

The Lanthorn

October 2020



“a broken body”

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from the editors

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking a moment to look at this issue of *The Lanthorn*! We hope you find something in its pages to challenge and inspire you today.

The theme for this issue is “a broken body,” something that seemed especially apt as we were reflecting back on all that’s happened so far this year. This year has made us especially conscious of the fact that we are a hurting people, both individually and as a larger body. Even as we dream of being a unified, loving body, we see the ways that we continually fall short of this goal.

Often, as I am reflecting, I think of the words from 1 Corinthians 27: “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” These words give me hope because of how calmly and firmly they assert that we already are the body of Christ, each of us members, even in our differences. It’s so easy for me to think of being Christ’s body as a goal we haven’t yet achieved, but this verse asserts that we already are this body. We are Christ’s body—just broken.

Christ's body, broken—an image that calls to mind the words we say at Communion: “This is my body, broken for you.” I hope that the brokenness we are now experiencing can be like the brokenness of Christ's physical body: something painful, but the prelude to redemption and reconciliation. I hope also, that in these pages, you can find some bread for communing—with God, and with your neighbors—even as we still wait in our brokenness.

Much love,
Ally and The Lanthorn Staff

“Hope”

help
i'm stuck.
it's dark down here

A hand from the top of the pit, reaching down

hey
i know what it's like down there

Gasping for breath
Head above water
A breath of fresh air

At last. . . I can swim again

“A Desert”
Hope Barnes

It's easy to get lost
When you only see one path
The same one every day
Never differing, the same old rocks and
dust
With not a soul in sight
Your mind forgets that there ever were
other roads
Or that there might be better ones ahead

[I am Sorry Kenya]

Sarah Halvorson

I am learning again,
of the red dirt and skyscraper land,
and the blood that stained the earth red
when colonialism was thrown down.
Why did no one talk about the revolution?
Why did they skirt 'round the subject,
at my international school, built in colonial days,
founded on privilege? Or was I not listening?
Instead, they taught us of Churchill,
called him a saint,
and Hitler? The devil.
And now I learn,
thousands of miles from home,
that Churchill was the devil too—
he used concentration camps on you,
only no one found out.
'If we're going to sin, we must sin quietly,'
Jones said,
and so they killed and tortured and enslaved
in hushes and whispers.
Hitler tried to hide his crimes,
but the world found out
and a nation was punished.
Churchill tried to hide his crimes,
the world is just finding out,
and it is silent.

And still when I walk the streets of Kenya,
a land I wish I could call mine, but cannot—
it would be unfair, the scars of colonialism run too deep—
When I walk the streets,
they call out my white skin,
bow down to my privilege,
and I am sorry Kenya.
My apology can never be enough,
but I am sorry
for what 'whiteness' has done
for what justice is not
for the hidden wounds that still bleed into your red earth.

If you want to see more of Sarah's poetry, you can follow her blog sarah.halvorson.wordpress.com or on Instagram @the_sojourners_post.



Art by Emmy Mulindwa

“When I feel like I have no friends, I have three”

Jared Malone

When I feel like I have no friends, I have three. Depression, Loneliness, Anxiety. See my friends come around but they rarely see these three. I've done well to hide them in the closet of laughter and smiles.

Depression is a big guy, my life has fed him well, with tragedies as a buffet and a few early deaths for desert. Depression is the friend who never leaves, he's constantly around draining me, he sits here, right there, sometimes whispering across the room, reminding me of all that's wrong with my life. He says, “You have no friends! No one really cares! What's the point of getting up today? You're just one man, nothing special.” Some days he gets up and sits on my chest and yells at me “You're nothing!” and he is all I can hear.

Then there's anxiety, my girlfriend, slender and small, her nails filed to a point. We've been going out since high school. She's held my hand day and night, through hills and valleys. She caresses me, oh yes, but her touch is not one of comfort. The sting of her hand is fresh on my face for every compliment I receive, she crushes my fingers when I text the girl I hope replaces her! And chokes me out when I'm in front of a crowd, and tells me of all the things I must do for her before she can leave.

Loneliness is rather new to the crew. He came along only a few years ago. Loneliness is a child, tiny, innocent, with a backpack he takes to school. He was annoying at first but he left when people were around. Then one day he bit me! Turns out he has fangs with venom to spare--see the bite was rejection from the first woman I found truly beautiful, from her toes to her soul, the venom was knowing she'd never stay in my life.

On the bad days, depression sits on my chest, anxiety holds my hands above my head, and loneliness grabs my legs. My friends don't seem to understand. When I say "today is a bad day" I mean they are trying to kill me and I can't fight them. Your "I'm sorry." Doesn't scare them away! I need you to help me! I need someone in the fight they're afraid of. They aren't afraid of my family, they've been around too much! I need my friends! Just one or two, to carry off loneliness and get anxiety off my back. Then, maybe then, I can get depression off my chest.

[We Keep]
Sarah Halvorson

We keep making the same mistakes
Writing the same songs to different tunes
Filling the earth's crust with the dead
Praying to the sun, moon, and stars
Hoping there is something bigger
Aching for love to bind us.
And I keep waiting for you,
Holding my breath at your touch
Crying when I find you're not enough
Refusing to believe it 'till you're gone.

[Untitled]
Caitlin Napper

Fire in the world
Consumes all that it touches
We are that fire

“Trying to be a Good Friend
In Four Parts”
Ally Stevick

1.
Every time you told me you were sad
I would insist you stop immediately
And give yourself to happiness.

I would give you evidence for why:
The low moon, hanging like a gumdrop overhead,
The painful yellow of the first autumn leaves,
The taste of your evening cup of tea,
And your own heart,
 beating
 beating

Beating on
With reckless determination--
Piping warmth through your veins day in, day out.

2.
I was unkind
Asking you to reason your way to happiness,
To feel the way I feel
As though you were me

Instead of what you are:
Another person,
Someone who I love, not for being me,
But for being you.

3.
I wrestle with your grief.
I long to wrench it from your hands,
Hurl it deep into the woods,
Let it decompose under fallen leaves.

I clasp my hands behind my back
To stop myself from trying.

I won't ask you anymore to force your way
To happiness.
But could I give you some of mine?
Leave it in a bag on your doorstep
Like extra summer squash,
Or loan it to you
Like a book for the long weekend--
A book I wouldn't mind if you never gave back.

4.
Every time you told me you were sad
I would dream how I might give you my happiness:
By a transfusion,
The very blood that runs through my veins,
The wet hope my heart makes.

Every second I spend gasping,
Hungry for more of the world,
Bursting with painful satisfaction
As all of it--

leaves, moon,
tea,
the air,
color, song

--turns to happiness in my veins.
And if I could,
I would give you every drop.



Art by Emmy Mulindwa

“Our God”
Caitlin Napper

His eyes watch over us
His ears hear our silent tears
His mouth speaks words of encouragement
His heart breaks and rejoices with ours
His hands sculpted us each in His image

“Sitting in a barbershop”

Sitting in a barbershop
Watching you get cut and make small talk
You
 you
 you.

sometimes it seems this is a day like no other.
Today, it's slow, but I'm here with you.

We got freaky in the bed my grandma grew up in...
We got freaky in the house my pap-pap will die in...
Minutes away from a new niece,
Hours from hearing that my favorite person took leave.

Will he fly to the sky,
Or will he take his time?
God please send him a chariot with new seats,
And please send us tissues while we weep.

I didn't know what it meant to be a man until last year
When my man asked me the question.
Do I know what it means to be a woman?

“I heard you like knives”

Jared Malone

I heard you like knives
The tools you used
Blue steel to draw out crimson hue
To draw out your pain
To make you sane
So you could feel alive again

I heard you like knives
I hate that you've used them
I hate you felt the need
I hate that you felt alone
I hate those scars on you

I heard you like knives
So I made you one
Steel as resilient as your soul
Steel that catches the light of your eyes
Steel as sharp as you

But note my dear, the will of it's maker
The blade may be cold but it was forged in the warmth of the
soul
The blade may bite but I never want it to
The blade may be light but feel the weight of my hands as I
fashioned it

I heard you like knives
So I made this one for you

“The Answer”
Jakob Knudsen

The sun is warm, the sky is bright,
but I can't feel it on my skin tonight.
If you were there, you would know.
You do not answer: I am alone.

This shallow smile sits chiseled on my face.
The ballad turns, I quicken my pace.
Tell me: am I a man, or am I a stone?
You do not answer: I am alone.

The days are cold, the cards are down,
and I can't bear this leaden crown.
Ignore the guilt, please, hear my tone.
You do not answer: I am alone.

Look behind this gilded mask.
Understand: that's all I ask.
I don't want to be your foe
You do not answer: I am alone.

Crushed and cut by broken vows
I think it's time I take my bow.
It's finally time you let me go.
You—

*No—no!
I won't let go!
You have never been my foe,
I hear your tone!
No matter what's set in stone,
I need you to know
You are not alone!*

[Girl in the Mirror]

I burned you out of my
journal when I was fifteen.

I acknowledged you with
written word

then set fire to your
name.

I did not want you,

did not ask for you,

and I thought I could
cure you with flame,

thought I'd never have
to hear your name

again

and again you came back

until I could no longer
deny

that you can't split
atoms

without extreme impact.

You can't burn a part
of yourself away,

it doesn't work that
way,

and I'm starting to
accept

that
you're here to stay.

Message from the author: Are you LGBTQ+? You are not alone.
Get in touch with the queer community at Houghton. We are
here, and we want to support you in your journey.
youarenotalonehc@gmail.com





“Deracination”
by Mary Hannah Kennedy

“From a Friend in a Frozen Hell”

August

It is very cold here
It seeps into my skin
Never letting me rest
My bones are made of ice
I cannot feel my feet
My face is red
I used to plead and cry
But the tears are frozen on my cheeks
It does not snow here
But it is completely white
Nothing to see
Nothing in sight
The cold is not only physical
But in my soul
In my mind
I cannot describe
They say to die of cold is best
You become warm and sleepy first
But not for me
It always freezing for me
My heart stopped beating
A long time ago
Its as frozen as snow
Then it broke
Into millions of shards
And fell into my lungs
My lungs stopped breathing also
The pathways are frozen
My throat cannot constrict to swallow
Or breath
Or speak

They sit upon my diaphragm
Useless
Like weights of lead
My eyes are so dry they do not work
Frozen in the sockets like cubes of ice
I have to turn my head to look around
But there's nothing to look at
There is nothing around
Not even a sound
But maybe I am so cold
That I cannot see anymore
My eardrums are frozen as well
And the liquid in my ear
That sloshes when you spin
Making you dizzy
I think that's frozen too
That's why I can't move
Or hear anything
If there's anything to hear
In this solitude



Art by Emmy Mulindwa

[Untitled]

Kelsey Silvernail

Can't fill in]he pieces of my heart
It's a puzzle with all the wrong parts
Never to be fixed again
Never to be whole

Happiness seems to be an unreachable concept
My heart broken to a million pieces
Just like shattered dreams
Once broken never the same
The pieces never fit the same way twice

“Kaleidoscope”

Sarah Burton

Pieces and fragments
Scattered on the floor and walls
Of a tiny room in a giant castle.
Personal room; a mess
Compared to others, bigger and smaller.
Does it make it more
worthless?
less valuable?
disregard-able?
There's peace in pain
There's order in the disorganized
There's beauty in everything.
The Light comes in
and creates a pattern in the room
From the bits and pieces
Scattered on the floor and walls.
The pattern is unique to all the others,
Uncomparable and magnificent.
Worthy, valuable, and memorable.

“March”
Sarah Mertzluft

The trees groan in the damp wood,
aching at the sudden weather change.
The snow falls at morn
and melts away,
terrified.
It was only trying to help us back to...
happier times,
when the snow was the least of our worries.

Oh sweet nature,
you are trying valiantly.
Alas,
the human cannot listen to you anymore.
Your creeks and howls
are just that
and I, mankind,
am far greater.

“Tuesday”
Ally Stevick

The leaves are dancing:
So many orange butterflies held aloft by the afternoon’s breath.

I dance with them,
Stretching out my arms, leaftip to leaftip,
Turning in the arms of the breeze,
Happy to hang in the air as long as possible
Before I reach the ground.

“Labyrinth”
Sarah Mertzlufft

I found myself floating
in the mist and the moonlight.
The red light found us,
the moonlight wasn't enough.

If I cried out to the field again,
would rain finally come?
If I cried out to God again,
would it finally be enough?

I couldn't find answers
in the stars in the sky.
What if it's just love in company,
and dancing through life?

Isn't that enough?

If I go into the world
will I ever remember my name?
If I cried out to God again,
would he speak to me in the flames?

“Perspective”

Eden Jones

Often when I look inward I feel insecure, inadequate, even ugly.

But when I look up, all that fades. Sometimes a horizontal and inward gaze can be so depressing. Looking vertical, I will admit,

I sometimes see clouds in the shape of question marks.

But there is something else too: a presence, peace, and security transcending words. And it is not long before I have tossed aside

my little bouquet of worries that I have plucked up from the earth, falling into Harmony once again.

“Teach me how to Love”

Emmy Mulindwa

teach me how to love

this day

even as I hate this hour,

last hour, this minute,

each second

can you do that, God?

“Celestial Reflection”

Jakob Knudsen

I might not be the sun

but I'll be the moon, if I can.

Pockmarked, space-scarred—

and still a light in the dark.

our thanks

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