near the bottom of the list, but she still calls a friend who knows a friend. Or maybe she doesn't and she leaves it there, an uncomfortable omen three days after she married the man she's already left. Maybe she'll roll it underneath the trees at the edge of her property, out of sight. She'll forget about it until years later when she has a scientist friend over for dinner and they're discussing constellations. In his excitement, he'll forget to sleep with her. Schoolchildren will file past her front door and point at the house where the star fell. She'll receive prank calls from a blocked number: "Meteorites are God's spittle."

Maybe, though, the outcome she'll want most. She'll consider it that first morning, the morning she still hasn't woken into, before she does or doesn't do anything. She'll think about going outside and touching it. She will want it to singe her wrist flesh, to spark her backwards with an uncommon, heavenly heat. She will want to add to that scar still on her knee, black smudge across her fibula, smell of putrid meat inside. She will want it to add to her body another proof: I've been here. I'm still here.

× **BLUE WITCH** BY BRETT WINDHAM

ONCE HOME, WE RAISED A TOAST TO HIM & DRANK

BY GERALD FLEMING

There we were, the smash of us in wait for a train in those tubes-through- the-earth the French dug so long in the past, and at the edge of the quai they'd put in new glass doors to keep us *safe* in our wait to go home, but when the train came we saw that it, too, was jammed—fish in a can—& you could just smell the hot breath & stale clothes, all of us mushed there—Half *of these folks sure to get off*, but none did, & there was a surge, & that stuff scares me, so I stepped to the side & the guy at my left tried to get on, but the horn-to-warn blared & the train door closed & the keep-us-safe shield snapped shut & there he was, caught half--way the train soon to take off & those of us at the glass yanked back the doors, snatched him free.

Breaths let out, the man nods, says thanks, but this was not his day. Next train comes, *more* packed—no one gets off, crush of crowd, the guy braves it, steps in but not quite all the way, train doors slams & he's in but somehow his coat's caught & we on the quai see more, more of that coat pulled *out* by the doors as they shut tight—but can't see *him*, who must be pegged there at the doorjamb, scarecrowed—can't move his arms, the look on his face a madman's look, the fear.

Now the train pulls out & inch by inch we see the coat drawn in—much talk in that train for sure as those at his sides tug at the coat, but on the quai we hear none of it, just wheels on rails, and we laugh, a crowd-laugh, a fine thing to hear, just as those in the car must have laughed, too, when it was done, when all of him was in, red-faced, but in.

The rest of us still there, keen to head home, tell what we saw that day. But not once would that tale—though it might have held the words *poor fool*—not once mock him, for we know we are he, & it was just dumb luck that kept *us* that day from *caught* then *caught twice* in the vise of what keeps us safe.

We are good. I've come this far, war to more war, but claim it still: we are good. No one in that tin can of a train car knew that man, yet inch by inch they drew him in, freed his arms & no doubt slapped him on the back one-two-three to say You're O.K., *the wheels the gears the pressed jets of air will come for you, pin you, try to suck you through, but we're here; we're here for you.*

A ST. PATRICK'S DAY TAN

BY DAVID BLAIR

Asphalt down to archaic brick
roadbed, the Lenten heat
has our neighbor from the Azores
out with his spade, metal into soil
against stone after stone. Gardening
or cleaning rocks? The sun,
that Dutch oven,
sun-colored,
unnatural brightness,
seems full of shanks.

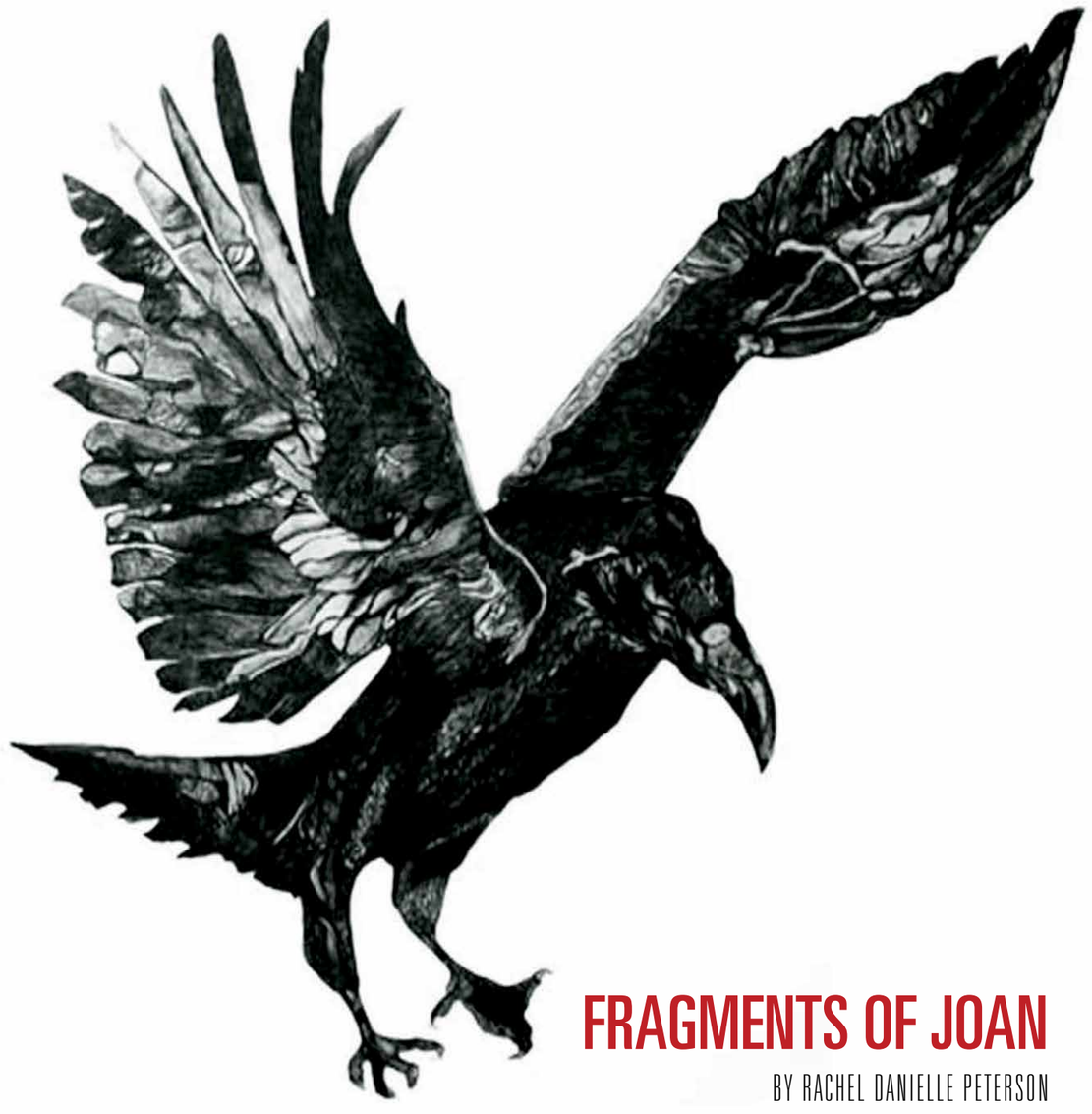
Three playground girls
share a spinning wheel
attached to bright chains,
engineered, for safety.
Their squealing joy comes
near you and is going far away,
and then sound coming near you.

If I were two cataracts on my stoop,
I would enjoy the approach
and retreat, the periodic elements of shampoo.

Sailboats on the river, billboards, I'll stay alert,
sopressata, jellybeans, South American candy bars,
even priced out, so go ahead, push red states
down the delta and into the tornado belt.

I couldn't tell you what I really think
about nature and change, but I will
hold the bottom of your silk undershirt
while you pull off your thin sweater.

× WITCH STUDY BY BRETT WINDHAM



FRAGMENTS OF JOAN

BY RACHEL DANIELLE PETERSON

XI.

When you
kill,

descend your shield before the man,
before the mace's distortion

shatters brain-cage. You'll need it
when helmet shrouds features,

and he drools the foam,
bears the grin of statecraft accompli.

When sword snorts buckler
like fish dumbstruck by air, flee

the elemental clank as your shoulder's
blade snarls gross and jagged.

This English prattles feral consonants,
but there's no translation—only the screw

of sinew snaring sinew. Entomb
a Buck Knife in his Adam's Apple.

Don't believe in how the blood
spurts ragged, a crescendo

of groan, like fumes of incense
flung from a censer.

Every spilled, godly bowel cries
Deliverance, but instead,

you'd sink in the nearest stream,
bellow for any pastor, any medicine

or waterskin to remove the weight of torsos,
the weight of meat and men

while thunder, rain, forests of oaks
flash. In the heat lightning's cursives,

Oh God, she screamed, *I'll be free*
across the goddam sea.

THE HONEY FARM, CHAPTER ONE

BY HARRIET ALIDA LYE

At any given moment, there is literally tons of free cardboard in the city. Twined in bundles on the streets, stuffed into garbage bins, stacked behind restaurants and shops. Tons. And all of it freely available. Seriously, it's unbelievable. Ibrahim would never take anything that belonged to anyone else but this belongs to nobody and so, by consequence, it also belongs to him.

Ibrahim and his family live near the train station, a stone's throw from where his father alighted thirty-two years ago and where they've all stayed ever since. Ibrahim moved into his own place a few years back, but it's just around the block from his father, also called Ibrahim, and his brothers and sister.

The streets behind the station – on a map, the lines are so fine they crosshatch, like shading – form a neighbourhood the locals call the Marmite. Mar-MEET. The French were among the first people to arrive and for them, *une marmite* is a pot in which you cook any old thing. A village stew made up of all the leftovers. A kind of stone soup.

The Marmite now houses the Arabs, the Poles, the Chinese (lots of Chinese), the Somalians, the French, the Irish, the Cubans, the Koreans, the Indians (the ones from India, not the ones from here), the Sri Lankans, the Balinese. The whole world.

If they'd come off a boat they would have hopped on the train out east and stopped here: the first, biggest, brightest city.

Toronto! Hogtown! The T dot! The biggest city in the middle of nowhere!

And if they came from down south they'd have stopped in what was effectively the first city – the first city that counted, in any case – across the border. No need to reach beyond the necessary. Besides, everyone knows it's too cold further north.

For all the development happening now in the city – condos and complexes and tramways and that – they don't touch the little shantytown casting its low shadows behind Union Station.

And everyone stays, no matter the disrepair the houses fall under or how much cleaner and cheaper it might be to live elsewhere, the suburbs maybe. They stay where they first landed, out of convenience and fear. They had already come so far, Ibrahim the father said, there was no reason to stray and risk it all. Risk what, Ibrahim the son never asked.

Nights, Ibrahim goes round the city – all over it, from theatre district to textile, Chinatown to little Italy – to collect all that cardboard, but the best stuff is right by the train station. All the shipping crates for furniture, pianos, farm supplies, car parts, wheelchairs, bicycles, textbooks, hospital equipment, grain. He stops here last, on his way home, arriving moments before dawn, before the first trains come in from out West.

He uses it for canvases.

His paintings are big, abstract, bright. If you know where to look you'll see all the weighted Moroccan symbolism he disguises in them. The lion, the pentagram, the hand of Fatima. It doesn't matter if you can't see any of it outright though. And most people can't. The paintings are like those Magic Eye drawings in that you get the message subliminally.

He has yet to sell any, but he also has yet to try.

Ibrahim first sees mention of the Honey Farm on the public announcement board in the departures hall of the train station one evening. Morning. (He sleeps during the days.)

He has sheets of cardboard strapped to his back using a careful system of bungee cords he devised and he's carrying a box of hardly-broken bottles in each hand. He has nothing particular in mind for the bottles, but will find something to use them for. Maybe to store his brushes.

Each time he passes through the entrance to the train station, Ibrahim has to wipe his feet eight times on the mat provided. When he leaves the train station from the exit on the opposite side, he has to wipe his feet sixteen times. Each time, he has to do this while facing east. He also has to remove anything he is holding, including any coats or jackets or layers of clothing that are not considered necessary.

He has performed these ablutions unthinkingly for forever, for ever since his mother had died, actually. It was no big deal to do them, but it was a big deal to not.

This time, between the eight for arrival and the sixteen for departure, he lingers by the public announcement board. It's not unheard of for him to peruse the postings. Rarely any reason in particular, just general interest.

A pigeon – no, a whole family of them – had wrangled into the station and they are now busy creating a nest for themselves above the coffee shop that hasn't yet opened its wrinkled silver lids. Ibrahim watches the one that seems to be the mother fold slender bits of food into the mouths of the younger.

THE HONEY FARM. A retreat for artists, writers, thinkers. Can't work in the city? Come to the Artists' Colony for a month or two (or longer!) and also learn how to keep bees! Starting beginning May.

Contact:

And then the paper fringes at the bottom, each narrow tongue with its own handwritten name and phone number. The furthest on the right had been pulled already, but Ibrahim assumes this is a marketing tactic and that he's the first person to take genuine interest, in spite of the insincerity of the exclamation marks. He pulls the tongue next to the missing one.

Sixteen wipes before leaving and he begins the walk home, across the sleeping steel tracks already starting to vibrate with the national repercussions of movement. The sky is veiled with thin clouds – cirrocumulus, combed so high so as to be in practically another stratosphere, a whole different universe – starting to pink with the first inkling of morning.

His pack is heavy and he feels full of this contentment feeling. A feeling of fullness. He is excited to start work, proper work, paint on his hands and pants, in his hair and eyes. His mind is already preparing for his next piece and the world begins to parcel off into colour swatches, alternating and contrasting blocks of neon and matte metal that comprise his palette. The world becomes as he would paint it: simplified, brightened, stratified into a kind of unity.

Get him going and Ibrahim would have your ear off talking about the connection between the line and the Lord, though he's not particularly religious. He does believe that things get spoken into creation – *In the beginning was the Word* – and that this is also true for his paintings. Nothing exists for him until he paints it.

Walking up his street, he passes his father's house and brings the mail to the front door. It's been getting farther and farther from the mailbox and now Mikey, the mail-boy, stupid little lazy-ass kid, thinks the foot of the driveway suffices. Not thinking about the old folks for whom even getting to the front step is an effort, not to mention what would happen if it rained.

Ibrahim turns the block and, coming round the corner, the sun breaches the horizon. With this he feels, with the tiniest bit of sadness, that he is no longer the only person in the world. Daylight gives a kind of sense to wakefulness; there is something exciting and absurd about being awake in the night.

Once home, he disregards the first two floors and goes straight up to his attic studio. This is where he works. Though his paints and brushes and thinners and sponges are nearly impossible to find in all the mess, it is here that he stretches the boards flat and tapes them into one, patchworked canvas. (The paint he gets at stock prices; though his father's stores don't sell paint, Ibrahim the older has no problem importing them in bulk for his son's use.)

Once he's located them, Ibrahim lines up the paints he's drawn to that morning and splotches red and blue and yellow, gold and pink and neon orange, and black and white and silver onto a palette of waxed card and then, finally, he starts to paint.

You wouldn't know it to look at him, but Ibrahim is very rich. Or at least, his father is. Ibrahim the elder founded a small business importing Moroccan products for a local store that also functioned as a deli and – slowly, steadily, strongly – the business grew. Now the Abdullahs own a whole apartment building, all seven floors. None of the family live there, though – nobody wanted to move from the Marmite – and the money is inaccessible, tied up in real estate both here and in Tangiers.

As he paints, shapes emerge from colours; the line of a horizon volleys, peaks and turns, the stroke unfolds and meanders as a river does and then continues, bending into the first letters of the Arabic alphabet: alif, beh. One slight stroke for a dot beneath the cupped line of *beh*.

Alif, beh; aleph, bet; alpha, beta. The first letters – the first words.

Ibrahim is getting into the rhythm of it now; he starts to feel alive in the painting, as if its motion and his motion are one, as if he is the colours and they are coming out of his fingers. This is why he paints. To see things differently, but to *be* different too.

He pulls back from the canvas to see the bigger picture. He is happy with it, he feels it in his chest. He puts the brush down, pulls out the spare one from behind his ear, pushes back his straggly hair – his longish curls tends to puff out with the morning humidity – and motions as if to crack his knuckles. His knuckles don't crack but his father's do, and Ibrahim inherited the gesture. Both Ibrahims make to crack their knuckles either when there is a situation that needs to be controlled or when they are satisfied with a job well done. This is the latter.

It's time for coffee.

Ibrahim sits in the window cupping his mug, milkless, and looks out over the tree- and roof-tops. Mikey comes by, he can see the little boy made even littler from up here, and Ibrahim shouts: "Through the mailbox, boy," pronounced *bwai*. Mikey looks up and waves the newspaper, "yeah, yeah."

Spring on a honey farm, Ibrahim thinks. That could be nice.

THE INVOICE

BY BEN STEPHENSON

The invoice was mailed very near the beginning of the year. It was mailed, priority post, from a professional person to a large corporate client, in the hope that the client would pay the freelance professional the sum the invoice specified without delay.

It was a top-notch invoice. In a large modern typeface at the top of its page it read simply and legibly: INVOICE #37. Below this it stated the date of its creation, which was – not coincidentally – the same as the date it was mailed. How thrilling, how frightening: the invoice had just now been printed and already it had a task. It was expected to set up a conduit between the professional and the corporate client, enabling a transfer of information in one direction, then finances in the other. Presently the finances requested were important to the professional, indeed they were vital; it was of utmost importance that the invoice carry out its task in a competent and efficient manner.

Below the date of its creation, the invoice provided the freelance professional's name and business address, which was – not coincidentally – the same as her home address, followed by the professional's full bank account #. Below this it stated confidently the name of the multinational company to whose accounting office the invoice was issued, and that office's mailing address, which was in a country across a considerably large ocean from the professional's home/business address. Still below, the invoice listed the specifics of the finances requested and then their net total, a total that was indeed, to the freelance professional, a substantial sum. As for the invoice's task, it would simply be to rest inside various strange containers in various vehicles that would safely bear it across the vast ocean to a representative of the conglomerate. Its envelope would be looked over, then harshly torn into, and then would come the moment the invoice had been created for. It would be unfolded, a third at a time, and the impossibly distant representative would read it. Would it be read with indifference, or appreciation? It didn't matter. Certainly the conglomerate's representative would accurately process and respond to its clear, assertive information, and its vocation would be fulfilled. And this anticipation was cause for great pleasure and great skittishness.

*

By the second week of the year, the corporate client had not yet received any invoice from the freelance professional. The professional, who had not yet received any portion of the crucial finances, phoned the conglomerate's office's secretary to inquire about the arrival of her clear and concise invoice, and the secretary passed along the news that the invoice had unfortunately not yet arrived. The client's secretary then told the professional that if the invoice failed to materialize by the end of the week she would be notified, and appropriate measures would then be taken.

*

Was it true: could the invoice still be in its envelope? How much time had passed since it began its transoceanic journey? Had it perhaps been too long, or even far too long? Was there legitimate cause for worry? Why did the invoice seem to be somewhere very dark and cold? Where was the freelance professional who so direly needed the finances it was to call for? Was she at this moment lowering the temperature on her thermostat, or walking to the store to purchase low-end noodles? Was the professional in professional anguish, taking on extra clients instead of sleeping? Surely the priority post envelope could relay some information about the invoice's position with respect to the conglomerate and the freelance professional and the considerable ocean ? It was true that waiting was the bulk of the invoice's task, waiting as long as necessary, but it had been too long, hadn't it? Still here in the cold and lightless envelope, could it be the case that the invoice had somehow disappointed the professional? Certainly it couldn't have betrayed her by its own fault, but then how else to explain the predicament, if indeed there was a predicament at hand? And what of the representative of the conglomerate? What of his or her nimble fingers and knowing eyes? With the cold now deepening, was the representative's dutiful, comprehending touch something the invoice would ever know?

*

Halfway through the third week of the new year, the freelance professional's home/business phone rang. A secretary in the finance office of the far away conglomerate regretfully informed the professional that her invoice had still not been seen by anyone there. The professional, impatient with the professionally straining circumstance, told the secretary she would correct the situation. And another invoice similar to the first, although not exactly the same, came along to take its place.


GERMAINE LE

COUNTING GAMES

BY STEPHANIE LACAVA

I've never had a living lucky charm.

It could die.

You can count on numbers and you can count on things, but you can't always count on people.

Along with my collection of objects, I used to believe in even numbers and then, somehow, this changed to odd. When I would count with magical intention, it used to be to four. Then, all of a sudden, I wanted everything in three or five or seven. This change could have been an aberration, or maybe I thought I would always be alone, always odd, only one.

The change happened as I became a grown up very quickly, living overseas, lonely and confused, having to accept circumstances that couldn't be believed into something else.

Charm is magnetic allure and a charm is a little thing. What happens when you sometimes, rarely, find both at once, when a person takes the place of inanimate objects? I used to like objects because they were there to take my mind away from who wasn't. I loved the opal necklace I'd found in the street, violet sugar-dusted candies, a kaleidoscope, coral branches, glass eyes and stuffed birds.

"You have to take care of your things," my mother always said. Now, I'm thinking about having children of my own. But can you ever learn to count on a child as you can count on a charm? A child could die. How do you take care of a new, breathing thing? My parents must have known this; I'll have to learn.

Children up the stakes of living and also embody the paradox of good luck. To have the fortune of a family means an awareness of the bad luck that can befall you. You can't take living lucky charms with you to the afterlife, like the treasures in the tombs of Egyptian kings.

Having children is giving in that we can't change the whole world, only illuminate parts of it. The little ones of our world are full of luck: because they were born, because they love and because they believe in us. And then they may grow up, too, to believe in talismans and lucky charms.

THE ROCK BY BETTE ADRIAANSE

ON A CERTAIN DAY, a man arrived in a certain village somewhere in the desert. He was carrying a large rock on his shoulders. He was a skinny little man and the rock was almost as big as he was. The citizens of the village watched the man as he slowly made his way towards the market square, his back hunched and his eyes tired.

'Look,' one of the villagers pointed at the man. 'He never once stopped to put that rock down.'

'Look, he is eating his bread and even then he doesn't put it down.'

And: 'Look, he is leaning against a tree, that means he's tired, so why won't he put it down?'

The villagers whispered and couldn't stop staring at the man. It was a very unpleasant sight and it was also inconvenient for them, because they needed to do their groceries. After a short period of whispering and staring, one of the market-women had enough and yelled: 'Will you put it down already?'

The man lifted his head and looked around helplessly. 'It's not that I don't want to, you know.' His voice was soft and unstable, as if he hadn't spoken in a long time. 'I've carried this rock ever since I can remember. Every day and every night. Who knows what will happen when I put it down.'

'Why are you carrying it then?' one villager asked.

'I don't know what the reason is,' the man said. Tears welled in his eyes.

The villagers stared at the flies swarming around him. Looking closer, they could see there were deep open wounds on his shoulders.

'I must be sentenced to it,' the man said.

The villagers shook their heads. 'This can't be right,' one said. 'Look at your shoulders, look at your back,' another one said. 'You're suffering.' 'Just put it down.' 'Yes! Put it down!' they all joined in now. 'Put it down, you will feel better.' The villagers had formed a circle around the man and clapped their hands. 'Put the rock down!'

The man twisted his heels nervously in the sand. 'I guess, I would really... I know I would really like to stretch my back. Just once.'

The villagers cheered. 'Just do it!' they shouted. 'You can!' 'Stretch your back! Put the rock down!'

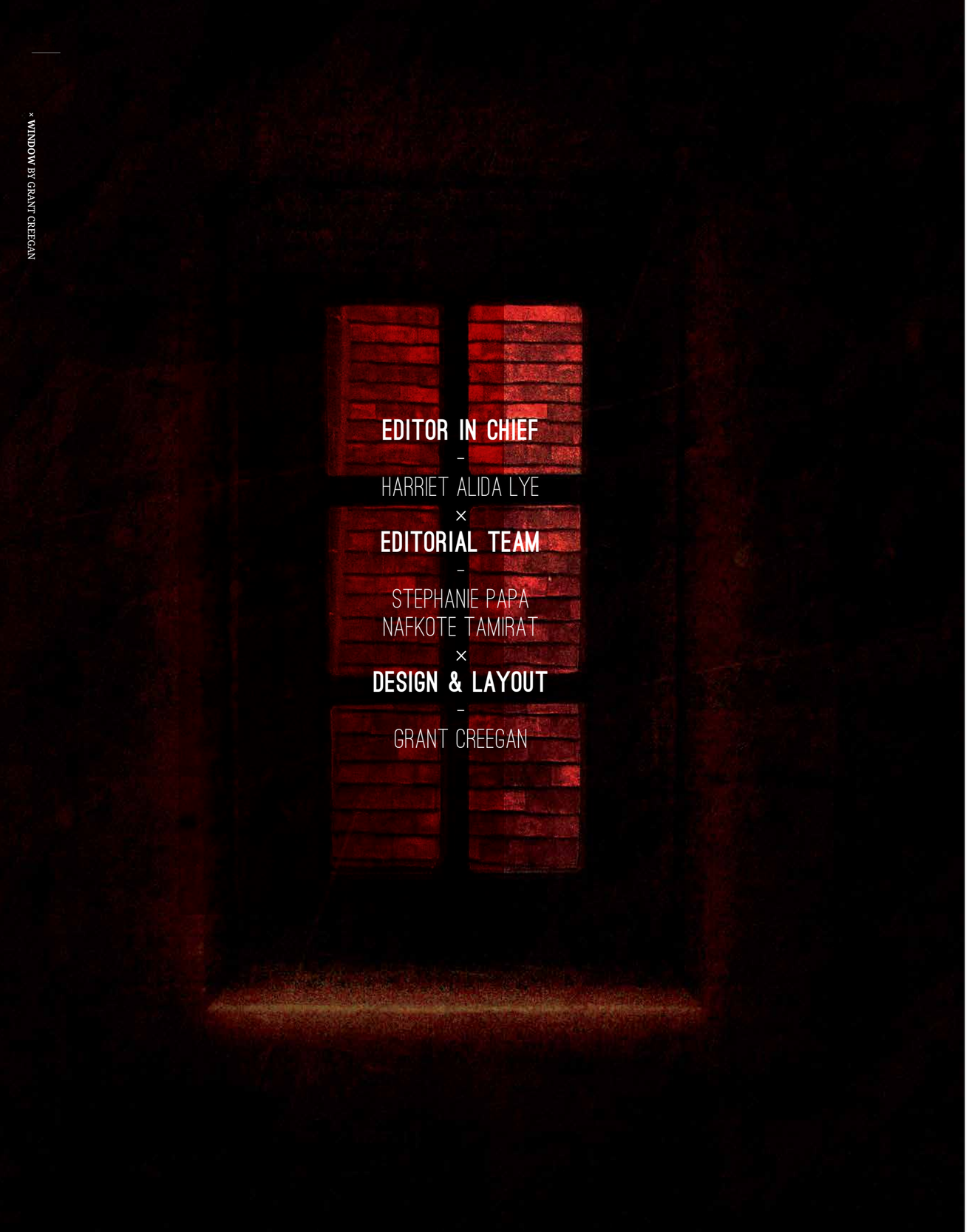
Hesitantly, the man put his hands on the rock, inched it up slightly, and, with a soft scream, lowered it back on his shoulders again. 'I can't!' he said. 'Or can I?' Like a scared animal, the man paced back and forth within the circle the villagers had formed around him. The shifting of the rock had revealed a large indent in his spine.

'Come on, do it!' the villagers urged him, looking appalled at the dent in his back.

Suddenly, the man stood still. With shaking hands, he grabbed the rock, lifted it up from his back and placed it on a heap of sand with a sob. Then, he lay down in the sand and vertebra by vertebra, he straightened his spine. Tears of joy streamed down his face.

'This day,' he started...

But unfortunately we will never know what it was with that day. At that moment, the rock rolled down and smashed the little man's head. The disappointed villagers fell silent. They dragged the man's crooked body to the edge of the town where they left it for the vultures, and went back to their business.



“You play, you win, you play, you lose, you play. … What you risk reveals what you value.”

Jeanette Winterson, *The Passion*

TABLE OF CONTENTS