

Middle Cove

Isabella Wang

We see Nature retreating like tides, turning late summer Newfoundland into a tourist attraction for the capelin returning to spawn. A whale keeps the lifeless body of her newborn calf for 17 days: in the Pacific Northwest, we hear her mourning. Fishermen blame whale-watching companies that blame agricultural run-off, industrial noise made intuitive by the blow of propellers. We saw them arriving in pods along the BC coast—these whales that once impeded vessels—it was not supposed to be the other way around. The Coast Salish peoples banned from harvesting salmon, told to retrieve their dip nets and from hatcheries we'll release four million chinook salmon back to the banks of the Quinsam River and wait, track their movement, but there will be none.

New Growth

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So here we still stand at the end
of the dry season.

Another month has passed
before I've made sense of it,
though there's been no real change.

Smell of exhaust mixed with diesel fuel,
storm clouds sweeping air
that breathes like twelve
Marlboro cigarettes, all gone.

Still, there sits the summer-spiked
grass tanned like parched
camel skins beside concrete,
and still, down next street,
the lawn mower
makes use of his daily rounds.

And though this climate is no longer
temperate—fog blurring
horizon, maroon skies,
some species have managed
to survive this rainforest desert.

Because that is what we do: survive.
By the fountain,
the pink toddler in yellow
rubber boots trails
her mother
with storybook precision.

Each day, we can tomatoes
from our garden.
Each day, the geese fly
in a V-shaped formation.
Each day, I relocate spiders outside,
dust off cobwebs,
mop residue from window ledges.
Each day, I unscrew
the honey bowl lid
to crystallized ants
crawling to their deaths,
but each day, they keep coming back.

Despite the sunflowers
growing backwards,
dragonflies expanding
their wings,
crows nursing their young
by the dried-up bog
where mud has begun to crack,
we are left with what remains
of the Stanley Park swans
and the geese are migrating elsewhere.