time
(a collaborative zine)
CONTRIBUTORS

JOEY ZAVILLA
Twitter: @JoeIsSuperRad
letterboxoriginals.tumblr.com

ELISHA RUSH
Instagram: Pixel_Sunshine
Email: elisharush@gmail.com

DALLAS FREEMAN

COREY HUMPHREY

WILLIAM

KRISSY JOHNSTON
Instagram: shuttupkrissy

JANAE A RAE LOCKETT
Instagram: afroqn73
Email: lockettj917@gmail.com

LUCAS FAUBLE
Instagram: LucasTheChin
I knew this guy in college, George, he was in my English 101, and he would go to parties, get really drunk, and accidentally time travel. You would be talking to him, and then he would sort of stutter, except it was like his whole body stuttered, and then he'd be gone. The first time it happened, George was doing a karaoke rendition of "Rebel Rebel." When it first happened people in the back of the room thought he had fallen off our makeshift stage. Everyone in the front was looking around at each other, trying to confirm that someone else had also seen what they had seen. Nobody knew what to do.

A few minutes later, his girlfriend, Jenna, got a text. George was in the bathroom of a 24-hour convenience store on Beechurst, and needed someone to come pick him up. He thought that he'd blacked out, George did that sometimes. He though that he'd fallen asleep on the toilet in the GetGo.

He talked about a dream, walking through a city of white spires, surrounded by people wearing form-fitting spacesuits.

At first, when we told George that he had disappeared mid-Bowie impression, he didn't believe us, but a guy from my political science class had been taking a video for Snapchat.
It pretty clearly showed George vanishing, the microphone falling to the ground. There were a lot of theories about what happened thrown around at the party that night, but honestly we moved on pretty quickly. I mean, we all thought about it a lot, but there really wasn't anything to do. George and his girlfriend went home, so we couldn't perform experiments or anything. I heard the poli-sci kid tried to show people the video of George disappearing, but everyone who wasn't at the party just assumed it was viral marketing for "Jumper 2."

A lot of us had even convinced ourselves it must have been a prank by the frat party two weeks later when it happened again. This time George wasn't the center of attention. He was just talking with a few people about going to pita pit afterwards, then poof, he was gone. Only like three people even saw him disappear, but they were freaking out. None of them were there on karaoke night, and they started telling anyone who would listen that George had vanished. They were about to call the police when his girlfriend, she was playing pool in the basement, got a text. George was in the bathroom of the GetGo again. This time, he remembered wandering around a city that had been totally reclaimed by the jungle, huge animals meandered calmly through the streets, they seemed interested in him, but not aggressive.

The trips started happening more often after that, and they lasted longer, at least according to George. For us he always appeared in that GetGo bathroom the instant he disappeared. People were starting to come to the same parties as George just to grill him after he returned from his trips. They wanted him to find out about their future, where would they work, who would they marry, what were tomorrow's lottery numbers. George said he didn't know. He couldn't find out anything because he only had a few minutes, and he spent more time wandering wastelands then he did browsing libraries. Once, I was the one to go pick him up from the GetGo. George came running out to the car, dripping wet. He kept apologizing for messing up my car.

I said that it was fine, and asked him what happened.

"Pennsylvania sinks into the sea way too often," He said, "Way too often."

 Mostly because of George's inability to answer their questions, there was a group at the parties who were saying he wasn't time traveling at all. They said that he was just teleporting, and saying that it was time travel to impress people. One night they confronted him, said that if he was time traveling, he ought to be able to tell them something concrete about the future.
George had just come back from an especially harsh trip. He was in a foul mood, and didn't want to deal with these guys. "I've told you everything that I've seen." He said, "I don't know what else you're looking for. I'm not even sure the future is concrete."

The leader of the non-believers was even drunker than George. "You tell us something different every time! They can't all be true!"

There were people who were on George's side, people who knew him before the time travel. A lot of strangers believed him too. One kid even thought George might be some sort of minor deity. People on both sides were yelling now, the room was falling apart. This had been someone's birthday party, but it had become about George. Every party George went to became about him now. He was sick of the attention.

He was screaming at people now, screaming that he hadn't asked for this, that he didn't want to do this, and then he was gone. The yelling stopped. George had never gone on a trip twice in the same night. One of his friends went to go pick him up, but they didn't come back to the party.

Things started to go downhill from there. I wasn't there for most of it, but I heard a lot second hand. George was starting to take trips sober, at all times of day. He had stopped drinking because it seemed to make it worse. Apparently he went to a bar one night, and he had taken a trip five times, but even sober he was ending up in the GetGo bathroom at least one a day. George stopped coming to class around then, but I saw him a couple of times in the last few weeks. He looked pale, nervous, much older, like maybe he was spending more time in the future than in the present, but I didn't ask about it, just said hi, kept walking. I don't know why he didn't tell anyone. At first, he was afraid that somebody would stick him in a lab somewhere, but I can't imagine that would be worse than what was happening to him then.

One day, while eating breakfast in the cafeteria, he disappeared, and when his roommate got to the GetGo, the bathroom was empty. Missing person reports got filed by his parents, who didn't known anything, and for a while there were posters up around town, but nobody was ever going to find him.

Once a month or so I would go and look in the GetGo bathroom, thinking that eventually he'd come back. Then I graduated college, moved to Arizona for work, haven't been back since.
The Wind

It's travelled around the earth,
Basically since Creation, right?
I'm not sure—when did the atmosphere develop?
It's been around since then.
Since before the dinosaurs, I bet,
And will be around long after us.
It's seen some shit, you might say.
The pushing of tectonic plates,
The ocean overtaking small islands,
The extinction of countless species,
The creation of countless more.
It saw the first skyscraper erected into the clouds,
And it saw the first one destroyed through protest.
It's seen us smack a younger brother when he stole our toy train,
And it's seen us pick up the pieces of a broken bottle
Even though we didn't break it
And even though no one was watching.

-Cory Humphrey

Alive

How weird it is.
That you happen to exist at the same time as me?
Around 100 billion people died before us,
And who know how many will come after.
But, here we are.
Both human beings,
Both breathing air that may have passed you by just days ago,
Or even been inside of your lungs.
And now these words are inside of you—
Like a worm boring into an apple
Or wine slipping down your throat.

-Cory Humphrey
Final Award

Ms. Humphrey, so happy you allowed us all to be here
On this very special day—the day of your death.
We were able to predict it because we’re really fucking smart,
And it’s the future and shit.
It’s not worth explaining to you since your minutes are numbered,
But just know that we appreciate the invitation.
In this time when most would prefer to be alone,
Or to be with loved ones,
Not us.
Anyways, as you may or may not know,
We’ve been monitoring your actions and deeds throughout your time on earth.
I know you suspected you were being watched, and you were right!
We apologize for the intrusion, but
We had to.
How else would we know what lifetime achievement award to present you with?
So, without further ado,
We hereby present you with
The Dedication Award!
(Streamers pop and confetti falls)
You see, you are the most dedicated
To whomever or whatever your interest at the time.
And you show unwavering loyalty to those who didn’t notice or deserve it.
So, although you may not have been acknowledged by those you were dedicated to,
We acknowledge your commitment,
And we hope that this award is some small consolation
Or some large distraction
To your obvious next steps.
So, good day, Ms. Humphrey (or good half an hour, as it seems)!
Thank you for your service.
You will be not be forgotten,
For about a year or so.

- Corey Humphrey
I Visited a friend's garden a few weeks ago.
The too-rushed spring had confounded the foliage into a stunted growth.

I sat on a wooden bench and spilled empathy atop the jasmine fern.

I yearned for the confidence I would need for my future.
My friend told me not to worry so much.

He said growth was unfailing and boundless,
but it is hard to notice until some time has passed.

I was in town two weeks later
and decided to stop by.

What a difference it made.

Krissy Johnston
North and South

My grandfather invited me over
to give me objects to remember him
One year away from a century
Eyes welling, death lingering on the doorstep

My parents want to be Canadian
And I want to be Chilean
Conquering a new frontier as an expression
of American Identity
Why can't we be pleased to be West Virginian?

Correcting our tongues to sound Northern
We're not anything anymore
Just educated and aware
That we don't belong with normal people

-William
CONSTANTLY CHASING ME CHASING
ME SLOWLY ERASING
THE NEURONS IGNITING
AND FLASHING THEY PUTTER OUT
BUBBLING PUTTY THE HOURS
MAKE MUDDY THE MIRROR DEVOURS
PEERING INTO NEARING ENDS
LEERING FEARFUL TEARS DEPEND
A SANDY GRIT FILLED VISAGE FACES
WHERE I WAS THE GHOUL REPLACES
TIME AND TIME AGAIN

--DALLAS FREEMAN
UNLOVED, USED, AND ABUSED: WE ARE A
NETWORK OF CRYPTIC
SECRETS, OF PRIVATE WARS
EVERY ONE OF US
EVERY SINGLE ONE KNOWS THE
NEXT ONE'S STRUGGLES - THE NEXT PERSONS SHAME

MANY TIMES MORE
OFTEN THAN NOT OUR ABUSERS LOOK JUST LIKE
RIGHTEOUS, REGULAR
GALS AND GUYS
AND LESS LIKE HIDEOUS MONSTERS LIKE WE WERE TAUGHT
NOW SNITCHING, TATTLE TALING, AND REVEALING ARE
THINGS THAT ARE WRONG - FORBIDDEN AND BAD
OR SO WE ARE SPOON FED FROM BIRTH - SO
WE SUFFER IN SILENCE - WE KNOW NO PEACE - NO RELIEF
NIGHTMARES ARE LIVED WHILE AWAKE

--JENAEA RAE LOCKETT
My mom told me when I was younger I used to stare at her hands and tell her how pretty they were. I would tell her that I loved the shape of her knuckles and the way her veins were visible just under the skin. She laughed.

"You won’t feel the same way about your own hands when you are older."
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