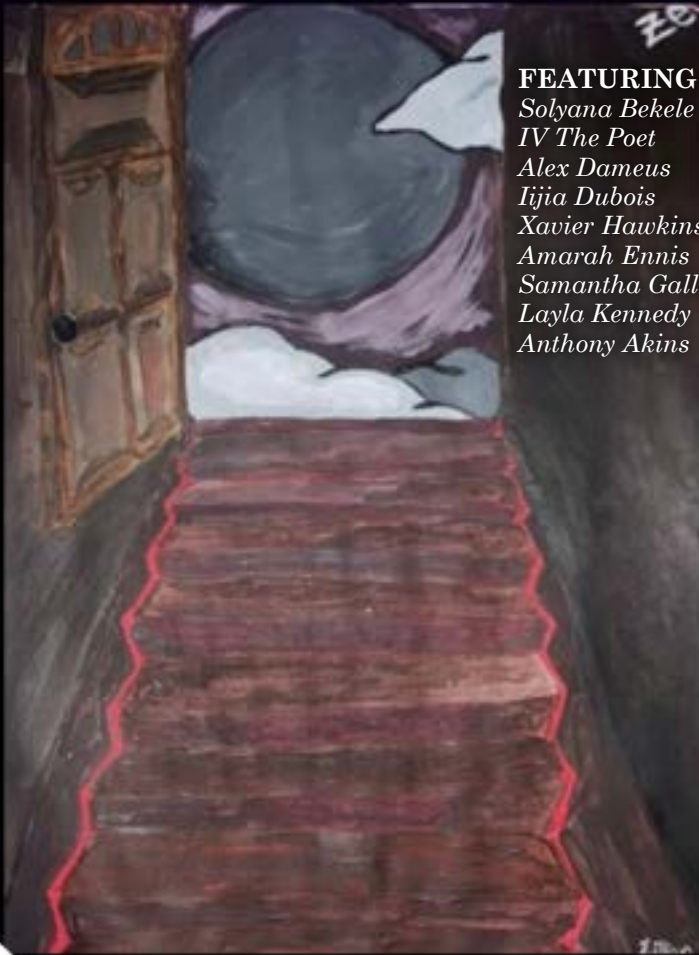


Spring 2023

The Hampton **RENAISSANCE**

AFTER HOURS



FEATURING

Solyana Bekele

IV The Poet

Alex Dameus

Ijia Dubois

Xavier Hawkins

Amarah Ennis

Samantha Galloway

Layla Kennedy

Anthony Akins

Cover Art by Alex Dameus

ISSUE 3

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A Note from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Welcome back, *Hampton Renaissance* readers, writers, and friends. As another fall semester at Hampton University comes to a close and the days grow shorter and the nights longer, we wanted to know, what comes to your mind? While the sun sets and the sky's bright blue dissolves into deep violet, what do you see? When you're alone with your thoughts in the wee hours of the night, what do you hear? When the moon slinks into the sky, what do you feel?

Our theme this semester is After Hours. We are curious about what keeps you up at night. What do you do in the dark? When street lamps come on, washing the street below in hazy yellow light, what do you think of? This issue is for the late-night poems scratched in the margins of your notebook, for the song your heart sings as you look up at the moon, or down at the cup of coffee you desperately need to get through the pile of work in front of you. We asked you to stop for a moment. To take a break, take a breath, and reflect on these late night hours.

Our questions made for some truly amazing pieces. From Iijia Dubois's chilling "The Straw Man" to Anthony Akins's reflective short story "Secunda", every piece in our third issue provides a unique perspective on After Hours. I am so happy to be able to provide a platform for these amazing works. At the *Hampton Renaissance*, we strive to showcase the talents of the faculty and student body, and to provide a space for students and faculty alike to share a little bit of themselves and be heard. Thank you for giving us your time and your energy, thank you for sharing your stories with us, and thank you for trusting us to listen.

Don't stay up too late,

Zoe J. Treadwell



Nocturnal Musings

by *Solyana Bekele*

There's something about the night that makes emotions unbearably heavy; something about the dim light of the full moon that makes sadness despair; solitude, utter loneliness; tiredness, back-breaking fatigue. Maybe there's a scientific explanation for it; something about the position of Earth, the moon, and stars—pulling and tugging at our fragile hearts, compelling us to believe that there's nothing else more real than what we feel right then and there; the force of gravity not only holding things in place but ripping apart the seams of our hearts and minds, prolonging time, and once again making simple solitude desperate loneliness.

As deep as that sounded, that may not at all be a universal feeling. I'm not so cocky as to generalize the nightly musings of my brain to everyone else's experience—but it can't just be me, right?

I lay awake at night, every night, in bed, but perpetually separated from the exodus of sweet slumber by crippling insomnia. I gaze at the lonely moon and wonder does she ever feel lonely? A barren rock, floating through space, forever tied to Earth's orbit—looking on in somnolence as people live and die in ignorant bliss of their cosmic isolation. Does she get lonely up there? Or do the stars keep her company?

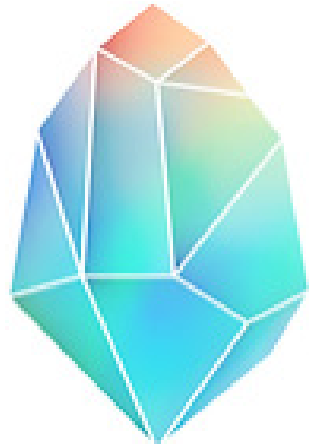
Is she maybe the only one then that truly understands the nocturnal musings of my brain?



Brain vs. Body

by IV The Poet

Ring around the rosie I go with you
Gambling with the pair of hearts in my deck
Scared of the risk but anxious to bet
My heart is torn cus my mind is in two
As the War of Brain and Body pursue
The attention I paid ain't cleared my debt
If my Queen departed, I face a threat
From King to fool, I'm eternally blue
From King to fool, forever lost in Lust
Fiending for satisfaction I won't find
Feeling pleasures I soon won't remember
A craving my body says is a must
When the message is questioned in my mind
My heart burns, but stays frozen like winter



Coal.

by Alex Dameus

The saying goes...

“Pressure makes Diamonds”

Yet so often overlooked,

Is the coal.

Rough and unrefined,

Darkened through experience,

Yet expected to become flawless.

How exactly?

First, you must seal away all

impurities:

-Look Proper

-Speak Properly

-Act Properly

*This coal is now... appropriate, to become a diamond, but it still needs much refining

You must add pressure.

Remember, we're making diamonds here, the standard doesn't cut it. We need Excellence. The pressure you'll need must be skull-splitting. It must exceed the depths of the trenches unknown. You must be Perfect in all that you do.

*At this point the coal has condensed to a nameless shade of noire bound by responsibility and stress. Yet FAR from flawless...

One last factor: Heat

“What's at stake?” “How much can you lose?” “Will it be worth it?”

Heat will come from what can be lost, anxiety being the spark to the uncontrolled fire.

This must burn inside of you hotter than the light that wakes the earth.

Singeing the lungs at each gasp for air as you so desperately search for the way to salvation to no avail.

Year after year... After year... After Year... AFTER Year... AFTER YEAR.

Unrecognizable....

A Stranger....

*CONGRATULATIONS!! You've now become a Diamond.



The Straw Man

by Iijia Dubois

I was always warned about the thing
The creature that crowns and stalks the night
He stands above the hill,
Powerful and lonely.
We are told not to speak,
But I wonder how he fares
And how a person can rule in such a fortress of solitude.
Each evening, I sneak a peek
And stare at his disembodied figure.
I gaze upon his makeshift button eyes, and sunken stomach
Each dawn, he stares back at me.
Dark, damp, and lonely.



I Love Movies

by Xavier Hawkins

“Did y’all kids manage to get along?” Makai asked upon returning to the group.

“Tye and Nia have been talking about whether you love her...Do you?” said Kiera, Tye’s girlfriend. Makai looked at Tye with disappointed eyes, then shifted his glare to Nia.

“Yeah. I do. I thought this was understood.”

“And what’s understood don’t need to be said,” Tye added.

Turning to Kiera, Nia said, “I bet Tye says, ‘I love you’ all the time.”

“Actually, he doesn’t. However, he did clean our apartment this morning before surprising me with my favorite lavender eucalyptus candles. I like when he tells me how he feels, but it wouldn’t mean much if he never showed me.”

Nia heard Kiera, but she felt how she felt. Her body language made those feelings palpable.

“Nia, I love you,” said Makai.

“And I love movies. Are we still going to the theater?” asked Tye.

Takis and Tacos

by Xavier Hawkins

As she exits the shower, Kiera says, “I like how you handled today. You joked a lot, but

most of your feelings are hidden in humor. You don’t have to do that by the way. I hear what you mean, and you’re doing a good job. Your feelings are valid. I appreciate you. I’m proud of you.”

“Thank you.” Tye smiles as he exits the room. Two minutes later, he returns with a bottle

of chardonnay and a big bag of Takis. “Pick a movie,” he says.

“Where’d your clothes go?”

“I feel like you could use a back massage.”

Find Everything Okay?

by *Amarah Ennis*

The welcoming chime of the grocery store is too cheery for the hour. It's the middle of the night: Sebastian would rather be in and out silently, a black ghost in this blindingly white ghost town.

The hum of the fluorescent lights is his only company as he darts through the aisles, snatching things off the shelves: dish soap, a bag of pork rinds, a tub of cookie dough ice cream, a box of Kraft mac n' cheese, a pack of Caprisuns, a bag of powdered donuts, and a bottle of vodka.

There was no one at the cash register when he came in, but there's someone there now. He's—attractive, even dressed in a drab polo and cracking his jaw with a yawn. Somehow the fluorescent lighting doesn't wash out his dark skin. His name-tag says DaVon, and under that writes, Here to Help.

Sebastian puts his items on the conveyor belt, careful not to make eye contact. After scanning the shelf of candy next to the register, he throws in a bag of peanut M&Ms.

“You just broke up with somebody?” His voice is deep and a little raspy, like he's just recovered from a sore throat.

The scanner beeps. Shocked at the assertion, and even more so at its accuracy, Sebastian looks up and meets the man's eyes. DaVon is flicking his gaze intentionally from him to the items still on the conveyor and back.

Not that it's any of the guy's business, but Sebastian says, “How'd you guess?” His own voice is scratchy, after hours of yelling and a couple shameful minutes of crying.

The cashier gestures at the items with his head. “Buyin' this stuff at once, you're either high as hell or you just got dropped, man,” he replies.

“You get a lot of people in here right after a breakup at this time of night?” Sebastian asks, a little sardonically.

DaVon seems unfazed. “You'd be surprised. What she do?”

The memory is as fresh and raw as a wound filled with glass shards, but why not reopen it for this stranger? It's not like he'll see DaVon again, not when this grocery store is closer to his ex-boyfriend's house than he's ever willing to get again. “He just...didn't wanna commit.”

No need to recount every argument, every insult. No need to detail every needle-stab of Ells saying to Sebastian's face that he wasn't a fucking f—,

that they were just messing around, as if dating for two years fucking counts as “messing around.”

“Damn. Sorry, man. Well, y’know, niggas ain’t shit.” The cashier scans his last item. “I’ll pray for you, though. You got a rewards card?”

“Oh, uh, no.”

“S’aight, I’ll just use the store one,” he says, and pulls a barcode from behind the register. “Gotta uplift the race, y’know. Not like my manager in here to stop me no way.”

He scans it, and reads out the new total. Sebastian goes in his wallet for his credit card.

In the front, where someone would usually put an ID, there’s a picture of him and Ells smiling, with their arms around each other. Gritting his teeth, he pulls the photo out and crumples it in his hand as he pulls out his credit card. If DaVon notices the ball of paper falling to the tile, he doesn’t say anything about it, which is probably for the best.

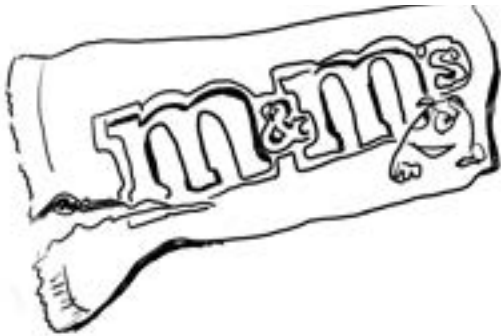
Sebastian goes to slot his card into the chip reader, and DaVon says, “Oh, that don’t work, let me—” and puts his hand out.

The guy takes the card, swipes it, and punches in some numbers. The high churning of the receipt printing sounds, and the cashier scrutinizes the front of his card. “Sebastian? Like, the crab? ‘Unda da See?”

Sebastian heaves a sigh. It is too late at night for this. “Look, man, —”

“I’m just messing with you. S’a good name,” DaVon says, handing Sebastian his card back. “Receipt’s in the bag. You have a blessed night.”

“You too,” Sebastian says, and DaVon snorts. Sebastian picks up his bags, and disappears through the sliding doors, the chime announcing his absence the only sign he was there at all.



Heavy On My Mind

IV The Poet

Passin' back n forth as we pass the time
Your eyes close slower than a broken heart
Pickin' my brain while the car is in park
I feel I'm creepin' closer to the line
I think of this happenin' to her, mine
Hidin' fears behind trust, slowly I march
Into the light, hope I don't fall into dark
Bringin' myself to admit my crime
Fulfillin' indeed, but not yet fulfilled
Foolin' myself just to fall once again
When I have what I need right next to me
Is this what I want? Am I bein' real?
Contemplate typing and pressin' send, then

You put down my phone and put in the key



Nyctophobia

by Solyana Bekele

Tomorrow isn't guaranteed. When I was little, I was deathly afraid of the dark. My mind would make up and animate the most terrifying, bone-chilling monsters every night when the lights were off. Some say this fear of the dark is tied to the fear of the unknown—a fear that likely kept our ancestors alive.

Now, in an age where we like to think most things are known, this fear of the unknown has stayed with us in a different way. The fear of the unknown is the fear of the future—the greatest unknown. Mankind has always fought this gaping chasm by predicting things about natural and manmade occurrences alike—the weather, a world war; but I reckon it's a losing battle.

Tomorrow will never be guaranteed. One will never be able to plan their posterity to the minute. This should scare any feeling and thinking human; it scares me to paralyzation; to the point where thinking or planning about my future is a dreaded, heart-wrenching task that I avoid at all costs.

It's no great help when these unwanted thoughts are thrown at you by your restless brain in the dark of night and you realize this: your desire to control the most uncontrollable aspect of life has kept you up till the break of dawn.

Maybe this is what it means to fear the dark; not the lack of light per se, but the fact that the dark lays bare all the things you wish to avoid in the glaring light of the day.

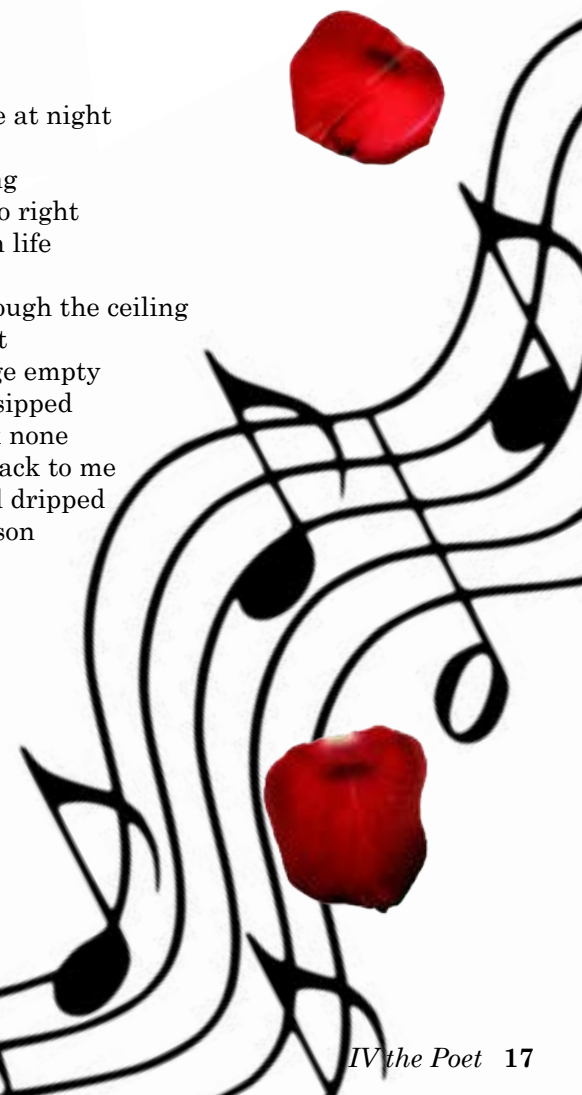








Jezebel Blues

IV the Poet

Beautifully Black would sing to me at night
Her ballads of a love unforgiving
Her tales tell of a man worth killing
To some, but others felt passions so right
Beautifully Black was at odds with life
Though her faith was unfulfilling
She'd cry to the stars all night through the ceiling
And the whole of the bar held sight
At some point she had left the stage empty
And as everyone drank, I had not sipped
A full glass of beer yet I had drank none
Because Beautifully Black wrote back to me
I held her the night after her blood dripped
Before I laid her right next to our son



Nice To Make Your Acquaintance.

by Samatha Galloway

I'm well acquainted with unrequited love.

The first time we met, I was 7.

I had just gotten home from school.

I went into my parents room to greet and hug my father.

As i was making my way to his side of the bedroom I heard him call me, what later became my

childhood pet name, chubbsy wubbsy.

After our hug and kiss, I left his room and went into mine,

shut the door, stood in front of my full body mirror, and looked at my body in disgust.

Our first encounter branded my self-esteem.

We had met up again and again throughout my formative years.

Sometimes during the night when my father would ignore my goodnight air kisses and well

wishes for him to get to work safely.

Sometimes during the day when my sister would ditch me for friends or lovers, even though I

asked her to stay.

Thus came the branding on my security.

In high school, we still kept in contact through my father.

He'd still ignored the same person he helped create,

had me feeling like I was the biggest burden on his plate.

Watching the favoritism between his three kids became too much to bare,

because the moments where i felt he loved me became more and more rare.

At a certain point I thought he absolutely hated me,

and when I brought that to his attention, he asked me, "how could that be??" telling me,

"you're my child, how could I hate you??"

In that moment I wanted to respond, "well, nigga you my father, so act like it fool!"

These moments branded my ability to receive love, this being the closest we had ever been.

Time started to pass and when the world went to shit, we became less than friends.

I was 18,

learning how to create a home in me,

trying to find that security,

trying to find ways to trust in me,
trying to love me.

I thought I was successful, but a year later we met up again.

This reunion showed its attendance had no end.

Their presence came in the form of an unanticipated friend and “lover”.

Initially, when this person and i met there was a slight romantic spark that hovered.

That spark ignited into a dimly lit flame,

as my anxiety became too great to tame.

That unrequited love birthed emotional turbulence.

I slowly became disgusted with myself,

and the thought of anyone loving me didn't quite make sense.

I sat on that mountains peak,

fearful that what would come after equated to more misery.

I was eventually forced into deep waters.

What I drowned in, I learned to swim through.

What was once a hurricane, became still waters.

I floated to land to birth my ripe fruits.

I created the home I longed for.

I restored the security that once was dismantled.

I created the love I desired from outside.

We create ourselves. We're always what we are looking for.



Rave

by Amarah Ennis

Pounding music. The bass vibrates through your bones. Lights strobe in colors you shouldn't be able to see. You could've sworn you'd drained the drink in your hand, but it sloshes across your knuckles as you stumble across the floor.

Too many people. You trip over a stray foot and sail towards the ground.

Someone catches you.

Unidentifiable. They're trapped in neon fishnets, dull rhinestones lining their bright eyes. Their hand travels up your arm, light as a spiderweb on skin. You shiver. They speak, and you read the shapes of their shiny pink lips.

Wanna get out of here?





Until Morning
by Layla Kennedy

Read Blue Only

Read White Only

Read White Only from Bottom to Top

Read All Together

What is it about the night that ponders my awakened thoughts?

When everything is quiet, yet screaming in my mind,

The gentle breeze that taunts me from the window,

The tunnel vision of your intentions, yet I still feel blind,

Or the way you circle through my mind more often than not,

Always feeling one step further behind.

How do you creep through my skin chilling my bones,

Do you like feeding me poison in my sleep?

Interfering my presence with your shadow and even so,

You break me with words as a fragile antique,

You crash through my walls throwing sticks and stones,

And yet you manage to have me under lock and key.

Am I just a pawn in your game of chess?

More of a broken puppet that is strung along

Are you happy? Are you proud?

Of always believing that I am in the wrong,

It's slowly eating away at me nevertheless,

On a wrecked ship of the night terror's siren song.

Yet I long to play and want to be part,

Wanting to know the monster that's under my bed,

Of being lost in the loneliness, lost in the dark,

Of all the things that are left unsaid,

Into the depths of the hole that lies in my heart

Here comes the infamous morning of which I dread.

Secunda

by *Anthony Akins*

The night is beautiful. The way the stars twinkle in the distance. The way the crescent moon glows down below. The wind is timid, yet powerful. It traverses the land, whistling in the blue darkness. It is never pitch-black; rather, the world is covered with navy blue. The clouds darken. The sun vanishes beneath the horizon. After hours, I come up to the hill just outside of downtown. The sky grows dimmer and dimmer with every step I take. A grandeur reduced to nothing more than a cluster of white lights. They are pretty to look at, but the darkness of the night fascinates me. It always has.

The ambience is beautiful. At the dead of night, the quiet becomes loud. I can hear the rustling of my boots as I trudge up the hill. The crunch of the grass. The wail of the wind. The chirp of the crickets. It's all loud, but never deafening. It fills the emptiness of the night, but it isn't noisy or overbearing. There are no people here. No children. No busy people. No roads in which cars go to and fro. Just me. The sound of my breath echoes in the night. I place a hand on my chest. THUMP THUMP. My heart beats steadily. That's when it hits me: I am alone.

It wasn't always like this. I used to come here with my friends, matter of fact. "Let's play Bucket Hoop, Sarah," they'd say, or "Let's study on the hill, Sarah" or "Let's tell each other secrets, Sarah." There was always something to do. It was never something I came up with, but something nevertheless. "Sarah" this, and "Sarah" that. I'd be lying if I say I didn't miss it. But now, it's just me. Times change. People move on. Yet here I am. I finally get to enjoy what I've always wanted. I get to enjoy the night for what it is. A lonesome girl who quietly enjoys the night, they'd say. Lonesome, indeed.

The sky is beautiful. The colors blend seamlessly, like someone glided a paintbrush across the world. The deep purple. The timid blue. The graceful indigo. And, lastly, the lonely red. I sit down for a moment to gaze at it, with my legs outstretched. The weather's nice enough for me to wear shorts and a T-Shirt. I take off my glasses and wipe the lenses with my sleeve. For a moment, I try to look at the sky once more, but it's nothing more than an aggravating blur. Dammit. My hair flows with the wind. That feels nice. I look back down at those tiny rectangular reflections, staring back at myself.



My face is stoic and blank. My sage eyes are dull. I am nothing like the night. I can't even come close. I am just a secondary piece in the grander scale of things. The most I can wish for is that my eyes can be like the stars. You talk nonsense, Sarah. I put the glasses back on.

The stars are beautiful. They never move; they stay there, sparkling and illuminating over the world. What's it like being so far away from the world, yet close enough to be gazed up upon?

When I was younger, I used to think they were guardian angels watching over us. The brighter they were, the stronger they were. My brother saw them as the spirits of our late relatives watching over us. Now, I see them as they are: simply stars. They don't have a conscious. They don't have thoughts. They don't move on. They don't judge. They don't leave you behind. They don't cry. They're just there; twinkling spectacles unwavering in the dark. They are always there, even when the sun is out.

There are so many of them, and only one of me.

Perhaps my reason for sitting alone on this hill is that I envy the night. I envy its natural beauty. I envy its profound nature and serene ambience. They were not able to see that. Who knows if they ever will? Perhaps it is selfish of me to come here all alone, wanting to soak in the magnificence for myself. I can't help but wish I'm a star. Sometimes I wish I never had these thoughts, and that I could go on about my life. They came to the hill looking for something to do, and I come here looking for something to be. But alas, we are second to stars. I can barely see ahead of me without these lenses. I hate it. A star doesn't need glasses to see. A star can bask in its glory all on its own. Yet, we attempt to match that with our city lights or flashy billboards. We are second to the night. It is no use trying to be greater than what we are.

Secunda.

The name manifests itself in my mind. I never thought to give this hill a name. Not I, nor any of them. Yet sitting here, all alone, the name appears. It's not intrusive or surprising. It's as if I merely discovered the hill's name, rather than making one up. I wonder if the hill wishes to be a star, instead of being the stepping stone for others. Imagine that. Others use you, they walk all over you, and some ruin you. I wonder if the hill has feelings. I wonder, does it envy the night? Does it feel lonely? Does it wish it could be something more? Secunda, away from the city, and away from everything else. All Alone. A lonesome land that quietly enjoys the night. Indeed, what a beautiful night.



A Brief Description of Your Love.

by Samantha Galloway

Soaking in the sun, it's warmth caresses my skin all over,
like the wind, I can't see it but i feel it.
Your love rejuvenates me, similar to how flowers feel after rainfall.
Your love is earthly as it supplies me with all i need.

Like dainty doves, your love is pure and delicate.
Your love holds hands with beauty and romance,
it paints a portrait of wholeness.
Venus and Neptune dance to your love, La luna singing them that beautiful
song.

Your love feels like music, its vibrations filling up the space inside me.
It's smooth like jazz
Soulful like neo-soul
Meshell Ndegeocello kinda soulful
It runs through me like reggaeton.

Your love is like a smell good, a signature scent.
It's yours and the more i am around you,
the more i familiarize myself to it.
I can recall who it belongs to, with hopes to find your presence near.

Your love is sweet like a southern grandma's peach cobbler,
it's wholesome like an episode of steven universe,
feelings of joyous nostalgia.
Your love is joyously nostalgic,
it reminds me of the best and safest parts of my childhood.

Your love reminds me of home, because it's unconditional.
Bringing out every part of me, your love is my home.



The Nightingale Dreams

by Iijia Dubois

Her voice remained harmonious,
and one could only imagine if she was aware of the world outside
Her voice aired out a hymn of longing,
for a time, or place, or figure who was long gone
The Nightingale cried, with the waxing of the morning sun,
and waning of the nightly moon.
She sang,

Cree, cree, chicory
Cree, cree, chicory,
My heart, it longs for thee

A song so sorrowful, we were covered in gloom for our formative years.
Each waking moment lay a reminder of the bird's loss,
Each incantation shrouded the lands with distant sorrow.

Cree, cree, chicory
Cree, cree, chicory
My heart, it longs for thee

She sang, as with the sun, she rose to chase whatever was ahead
Falling back to her perch, each dusk gameless.
Her melodies waned with her spirits, as she began to wither
Soon betrothed to her perch,
up lonely on the fig tree.

Soon,
The sweet song was all we had left
after her soul was called to serve some other.
Her song fell down with each spring rain,

Cree,
cree,
chicory
My
heart,
it
longs
for thee.

and in each gust of wind, the voice whispered its lullabye.



The Particular Shade of A Particular Time of Night

by Amarah Ennis

The shroud of the witching hour
descends.

It cannot weave a spell of comfort to us,
under these
thin comforters,

layered and
layered and
layered for
warmth.

We are cursed to burn alone
(together)
with our thoughts,
warm wax dripping from the corners of
our eyes and
leaving cracked, cold trails behind.

The shadows of our minds envelop us,
creeping inside,
flattening and spreading along our
curved spines
dipping into crevices
of bone and breaking,
(growing)
tree roots in concrete.

Oil in the bays of our blood,
weighing on arteries
(on veins)
spewing into our chests,
until our slowing hearts are

slowly dyed
two a.m. black



Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank our readers and our submitters. I am so grateful to be able to provide a platform for the amazing pieces we receive, so as always, thank you for continuing to give us your support. I would next like to extend my gratitude towards our faculty advisor, Dr. Challenger, for his patient guidance and enthusiastic encouragement throughout this entire year. He has helped this magazine grow from a tiny seed of an idea to the blossoming flower it now is. Additionally, I would like to thank the amazing Editorial Team: Alex Dameus, Angel London, Arielle Thomas, Erin Townsend, Jenay Conway, Nia Cain, and Zyen Smoot, for all they do to make this magazine visually engaging and to keep our website up and running. This wonderful team has remained so enthusiastic about the work we do and I cannot thank them enough

Thank you all for reading and supporting Hampton Renaissance.

Until next time,

Zoe J. Treadwell + The Hampton Renaissance Editorial Team

Who We Are...



Dr. Scott Challener

Faculty Advisor, Managing Editor

I'm a practicing poet and the managing editor and faculty advisor for the Hampton Renaissance. I joined the department of English & Foreign Languages as an Assistant Professor in 2021. I teach courses on twentieth and twenty-first century literature and critical theory. My poems and essays appear in *The Nation*, *Poetry*, *Gulf Coast*, *Lana Turner Journal*, *Mississippi Review*, *OmniVerse*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The Rumpus*, and elsewhere.



Zoe Treadwell

Editor-in-chief

Hi! I am Zoe Treadwell, a senior psychology major, English minor from Chicago, IL. I am the current Editor-in-chief of *Hampton Renaissance*. I love to read and write and am passionate about the work we do at *Hampton Renaissance*. We began this magazine in the spring semester of 2022 in order to create a space for the arts on Hampton's campus, and I am so proud of what we have made.



Zyen Smoot

Social Media Coordinator

My name is Zyen Smoot and I am a third-year English major with a concentration on creative writing. In addition to my major, I am also the social media coordinator for the Hampton Renaissance. I am in charge of posting, promoting, and, initially, hosting the events. I was born in Varnado, Louisiana which is an hour away from New Orleans. New Orleans is a city known for its vibrant artistic expressions. Due to its closeness to my hometown me and my family often visited and since then I have always had a passion for the arts. I hope to create the Hampton Renaissance into a safe haven for all artists alike and help others find their passion for the arts.



Arielle Thomas

Hi all! My name is Arielle Thomas and I am a second-year English major, on the pre-law track from NYC. In my spare time, I enjoy dancing, reading, practicing yoga, and exploring new hobbies. Currently, my professional goal is to pursue entertainment/real estate law and I also wish to study abroad. As a person who enjoys different ways to express that others express themselves, I am grateful for the Hampton Renaissance as a platform for artists of all trades to freely exhibit their literary works.



Erin Townsend

I'm Erin, a second year English major with a concentration in creative writing from Atlanta, GA. My hobbies are painting, embroidery, and now editing literary magazines. I love publications that add a visual element to written pieces, and my work on the Renaissance makes sure the same is true for our literary magazine.



Jenay Conway

Hello! My name is Jenay Conway. I am a third year English major with a concentration in creative writing from Fayetteville, North Carolina. My passions include creative writing, and sketching. I am proud to be a contributing member and editor for the Hampton Renaissance literary magazine.



Amarah Ennis


Hey, I'm Amarah! I'm a junior journalism major, political science/theatre minor from Chesterfield, VA. In my spare time, I enjoy writing, writing, and more writing, in-between other non-writing hobbies like watching anime, playing video games, and talking to myself. I'm happy to be both a contributor and a staff member to the Hampton Renaissance, and hope to see even more visual and literary works from fellow students in the upcoming issues.




Alex Dameus

Hello, I'm Alex
Editor, Artist, Poet, Musician
Biology Major, Pre-med track



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