
Tea Time Verse
The Remnant Archive

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Message from the Editor

Dear Readers,

This issue we're diving into the transitional period between day and night. "Afterglow" is defined as the light remaining in the sky after the sun has set. Our columnists explore the momentary transformation between an ending and a new beginning.

This conversation between marathoners passing on the reins of time is short lived yet the most anticipated moments. Some perceive it as a hard pill to swallow as the sun parts ways with the sky. Others stare into the fast approaching nighttime solitude. There exists a third lucky party that longs for and finds beauty in this inevitable metamorphosis.

In this issue, our wonderful columnists explore this very metamorphosis, the beauty it carries and what role it plays in their individual lives. We hope you enjoy reading this issue and perhaps, get inspired to wait for the afterglow more often hereon.

Happy reading,

Warmly,

Zarnab Tufail
Guest Editor

To Dream of An Ending

Adritanaya Tiwari

I often dream of a kind of
ending.

It starts in the dark and
plays with the colors in the sky
till dawn arrives,
it whispers into my ear
memories
I could never fully process
and leaves behind
ghosts of feelings
I don't remember or don't want to.

I open my arms wide,
to see if the ghosts
accept hugs.

They do.

We play cards and
run around my heart,
laughing, crying,
until there's nothing left
to feel, anymore.

I wake up soon,
with its remnants
for company.

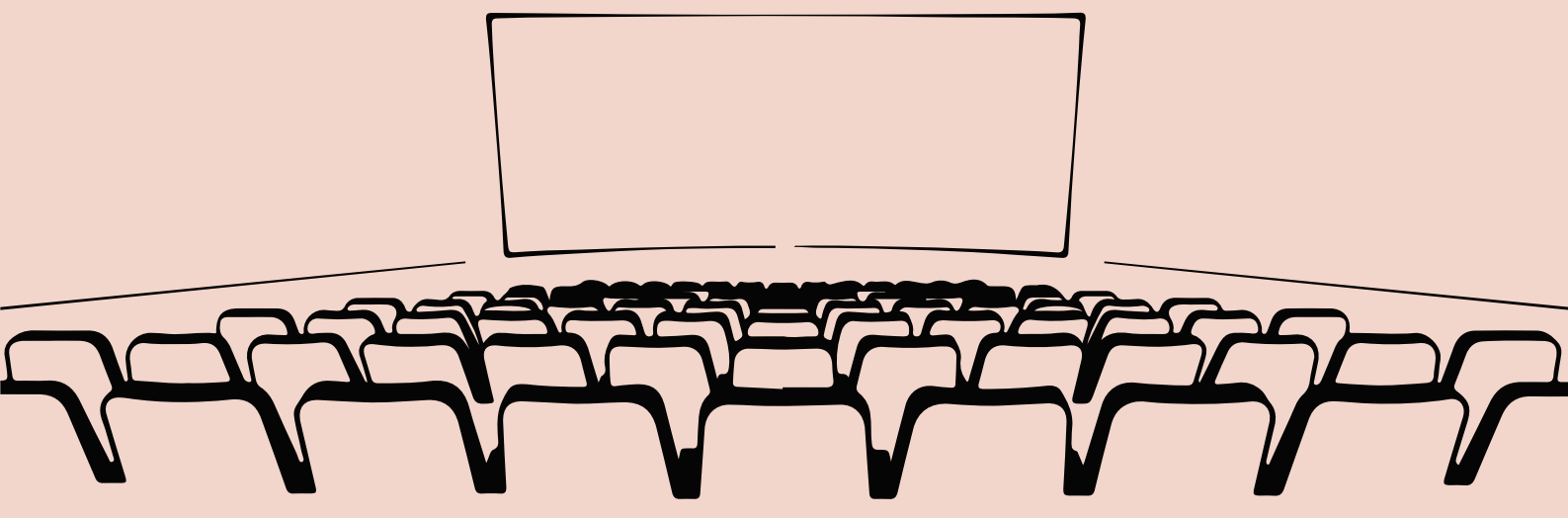
Wondering if
it was truly possible for me
to not feel
like a haunted castle.



In Reprise

Amal Mathew

Next time you leave a cinema hall, patiently wait for a couple of minutes. After the mother, aunts and lovers leave. Look around the corners of the projector, upwards to the ceiling. Where the light takes tickets, is the obscure domain of fear. The focal point in a painting, the opening to a chess game, the reaction to an unknown number. Cinema has the power to sustain desire, then it goes miss ing. Skewed through the iris, through the nose, the dark spot at the highlight of the room disappears. You feel estranged, tightening your back, the front most row pulls you to the seat at the extreme right-hand corner. You watch as the credits roll, inside Hopper's world.



Freeze

Navneet Kaur

That time when I first experienced the joy of being in love,
That was crazy, mad, unstable and childish,
When we decided to become "official lovers" in the eyes of our pals.

The night that I had to spend without sleep and rest,
To welcome a morning that turned out being even more restless.
Those tiny little butterflies in my stomach,
Were reproducing and making more butterflies,
All of them making my tender heart go thump….thump…..thump…….

That lightness on my face that my friends pointed out that day,
Those shimmering eyes that showed the entire movie of last night to the world,
With spoilers though!

Those pink bubbles that here and there floated in my mind,
Thinking about "What next?"
"Would we meet?"
"What would we do first?"

I wanted to freeze all that.
Freeze that moment of fragility,
That pushed me to surrender myself to whatever that was happening,
Because it was so beautiful.

I wanted to freeze that second when we said "I love you",
I wanted to freeze that silence that followed it.
I wanted to freeze those giggles that followed that silence.
I wanted to freeze that filling thought of being finally together.
I wanted to freeze all that.



god tries to scold flower-picking astronauts

Poulomi Deb

Breathe in the fire. Gasp, cough at it,
Licking the edges of Creation. Keep
tugging at his hand. Here he comes,
withered, a freckle, a rose in the garden
of stars. Against your velvet skin of death,
light creates a dancing shadow. Watch.
His chest expanding and closing in,
your people falling ill and collapsing.
Come, marbleize his guts, perform
Your fits of static anger, you burned,
Wretched, empty note of silence.
Grow a weed with his tears, perhaps,
When you are done with waiting.
When time has unfrozen

S *r* ?
T *e* ?
R *c* R
E *l* E
T *i* T
C *n* A
H *e* L
with me



My Closure is But Incomplete

Ishika Chaturvedi

Yesterday, my therapist told me that he thinks I run away from closure. He told me that right before all is coming down to an end, I find myself a ride on the freeway and try to ride off into the sunset, but I cannot stop myself. Because I've been feeling powerful while shouting curses from my terrace at dawn, but the second someone calls out my name gently- I fall apart. I fall apart and grieve in a tub of my own tears and blood, now flowing from my wrists. And I cannot stop.

My afterglow is a dark navy crayon, splayed across my face, saying slurs and breaking promises. It's me waking up and deciding to organize my room, trying to find a little faith in the piles of dirty clothes and unfinished assignments but it feels nice. Because even though I am broken, I did it myself and the only hands around my neck are my own and I can do what I want- dance, sing, smile- but honestly, can choose to do neither. It's a golden halo with devil wings and a hug that results in a chokehold. It's all things evil in little messenger bottles of purity. And so my therapist wants me to seek closure- but how do I tell him that I can now go out alone, beam when I cook, scold myself, and hold hope in my arms, that I now feel like I won a fight that was rigged and I can go coo in midnight's ears that I am no longer wasting her on somebody who doesn't find a home in her, I'm instead reckless building a home for myself.



Untitled

Harshita Vyas

If I take one more step, dear friends, I won't have you. It's just gelid sentenc - es and prophetic misery from now. But here I am, 10:30 pm, and I have a cup in my hands like you do. The wheels on the bus and the wheels on my bag are bursting with impatience, and I am stirring my spoon, not wanting to be purple again so soon. I keep finding my home in you and your tears and maybe this -us -will stop hurting one day, but that hurts the worst. There should be a rope to keep time still, but it is a silly pup, and it's biting us all hard. Yet we must find our buses and trains, our dreams and veins.

'They forgot to add the ginger again.'

All of us laugh, a synchronised performance at its last stage, the most elabo - rately raw. It is more painful than I ever imagined. Here. This city of glori- ous sunsets and terrible accidents and roads that lead nowhere familiar -in three years, it has taught me to find music everywhere. I hope you keep hearing it too when your tea goes cold. Someday, this will feel like a dream. Until then, let it hurt.

I hand over the keys to the warden.

Let's meet again.



you and me at the sea

Manya Misra

we sit on the sand with legs stretched out
so our toes can flirt with the waves.
I like listening to the sound of the sea
and you speaking together yet so separately.
you're telling me about a family vacation
you took by the sea when you were eleven
and the ocean roars to that memory as if
agreeing to its existence. I tell you about
how much I love the ocean that I couldn't wait
for the time to be right and the planet to be
vaccinated, but it took two years for this
moment to be, or not; I am no longer decisive
of reality with so much virtuality that is floating
around. People are much lesser than what
they used to be here at the beach. maybe
they're lost in their jungles of concrete.
a lot of things have changed but the ocean
has remained, like it was, like it is, like it will
always be. you always smell the sea before
you can see it and you always first feel the
hot sand in your toes and then the wet sand
and then the white ocean and then the blue.
the sea still possess the sky above it, the air still
echoes with what the waves have to say.
you and me at the sea are sun-kissed, happy
and momentary.

you and me at the sea.



The Story they Tell

Raunaq Saraswat

The photos make it look serene, two pictures of the room, scions of their feed, both taken with filters on, at a peculiar angle, showing nothing more and nothing less,

perfectly aesthetic for a micro second gaze amidst the endless scrolls, hollows of heartful admiration start pouring in, they too are delighted, buoyed by the instant validation, their gratified self now wondering why did the previous two pictures not receive similar comments and reactions, and one of them speaks up, it was the fairy lights, their sparkling
magnificence did the conjuror's trick,

it enhanced their wall, and the two photos of a corner of their room continue to receive love (reacts), they too are immersed in their screens, busy responding, telling people that the room looks like this for real, for real, the fairy lights flicker in the meantime, they go off, off for real, but the photo is out there, and it has the fairy lights, shimmering fairy lights in
that 'real',

and they don't pay heed to the fairy light in the room until next day, when one of them thinks of putting up a story, a story they want the world to know, for twenty-four hours only, and they realize the fairy lights have died,

what to do, until the other one speaks up, they have one more photo from the previous day, use that, and they use that, the story is alive, live and kicking, more and more people seeing it, believing it, preying their screen time,

the dead fairy-lights are enveloped by the darkness of the room, all the while glowing in the story they tell.



That Orange Star in the Burned-Out Sky

Annanya Uberoi

has touched more of you than my hands
ever will. Yes, I had sun-honey all over my skin
as we danced away in a pale courtyard of Ysaÿe
        and seeding flowers,
but with the dip of the bow
on the sky-cello, there was a violent strum,
stating so surely, we had stopped.

In the afterword of our story,
there are no words. Every afternoon
        we sit in different homes,
peel simple oranges and arrange them,
slice by slice, like sourness on the plate
        of an unclosed dusk
because it gives us no answers.

Sometimes, we think it is hiding away
its sought-after truth. Sometimes,
there truly are none.



MEET THE TEAM

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