

Sprinklers **issue 1**

March 21, 2014



Sprinklers[©] issue 1.

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Savannah, GA.



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“Everything is good!”-Meliah Adkins, Secret Editor

Heyyy,
So this is it! The first issue of Sprinklers. I’m pretty estatic considering this idea of starting an online literary journal has been playing in my mind for about two years. I’m not sure what it was but it finally struck me: just do it already. And here we are. I’m impressed with all the selections presented in this introductory issue. I found these pieces to be strong, calculated, and raw. Writing and art, among other forms of creation exposes us, and I’m glad these artists were willing to let us in on their vulnerability.

Thanks for reading. Let us know what you think.---V

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Smelling the Dead

In the shower, drunk,
piss lingers near the drain
as I force out the last bit
of your Juniper Ginger shampoo.
I roll round our bed
until its scent gets rubbed
into the linen threads,
until I get confused.
I feel the weight of your hips again,
skin barely covered by a silk dress,
pressing against the bed springs.
I believe the smell is coming from you,
those tendrils of molten obsidian
cooling on your back.
But now there’s only a few strands left,
nothing weighs down the bed,
nothing makes a sound above the static.
I keep diluting the shampoo
to make it last, but the smell is gone.
I see your loose hairs less and less.

Lucas Khan

Meet Me Anywhere

1. I wrote that i thought that I hallucinated a winged demon watching me while i stood at our stove, and looking back i realize that it's better when he's outside and i can see him, then when he's in me and i think he is me

Happiness is all about the removal of chairs. The reason, I think, that I feel so much more anxious than I did back then is that now

I don't sit on the floor anymore, when I get high and listen to music and stare

(at you)

I am convinced that we must learn ballroom dancing together, and reverse all the damage that these chairs have done.

We're made up of the same stuff as stars, and we are close to them like we are close to our parents. We love them and need them and don't want to become them, but we do.

we die and we do.

we Do. I promise you that we do.

(I used to worry that the medicine was just a replacement for religion and I was right because they wear off all the same.)

Outside of the bar, I told Frankielee that I spent every day killing myself and she told me that's what youth was about. She's been killing herself for a while too, but hasn't set a date. I wrote in my journal that personal growth begins with the pentatonic scale, and i know nothing of either except in sense memory.

2. I woke up brand new today.

My boyfriend's eyes are blue and I noticed them when I read his two dollar sonnets. (They were beautiful but I don't remember them anymore. You left the ones you didn't need in my journal and I still carry them around in my bag every day.)

I walked to pick up my car from the night before and found a \$5 tattoo on the way, and you met me there and I wished someone would draw comic strips on my legs like you used to. I was going to get this silly tattoo in your handwriting, but it didn't look as good as we thought it would.

My own blue eyes burn from last night's \$7 drunk. I don't remember what I said last night, but tomorrow my best friend comes back from the farm. She loves leaving, but I cherish her when she's here and nothing ever changes when she goes, because I am so certain that she's in the soil of every place I go.

I took a \$50 trip to visit the sand, just me and my man and all our favorite bands.

The churches and the plains remind me of Ohio when I was a kid, and under your Black Metal I wonder again how it feels when someone dies,

--and maybe if you don't answer the phone, you never have to react. I trust Death, and I think it knows it's place, but with you I was so worried that maybe Death would make a mistake because he forgot to write down how much I needed you and how I wasn't done memorizing all the places where your skin wrinkles.

but now the sun roof is open and I need to let it pull me out because I am alive and I am in love and I have never seen this road before.

I can't love anything until it's saved my life, and you save my life every day.

3. I want to have dinner with funny people every night and I never want to stop laughing. You stopped laughing a while ago. You play so safe with my body and I hate it.

Everybody here is making a mistake; I smoked a cigarette to remember that I hate the taste. This is me kissing you then.

I haven't picked up our guitar in weeks. I'm failing school from all the hatred and hash and maybe our youth isn't all that important. I like to think about growing old with you but I'm much too young for this now.

3.5 Someone else kissed me on the cheek the other day and I don't remember who but it wasn't you. I'm on the way to the airport and I hope that all of Olympia stays up late. I drink whiskey at an airport bar and read Don Delillo and realize that I could never blame my dad for trying to be so poetic even though there is nothing sillier than this stupid airport scene where I play the part of my dad and you play the part of my mom.

I'm so glad I spent the extra money on the good travel shampoo because I'm not sure if I miss home yet. I only brought shorts but it's cold in Washington in October and I wasn't thinking when I cut off all my hair and left. I'm going to see the city today.

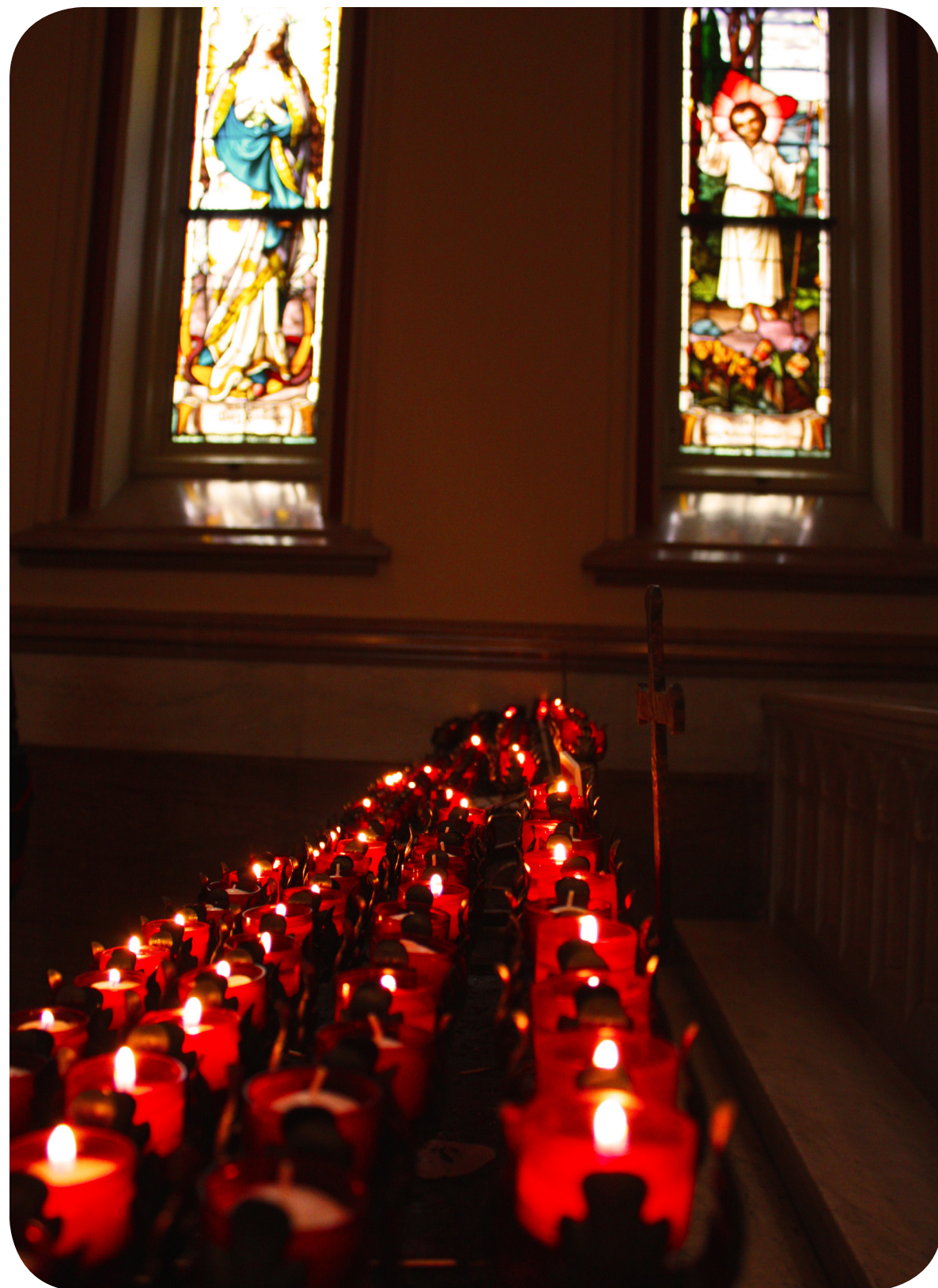
4. I saw a band in the street. They were dressed like blue aliens, and one of the singers held the mic with his teeth and he screamed with his throat like a banshee into it, and they reminded me of the fun bands we used to see in high school when someone's mom would agree to drive us to the shows 20 minutes away. The band kicked over a big bucket of candy and threw confetti and it was wonderful and I was excited to be crying on the street on a brand new coast.

5. My legs are making me shy. The cigarettes are better here. The weed is cheaper here. Finally I fell in love with a stranger at a metal bar owned by a man who calls himself the Demonic Dentist, and this boy listened to me talk and when I ran out of words and only had the wrinkles in my face he grabbed me by the eyeballs somehow and said "SHH. Your life is fine. Don't worry."

And what a lovely thing it really is, to be sitting on my mom's old suitcase on the sidewalk, eating airplane pretzels in Olympia in October, watching the cars drive by and waiting for my new best friend to shit in the grass before we head to the bar in the afternoon.

In my journal, I wrote about how I trained a scar on my face to heal in a certain way. I don't remember what scar that was anymore but I'm sure it's still there. So are you, baby. So Are You!

Samantha Severin



Prayer, Cannon digital print.



Imaginary Friend, Illford 35mm film, Illford fiber paper.

Me & Jesus in a Concentration Camp

the wind is yelping through the trees,
stomping in through the holes in the chain-link
fences. the moon hangs loosely in the sky,
careless and tired of giving us light.
you are there, the face of everyone i see.
the graves are full of you, piles and piles
of your body. i keep killing you, every
damn day. with a gun, knife, gas, starvation,
my own hands. but you keep coming back,
sprouting up from the earth like wildflowers,
looking beautiful as ever. and i can't seem
to stop, and neither can you. how long can you
keep reappearing, how long can i keep on killing you?
my hands are swollen from your tough jaw bone,
all of my bullets are in your corpses,
my knife dull from your tough weathered skin,
i am out of gas, and when you're starving
you never stop watching me.
you have only ever said three words to me-
hit me again followed by this look of love,
and i cry every night after i bury you,
knowing that tomorrow, i'll kill you again.

David Goins



Linwood, Kodak 35mm film, digital scan.

After the Tornado

After the tornado ate his shop, Daddy decided to take what little money the insurance paid and move us to Albany. Work had been slow even before the tornado, and I guess Daddy thought the move would let him start new.

He and Mamma quarreled about moving. Macon was her home, and Daddy couldn't understand this. His only connection to Macon was that he'd been stationed there before being discharged from the Air Force. I listened to them argue at night after my sisters and I snuck off to prayers and bed. Whatever started it never seemed like the sort of thing to precipitate a fight. But I learned to wait. Maybe Mamma would mention her garden club meeting, or maybe Daddy would talk about a building he had in mind to rent. They would chuckle at the late night comic; ice would clatter to the bottom of a glass. Another mention of Mamma's ties to Macon or Daddy's ambitions in Albany would go without a response from the other. I would drift off, either because I'd decided that that night would somehow be different or because I was just too tired to keep waiting. Just as I seemed to be dreaming, the storm would burst.

We moved to Albany in July.

Daddy found an old garage to open his print shop in. When I wasn't helping Daddy set up his new shop, I helped Mamma and my sisters arrange our new house. The house wasn't as spacious as our last, but Mamma and Daddy both insisted that it was temporary, that once business picked up we could stop renting and buy a place of our own. The house was on a lonesome street. No houses nearby, no kids to ride bikes with, just a large, rocky yard surrounded by kudzu coated pine stands and a cracked two lane road. The house had only two bedrooms, but I didn't mind. I slept on an old military cot on the screened-in back porch where I could stay up nights and read without Daddy noticing the little lamplight.

In the fall we started school, which I remember hating. I guess my sisters hated it too. Of course we missed our friends. Daddy was always gone to work before we woke up, and at dinner he spoke voraciously about where he'd moved this or that machine, an advertising man with promising ideas, a new wholesaler. Mamma seemed more tired than ever. She had stopped eating her dinner, though she still fixed a plate. As soon as the dishes were washed and stowed, she went to bed. At night, I waited. Ice would clatter to the bottom of a glass. Daddy would grunt at the late night comic. Just as I seemed to be dreaming, the storm would break.

I guess it was about that time I stopped praying with my sisters before bed.

I don't remember if my sisters were any good at school when we lived in Albany, but I know I wasn't. Daddy wasn't doing very well either, and one chilly night at the dinner table, as Mamma sipped her drink and let her collards and meatloaf cool, he said that he would do the very best he could for Christmas but that we oughtn't get our hopes too high. The important thing was, he insisted, that we were all together, healthy, a family. Mamma smiled, refilled her glass. dishes done, she went to bed.

Daddy loved all holidays, but Christmas especially. I wonder sometimes if he ever slept on Christmas Eve or if the excitement was in his blood and kept him awake until dawn. Daddy was never a beer drinker, but as soon as I rubbed the sleep from my eyes and shuffled into the living room—that Christmas in Albany and every Christmas I spent with him that I can remember—Daddy had a can of Miller in his hand and up-tempo Christmas tunes playing on the stereo and seemed just as happy a person as you could ever hope to see in your life.

Daddy had been right; there wasn't much under the tree—though Daddy had somehow managed to find the tallest and healthiest tree our tight living room could contain. Whether my sisters were as disappointed as I was or not, I can't say, but we all did our best to match Daddy's mood. Mamma, too, appeared happy. Daddy brought her a Miller with a wink and a kiss on the forehead as she settled into the sofa. We opened our few

presents. A pair of roller skates and a portable AM/FM radio for the girls. I unwrapped for myself a pack of baseball cards. And a boomerang.

Where the hell the old man found a boomerang, I can't imagine. Why the hell he thought I'd like a boomerang, I'll never know. It didn't matter. As soon as I unwrapped the strange thing, Daddy put his hand on my shoulder and said something of a kind I'm not sure he had ever said to me before or would ever say to me again after that Christmas morning in Albany, Georgia.

"After breakfast I'll show you how to use it."

I don't remember that breakfast. I don't know if I was too excited to eat or so excited that I choked the meal down as quick as I could. Either way, I sure must have sat in suspense for a long time. Daddy always had a big appetite. For such a small man, even years later as an old man, I don't think I've ever seen someone with such an appetite as boundless as his was.

It was a beautiful late morning. The sky was a vibrant gray, warm sunlight filtering through high altitude clouds. Miller in his left hand and my boomerang in his right, he led me out into our dry, rocky yard. He took a firm stance, like a pitcher on the mound, and explained with a slow-motion demonstration how to side arm the boomerang so that it would fly off and circle back to you. I wasn't sure that I could throw it the right way.

"Want me to go first?" he asked.

I did. I surely did.

Daddy set his Miller can on the dirt, dug his heels into the coarse earth, and cocked back his arm. Jerking it from spine to belly button, he sent that boomerang spiraling through the sky. I thought I could hear it whirl, with such force did it spin, but I knew I could hear it crash, get swallowed up by the thick, dead kudzu.

Daddy picked up his Miller can as I raced after the boomerang.

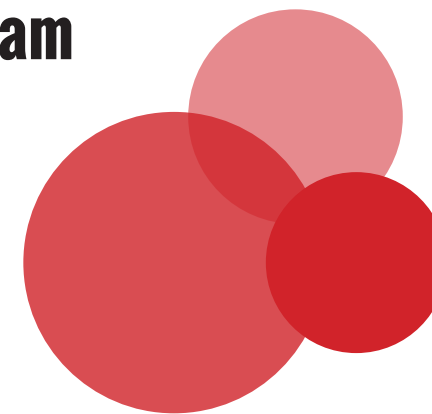
As I thrashed into the brush as far as I could, Daddy came over and stepped up on his toes to get a better look.

"I don't see it," I told him.

Daddy shrugged. "Well. Let's see if your Mamma has any cookies out of the oven," he said and walked away.

In spring, Mamma's brother-in-law offered Daddy some start up money, and we moved back to Macon, to old friends, to a new house. I had my own room again. Daddy's business rebounded, and that next Christmas he seemed to be trying to make up for the previous Christmas there were so many boxes under the tree. At night, when my sisters and I snuck off to bed, I still waited for the inevitable storm.

Tom Ingram



Autobiography:

“Writing makes me feel like I could be anywhere at anytime in any state of existence. Since I’ve graduated it’s been difficult to write and I’m trying to stay alive.”

**-Lucas Khan,
recent graduate
of Georgia State
Univeristy**

“Samm Severin is a dirtbag living in Atlanta.”

**-Samantha
Severin**

“I’m Lacey. I’m a copywriter with a BFA in advertising from SCAD. I love beagles (particularly my own, Digby), Buffy the Vampire Slayer, and my Pinterest which is full of beagles and Buffy.”

-Lacey Nichols

“I am a graduating senoir at Georgia State University. I live in Atlanta and can be found hiding out in my room, reading books or watching Parks and Recreation.”

-David Goins

“English student at Columbus State University in west Georgia. A father, who has worked painting fences, moving furniture, as a gas station attendant, restaurant servers, writing advertisement copy, and a few other things along the way. Lives alone in a little cottage by an overgrown park, and likes to entertain friends with bar-be-que and beer. Give them my email: tomingramga@gmail.com.”

-Tom Ingram

“Writing is catharsis. Someone else said that but it resonates with me. I don’t want to keep the stories hidden in my mind anymore.” **-Vanessa Escobar**