

SPECTRUM

Art and Literary Magazine

"Energy"

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Energy

By: Stacie Hueter

Energy is the source of our life.
It keeps us moving, even in the midst of our strife.
From illuminating our homes and giving us warm sunlight,
to manufacturing products, left and right.

Energy helps us to speed up and run.
To bask in the sun, and have lots of fun!
It is responsible for our motivation,
And the cultivation of our dedication.

Without our precious energy,
Life, as we know it, would never be.
So let us keep energy rife,
because it is the crucial source of our life!

Editor's Letter-

Energy is violent and chaotic, the chemistry and physics that make up our world.

Energy is nuanced and delicate, it's how we treat one another, how we interact and how we make others feel.

Energy is our drive and our motivation. Some have too much, others not enough.

So tell me, what's your energy?

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Margaret Yotko



Margaret Yotko





Nelumbo Lutea

Dormancy; A seed sits at the bottom of a riverbank, minute and stationery. The harrowing winds of winter blow through the air, freezing the temperature. Blizzards and squalls are merciless, making the once-green trees look like lifeless corpses. But the bud waits to be seen by the world.

Germination the cold dark abyss disappears as the sun reigns by the world. A tint of green emerges from the brown seed, safe from the clutches of the frigid Winter. Snow and hail are now suddenly...

Plop!

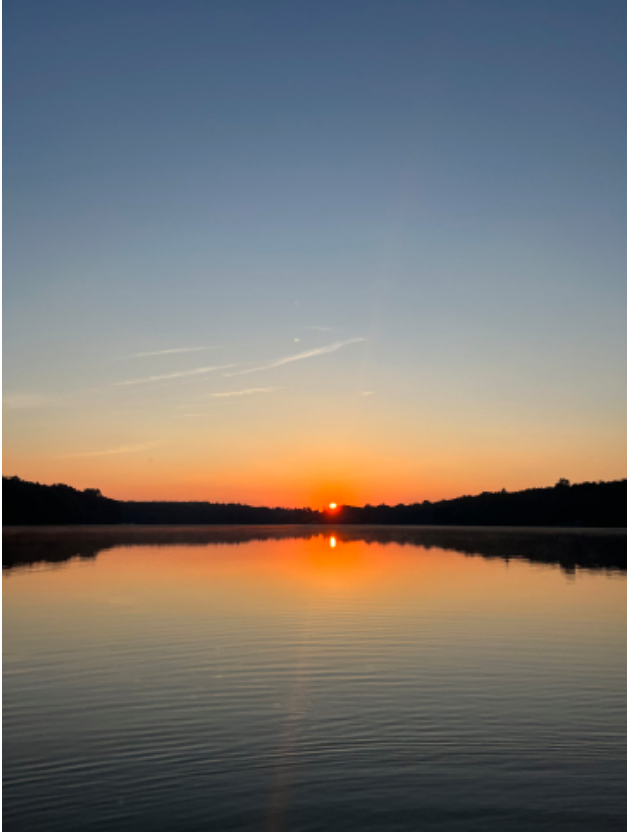
The rain's cool showers, and the green grows. A few centimeters turn into a few inches, and a few inches grow into a beautiful bud.

But it waits to be seen by the world.

Flowering; the magnum opus of Spring. Everything seems more beautiful. A kaleidoscopic world emerges from the same one previously tainted with white. Dahlias, Daffodils, and Carnations alike let out their true colors. And now it's time for the little lotus to do the same. The green bud transforms into a radiant yellow and white that illuminates at the sun's peak. People swarm around, marveling at the celestial beauty of their world of wondrous color. However, they stop and stare, and now people long to see the bud.

Stacie Hueter

Dylan Williams



How frightening the fact that the organs in the church still play despite my presence being there to hear its ring.

The priest utters his soliloquy, regardless of my ears being there to bear witness.

However at the same time the water in the fountain trickles in delight as the pigeons gather nearby.

Life moves with or without you being there as a witness; either engage or secede quietly into the abyss of solitude.

The moon shines bright against the old stone wall,
The cracks and breaks reflecting her turmoil.
A girl is running for her life, they declare;
From hearing the shrieks of her own name in the darkness.
It was midnight, not yet the crack of dawn,
As the residents of Gateshead were sleeping blissfully, unconscious of
their ignorance.
The towers of the castle looming far and wide,
Up above the branches shake; a forest full of memories.
A raven croaks
A black cat runs awry
Dawn turns slowly to dusk.
Her rosy, tear stained cheeks; vision slowly blurring
As the ground seems to sway under her feet,
Pulling her closer with every moment passed
Until she greets the earth with a pleasant embrace.

Patty O'Chair

Change With It

A poem on the seasons and human development

I wonder how something so calm, so serene, so clever can be so destructive?
 Like a present with layers of wrapping that never seems to end.
 At first sight it's delightful...
 but as I dig and dig and dig... it annoys, disrupts, and angers me.
 I look up to see faces and thy frown upon my discomfort.
 The silver lining seems bleak, as the absence of color.
 The soft kisses it gives lead to silent screams as adolescent lives wither away.

Green turns to brown
 Blue to gray
 Everything
 Turns
 White
 Small
 Cold
 My sense overload with icy peppermint and spices that burn as they claw
 down my throat

Alas, I can't help but wonder if those nights of fluffy snow exist to hug the
 broken...
 to let them rejoice in a voice that never speaks, never sleeps, just loves.

Loves as it hugs the trees to let them sleep
 As it tucks in the flowers so they can curl up into protected arms.
 Because everyone and everything needs a break.
 And as time goes on... the body heals.
 Flowers will spring
 And birds will sing

As we see vibrance thaw from the embrace of winter, and the color flush the earth...
this time the world doesn't seem so heartbroken.
Thundering clouds block the sun and cry out their souls.
Like humans as they walk by screaming; regardless of all the signs of pain that were given.
They take their problems and pour them in the world
Drizzle them through tears, violence,, and words shared with the means to harm.

Harm.

Flowers harm... they threaten each other, rip roots, steal homes
Trees harm... sucking the sun from the sky... drip by drip by drip

1

2

3

Animals alive

4

5

6

Animals dead

I guess maybe

Maybe not

That's what life is; guesses that lead to decisions, that lead to a new course

Usually earth chooses the same path

It chooses rebirth and growth

Then it goes on a vacation

It pulls its mask back down

and smiles at the sun that spreads the world with its butter knife

Teeth that shine and windows roll down
Wind blowing soft nothings and bees humming as they work
Everything seems perfect in this warmth

Now it's getting warmer
Warmer
Too warm
Hot
Hotter
Too hot
It's boiling
The earth is rumbling under its skin
Crawling for an escape from the overwhelming heat
It looks for... cold

It's realizing... that maybe some things of the past were right. That maybe it
shouldn't always be summer and sunshine
That maybe
Just maybe
A cold breeze should be let in
Because there can still be color in the cold...
there can be thousands of shades of hundreds of colors that exist at once.

Maybe this means that all the
White
Small
Cold
Things have
Vivid Yellows
Fiery Oranges
Powerful Reds
hiding underneath... they just need time to breathe.

So I look back at those words I said. I see the hate and spite I gave them. I see the mistakes I made... and I start to see the future differently.
I see how just like the world experiences different seasons as it rotates the sun... people see different lights in their days as they roll through life.
Some feel bad while others feel like summer.
Some scream for spring while others wait patiently for fall.
There's always change... despite repetitiveness
There is much to say about what happens in life.

There is neglect in the layers of healing our planet goes through
There are moments of hesitation and confusion...
signals are misread and people must fend for themselves.
There must be preparation for the worst and expectations for the best.
Some say lives are full of ups and downs...
I think they are full of seasons;
each filled with different temperatures, new growths, and unpleasant-but necessary-deaths

So I ask;
If we didn't strike deals with sadness and cold... how would we shake hands
with joy and warmth?

This is the question I ask...
and the
realization;
I hope comes as the
answer.

“All That You’re Scared Of”



“Nene Lindo”



Giana Mikula





“Dear Men”

Dear Men,

You have been in my life forever

In leaders to fathers and friends

You have taught me to be tough

How to “fight like a man”

The source of all of my anger and love

Enraging me with oppression

Consuming me with kindness

As a girl, I apologized for my existence

A bothersome object

And I still loved you unconditionally

But as I grow; I see the truth

It's not all; but enough

Where I grip my keys in parking lots

Scared to be alone in fear of your whistles

So I revoke every apology I ever made, unwillingly

You can deserve respect but not demand it

I know you were taught emotions are a weakness

But they are in all of us

Let down your walls doesn't define you

On behalf of women, we don't hate you for just being you

when you take our peace
screaming that we take up too much space
that is when my hands start to shake
the silence I hold makes it difficult to breath

We all deserve to be as loud strong and happy
As you want to be

So I am rewriting history
a world where queens are equal to kings
a place where people are honest and seen
Where schools that are more worried about learning
then how short a dress is
so I'm not sorry

it has been all these years
and still so many tears over
boys who simply don't care

One of you taught me to walk
Others to laugh, draw, and dream
a shoulder to cry on
enemies who were keen

So I will keep fighting like a girl
keeping my head up high for all to see
your power has no control
anymore over me

we will come by the Dozen
our voices loud and clear
our weapons, as Warriors
Breaking a system of fear

Violence is the gasoline
feeding the egos of the patriarchy
What you all need to see
There can be world with true equality





Giana Mikula





Stacie Hueter

“Fireflies”

Jaqueline Williams

Fireflies swarm my head
I cling to the little good that surrounds me
They buzz during the day blending in
Pretending to be something that they're not
You don't see true beauty, until there is pure darkness
They surprise you with their little bulbs
Mythical Quaint liars
I can relate
Sometimes it's easier to blend in
Pretend you are something your not
Brightness is found in the darkest of places
I imagine happiness is the same
When you feel like you have nothing left
That's when the dim bulbs blaze throughout the night

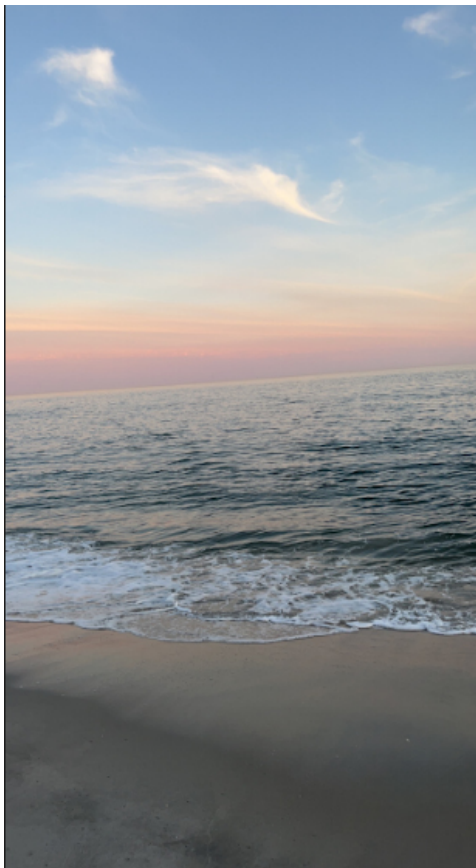
Leonardo Garcia





Stacie Hueter

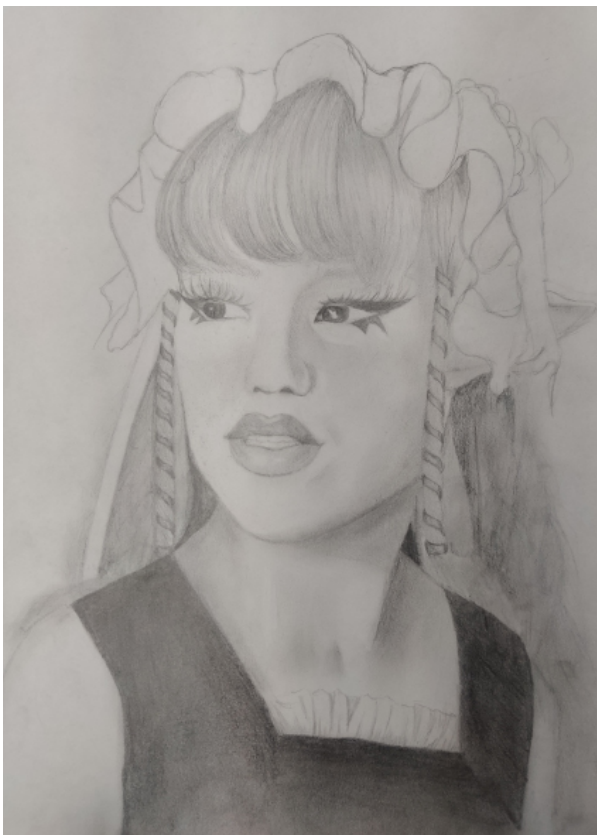
Michael Garczynski





Giana Mikula

Margaret Yotko





Taylor Odom





Leonardo Garcia

Athenian Wills

Ava peeked from behind the door, staring into the vast hall, the ceiling was sparse with glowing lights, enough to cast the room in light, yet retain a warm darkness. The hall was full of gods, goddesses, and angels, milling about as they exchanged pleasantries with one another. Her stare wandered for another moment before a hand reached out, yanking Ava back behind the door, and she turned to see the stern expression of her companion.

"Not yet. You'll come out when it's time. Only a little longer, now." Camila's stern face turned slightly anxious as she stole a glance out into the hall. "Remember, Ava. Show manners."

"Be charming," She interrupted.

"But not too charming."

"Don't fidget."

"And no falling over, tripping, knocking things over, or unwarranted jokes. Come on Camila, we must have drilled this a hundred times."

The shorter girl sighed. "I know, but it never hurts to--"

The sound of a fork tapping on glass rang through the air, and they both froze.

"Tonight, I would like to bring our attention to a special occasion. Beatrice, the goddess of--"

Camila pushed Ava to the door. "To the side, the side!" she hissed.

As the emcee continued her spiel, Ava edged her way quickly across the hall, standing inconspicuously near the woman talking to the crowd, glass and fork now vanished.

"Beatrice, this angel will be your companion, messenger, or serve any purpose you wish of her. I introduce you to Ava Silva."

Ava stepped out of the shadows, and with a few strides reached the tall figure. Pushing down the feeling of everyone's eyes on her, she dropped to one knee and allowed her wings to unfurl ever so slightly.

"Rise," A foreign voice commanded, the first time she had spoken, and Ava stood to look up at the woman.

She had a cold, stony stare, but not of unfriendliness- her eyes told the stories of a thousand battlefields bathed in crimson as the sun kept its vigil, of witnessing the rise

and fall of nations. A long, dark gray cloak hung around her shoulders and draped to the floor, from its fur lined collar emerged imposing strings, one adorned by throwing knives and the others heavy with trinkets, from ancient coins to what looked rather like a deer's skull, only the size of a mouse's. Her hand rested on a staff of gnarled, ashen wood, and Ava did not miss the multitude of silver scars slashed across her fingers and knuckles.

Beatrice held out her palm and as Ava did the same, she felt strings of ancient magic bind them together. After it was cast, she released Ava's hand, and the former gave a cordially charming smile bordering on a rebelliously foxy grin.

"I am pleased to make your acquaintance," She said, inclining her head slightly towards Beatrice.

Beatrice gave her a long, searching look, and responded. "As am I."

Ava stood by Beatrice's desk, the goddess quietly writing on a long, complicated looking document. Ava pushed her foot back and forth on the ground, having taken an interest in the tiles after the room had been exhausted of interesting things. Beatrice finally set down her pen and looked at her.

"I can hear that, you know," she told her simply.

"Ah," She paused. "My apologies."

Beatrice, however, seemed very unconvinced by Ava's passive apology.

"If you're bored, I could give you a few tasks."

"Oh, no," Ava faked an indecently casual tone. "I am fascinated by your... work."

Beatrice, being ever so polite, made an expression that was akin to raising one's eyebrows, but not quite. "This is a document regarding the terms of surrender."

"Was this a mortal war?" Ava peered curiously at the paper, catching only a glimpse of a few words.

"Yes."

Ava nodded very seriously, and Beatrice heaved a sigh. She scribbled a couple more lines on the bottom of the page, and curled it up before it vanished.

"What happens after that?"

“Nothing.” Her shoulders sagged. “At least nothing I’m part of.”

The next day, Ava stood for a grand total of four minutes before breaking the silence.

“Will you be at your desk all day?” She asked, unable to keep her voice from sounding a bit eager.

“No, I’m going to train later.” Ava was utterly delighted at the fraction of amusement that crept into Beatrice’s expression.

Later in the day, they teleported to a large, open plaza, empty save for the adornments found on the extravagant grounds of Olympus. Beatrice’s staff transformed into a sleek metal baton that unfolded into a spear, and Ava watched as she executed a pantomime of incredibly agile, fluid attacks. Beatrice slashed at her imaginary enemy with an utter look of concentration. Ava suddenly caught an edge of black on Beatrice’s face, slowly growing outward, and the angel’s brow creased, before she was once more distracted by Beatrice’s show of utter skill.

Ava closed her mouth when she realized she’d been gaping, and considered the possibility of asking to spar before realizing that it would be utterly humiliating as she was no match for the goddess.

And so, they went out, day after day to train, run errands, and sometimes just sit under a tree and stare at the beautiful landscape, although Ava’s glances were more often trained on Beatrice’s beauty. She was puzzled by Beatrice- an enigma that no one had solved, and she was determined to find out about her, underneath that stoic nature and awfully polite dialogue. It was not past her to casually mention a specific place she wanted to see, and feel far too much satisfaction when Beatrice took them there.

Eventually, Ava asked to spar with her, although the request was... daring. Beatrice and Ava stared each other down, both holding their weapon of choice.

She couldn’t help but feel a bit of trepidation, willing herself to calm down to little success. They held their gaze, and in a blur, Beatrice was at her throat. Ava whipped her sword up and barely deflected it, the force of the impact sending a shock down her arms and a loud clang echoing out.

Ava was inhumanly fast, but Beatrice was faster. Beatrice’s expression was fixed in a snarl as they clashed, sparks flying from their weapons, and Ava narrowly dodged a jab, bringing them closer. She suddenly spotted a light scattering of freckles on Beatrice’s face, and she nearly dropped her sword, leaving her defense weak. This opening was not unnoticed

by Beatrice, and she knocked Ava's sword out of her hand and held the spear to her neck.

"Forfeit."

Ava was still agape before snapping herself out of her reverie.

"Well," she concluded. "That about meets my expectations."

Beatrice arched an eyebrow.

"I was utterly smashed to bits in that fight," Ava grinned, and bunched up the bottom of her shirt to wipe her brow clean of sweat. Beatrice's eyes followed the movement as she lowered her spear, and Beatrice looked contemplating. "I could teach you," she offered.

Ava lighted up, and later, they had traded blows for near hours, and Ava was sweaty and sore after that.

Ava redoubled her efforts, determined to truly befriend Beatrice. But, she had hardly planned this endeavor before war struck yet again, and she followed as the goddess spent long nights poring over maps and inventory lists.

Ava tailed Beatrice as they and a great number of soldiers marched across a dry plain, vultures circling overhead. They heard a faint rumbling, growing steadily louder. Beatrice clutched ever tighter to her spear, her scars becoming ever more prominent, and a line of black dotted the horizon, swarming down the hill.

The crowd approaching increased to a thundering, and she could see their faces, angry and smeared with warpaint. They rushed forward, two armies, hardly noticing the moment before they met, the last moment of peace.

The armies collided, and Ava was a fiery whirlwind of attacks, utterly tearing through soldiers.

Beatrice efficiently burned through her enemies, a kind of grace to the unholy terror she unleashed on the battlefield. As the relentless swarm of soldiers poured on, Ava's arms turned sore and her endurance was running out.

She staggered as a spear clashed hard against her sword, thrust hastily forward to block it. Yanking it back, Ava moved to attack when a fist hit her head, hard, and she was disarmed quickly. Someone grabbed Ava's wrists while she was still dazed, and she sputtered when she was forced onto the blood-soaked dirt. She heard him yell some indication behind him, but paid it no mind while she struggled on the ground, furiously trying to kick at her assailant. Wretching her head up, he punched her again across the face and

she groaned in pain.

Suddenly, there was a scream, and a soldier was lying on the ground in agony, just one among the swathe of soldiers ripped apart as Beatrice slashed her way through, eyes red with fury. And when she spoke, her voice rang with power.

“Get away from her.”

In a frenzy, she ravaged the men, one after the other in gruesome and agonizing efficiency. She flicked her sword downwards, and an arc of blood splattered onto the ground.

Ava slowly got up, wincing at the sharp pain in her legs. When she looked up at Beatrice, she was taken aback to see black feathers jutting from the sides of her face, creeping past her jaw.

“Beatrice,” she said softly. “It’s okay.”

She stared back at her, wild and yet contained.

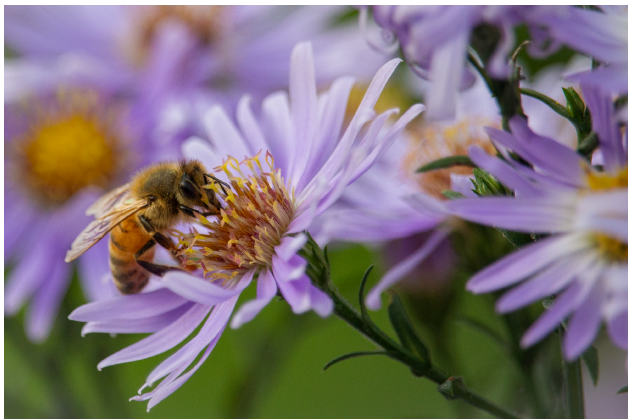
“We’re okay.” Ava reached up with both hands and held the goddess’ face, and the feathers slowly began to retreat, and in their place, Beatrice’s charmingly human freckles. Beatrice came back to herself, and looked at Ava, wanting to say something and yet bereft of words that would do the emotions justice. The sword fell from her hand, and she quietly embraced Ava. The battlefield too was quiet with only the sound of flickering flames and vultures, tearing into the massacre that stained the war-torn ground.



Taylor Odom









Elaf Mahmoud



Elaf Mahmoud

