

LAND

THE FRUIT
TREE VOL. 2



LAND



THE FRUIT TREE

MASTERHEAD

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dear readers,

Welcome to the second issue of The Fruit Tree, LAND! I am so incredibly proud of this issue, probably because it was a really tough one for us to pull off. Even with plenty of chaos and strife in the world and in our personal lives, our contributing editors worked their asses off to make sure this issue was the best it could be, and I love how it's turned out.

I have to admit, I was afraid of this issue. Not because the theme was controversial or difficult- in fact, I've been looking forward to an issue on LAND for a long time, and I truly feel the work we've published here is phenomenal. I wasn't afraid of the work I'd have to do to make it happen, either.

I was simply afraid that I would not be able to construct the best issue possible- and I've been proven wrong. Not only does this issue have amazing work from our own contributing editors, we also received submissions from incredible writers, and it's an honor to publish their work here.

As I mentioned, I've been looking forward to the theme of LAND. It may be an odd theme for a queer magazine, but the identities of LGBT+ people are often reflected in a unique relationship between the self and the land.

Due to our positions as liminal, marginalized beings and as physical beings, our connection to the land can overlap with ethnicity, race, gender, religion, etc., and this overlap is extremely valuable to analyze through creative work.

I am also extremely proud of a new element in *The Fruit Tree*— a list of resources, compiled by Managing Editor Ale E.C., for LGBT+ people around the world. Our contributors and readers are approaching our magazine from across borders and nations, and we needed to provide resources for those that we care about, especially for more vulnerable populations such as queer and trans people of color.

This list will appear in every issue from now on, and may be edited as necessary. If this list, alongside the creative work that we seek to highlight, can help at least one LGBT+ person to be more safe, more happy, and more proud of their identity, then this entire magazine is worth it. All of the work, the hours of editing and debating, is entirely worth it if it validates the queerness of a single person.

With love and kindness, strength and power,

Hollis Teves

Editor-in-Chief of *The Fruit Tree*

They/Them

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CONTENT WARNINGS

Until August: Animal death.

Serotiny: Body horror, violence.

let her down gently by Lauren Glevanik

everything comes together
and drifts apart.
the words,
the people.
ladybugs on the windows
come in through the vents
and fly to the stretched panes of glass
reaching for the ceiling.
we keep a dustpan and
handheld broom in the entryway
because there are so many on the windowsills
that fly and fall and die.
it makes me sad to see
so many ruby-jewel bodies
stiffened on the wrong side of freedom.
a gentle hand
coaxes a red-orange beetle onto its fingertips
and feet thud down the lumber staircase
to the front door.
little legs and sticky feet
touch the grooves of fingerprints
and puzzle at the
changing terrain.
suddenly there is no warm hand at all
but a patch of daisies
in grey april fog.
the lady bird, saved.

one out of hundreds.
gently, gently
let her down
gently



Big Crunchy Leaf

Nowhere to Land, Bee Carucci

You don't remember being born, so you only know what your mother tells you. She says you are a land animal; actually, it's just a fact of your life. She doesn't need to tell you, and yet it wasn't knowledge you owned when you were born—was it? You suppose you look like other land animals, you share similarities enough with your mother to pass. (Pass? Pass for what?)

Your brother is a sea creature. This makes sense because he looks different, sounds different from you. He's more like your father than your mother, or so you're told. They're all individuals so you don't really see resemblance between any of them. But Brother and Father have scales; you and Mother have fur. That's supposed to mean something, like your roles are set once you are born and sorted.

When you are young but not a child, older but not fully grown, you hear of other beings besides those of land or sea. There are whispers of animals who live in the sky, who only come down to feed and rest (your mother says those people are just land animals with big ideas). There are people who live not on or above the land, but *below* it, where there is water to drink and light that doesn't come from the sun. Your mother says these people are simply in denial, they want to be different so they pretend they're something they're not. If they live a dry life, they belong on land; if they live wet, they belong in the sea. It's that simple.

You don't know what you are. You know what you've been told by others yet your self has not spoken to you. You want to explore the possibilities of these other lives—maybe that will help you hear your own voice. When you leave the valley you have spent your life in, your mother says Goodbye and See you soon. To her, your return is definite and near. You have no evidence to the contrary, so you simply hug her, silently.

You haven't seen Brother or Father since you were old enough to know the difference between land and sea. That knowledge is failing you now, so you set off for the coast first. Father and Brother are surprised to see you—visits only occur when a child comes of age or an adult wishes to mate. Otherwise, creatures stay within their own environs. They love you, but they do not know why you are here. They just wait for you to return to Mother: your answer is not in the sea, though it is a nice change from the dryness of grass and sun.

The coastline is claimed by neither land nor sea, as it is too different and similar at once. You recognize this feeling. You are not sure if this is where you belong, but you feel it can be your resting place between journeys. After a break, you go next to a landmark the locals call a cave: it is dark like under water, but hard like land. It drips damp, but a body must breathe air to survive in the dark. Here, too, you find part of yourself in this rock formation that straddles sea level, dipping and rising like the tide. The echoes teach you that yes, you have a voice, even if you can't quite hear it yet. Even if you only know yourself

through what you are not: simple, straightforward, static.

The domain you saved for last is the one you consider hardest to reach: the sky. Surely, unless you were born with wings-- Whings? Weengs? The soft sand of the coastline only said it once, when no one else was around-- you could not get there. What are these 'wings?' What do they do? A breeze sees you, and calls out:

Child, what keeps you on the ground? Surely you can feel my warm air caressing your cheek?

You sigh, because you have no words even though you should have words, but a breeze knows the language of breath, and answers you. What do you mean, you can't fly? Have you ever tried before? Sing to me, please, it's been so long since I've met someone new.

You don't have the lips for Landspeak, or the teeth for Seatongue, and the silence of the cave is still beyond you. You try anyway: You push out air to meet the breeze, and it flows past your sharp mouth. The breeze responds, There's nothing to it! Just open your wings, and I'll do the rest! Let me show you what you're missing.

But I don't have any wings...Do I? Is that what these are? My mother said they were arms, and Father said they were fins, and the cavern creatures didn't know what they were at all.

The breeze blows gently by my ear: Do you want them to be wings? Do they feel like wings? Then they are.

I want them to be mine, I say. I want to know what I am.

And the breeze laughs joyously. What you are?

Why, you are You! Yes, it is quite impressive I must say.

But I've travelled so far, I protest, and I still don't know where I belong or what my voice sounds like.

Well, where are you comfortable?

I don't know yet. I just know it's not where I started.

That's something! Let me tell you a secret: there are people who don't belong anywhere, in the usual sense.

They live in one place in spring, or another in winter.

Others travel to give birth, then return home. You know... there are many other places to discover. Have you ever heard of lakes? Rivers?

No.

Would you like to?

The Coast by Csilla Richmond

My first step is into darkness,
wet and cold.
The trees are old

Old, old.
There are faerie rings
and yes, children disappear

Here.
All the time.
Physically or metaphorically.

It's a rabbit hole.
Time is flexible,
mutable.

Debatable.
It's different magic.
Green magic.

Life magic.
Wild magic.
Whatever you call it.

One day the ocean
will swallow me whole.
And who will know?

The dust has been
calling my name
from 400 miles away.

But I am here,
first quenching
my own thirst.



I Can See My Depression From Here

Campland by Kate Minzner

CAMPLAND 1

“I think it’s places like this that convince me God is real,”
She said, the sunset matching her every step.
I said nothing as I was not yet convinced,
But two friends at a lake at sunset was enough to make a
memory.

CAMPLAND 2

“I think God was with us tonight,”
He said, joking with us as the night drew late.
They all laughed, and yet, surely
God could be here amidst the blanket forts and fireworks.

CAMPLAND 3

“I’m sure that God is here,”
The mountains whispered, dancing with the highway as we left.
We sang along to songs we’d seldom heard before,
And I realized God might not be what I was taught in school.



*There's An Orchid Farm In The Middle Of
A Lake and A Kind Man Wakes Up Every
Day At Five Every Day To Water Them.*

something like a memory by Grace Nim

under and out, over and in, our feet follow one another
phone flashlights lead the way
cold, cold sand crunch
we missed the sunset
“we’ll catch it on the way back”
you snort, i laugh
funny, how the waves swallowed sound too.

tangerine tongue tangling, touching, tracing
your mouth’s shape, my favorite kind of puzzle
fingers catch on dried sea-salt-spray
we could never have enough
never enough time
time to move, to stay, to be, to love
the bits in between you and me

the dark made it easy, the cruel water whispering
all the things we needed to feel:
deep dark dreams dead to me



Untitled by Natascha Woolf

Well Met, Celestia by Zan Locke

Welcome, welcome, sons of man. I feel your reach across the waves. I hear your stories, strong and vibrant in my blood. Rest your flesh beneath the green, a verdant canopy of breezes, rest your souls here in immortal reverie. Slide your ships upon my swells, sky bright waters as your berthing, as your longboats cleft the whiteness of my shore. The birds will sing you lullabies and gentle rains will come with dawning to slake your thirst and bear away the salt of tears. Fruit and nectar for your hunger as the singers calm your nightmares, while the children of my bounty learn your tales. Delight us through with wondrous treasures, ringing bells and scents of dreamlands, but still the sharpness of your blades to listen well. Still the darkness in your hearts to learn our songs. Only listen to our stories and you'll learn.

Come away my trusting children, for these creatures know no mercy. Do not share the glow of treasure or your name. Flee the fires and ringing bells, blades that flash like bitter lightning. Place no trust in hollow smiles or lying eyes. Keep the secrets of the west wind for their spirits value nothing, only blood and gold appease their wicked god. Do not leave your virgin sisters there to laugh around their night fires. Hide your children and your souls and all you are. They will look upon the green leaves flexing gently in the night wind, they will see red hungry flames and empty ash. They will look at sky blue waters and imagine bloody currents with the bodies of our brothers left

to float. They will smear the air, Celestia, block your light with smoke and dogma and hide away the sacred dream of wings to fly.

Though we've no breath left for mourning, palms still ripple in the azure. Clouds still play at kiss and race me with the waves. The stars remain, though very distant, shuttered now and dimly whispering, waging war with what they've built, a billion suns. The great exhaust occludes Celestia, beckoning ever in her glory, offering infinite space unbound by mortal dreams. So stare they down to Hell instead, a vista formed by earthly madness, as vast unfettered and still more welcome than the sky. A pit to smolder, souls to ravish, flesh to flay and dreams to drown in. There is no grace left for the stories seldom told. And so the cold and echoing silence stretches over this Elysium and the sleep of sorrow gathers in my bones.

All the interlopers dust, no more now than dreams remembered, slaughtered by the very world that gave them breath. Once again the blood runs thin, too weak to salve old crimes remembered or to nourish soil with seeds of future tales. Welcome, welcome, bring your memories. Bring your pain and love and laughter. Merge your greatest lies of history on my shores. Birth hybrid lips to sing creation, urge us on to future glories, where the whisper of the night wind cools old fires. We wait on white uncertain beaches for new ships to come, Celestia, bearing blood and star-birthered stories in their wake.



That Girl Walked Into My Shot

Queridisima Jin Sol by Raquel Robinson
Bours

How have you been?

Has the new year been treating you kindly? Do I need to have words with it?

I was delighted to hear about your new job. I can't wait to hear more about it!

Oh. I miss you, Sol. I miss you so much.

Is it strange that I'm writing to you when I know a text will get to you faster?

I know I'll see you in the summer, mi Sol. I know, but the winter barely lets you shine through the haze, and the months I have to live without you are dreary.

I look forward to the days when I see a smile light up your face.

I look forward to the days with you in general.

I sent you a letter recently.

I sealed it with a girasol.

Did you know that "girasol" (sunflower) means "turning towards the sun"?

I felt it fitting that my letter be stamped with a flower that's always looking for you, Sol.

I hope it gets to you quickly. I hope my love reaches you quickly. I am always turning towards the sun in the hope that the feelings I send it reach you faster.

Love,

Chosen Home by Rachel Egly

1

Here the large windows stave off seasonal depression,
slow smiles strip paint from the bathroom ceiling,
foreign skin becomes a wall
socket I keep digging my fingers into.
Once I find the perfect creature I call her Ophelia
since love is always our undoing and under
my care she slowly grows less afraid of the water.

2

200 miles north, my father curves my mother
through the streets like a new car. House, bones, daughter
complain of age; he ignores
them all, but for a good reason. With steady
hands he denies some freedoms, but for a good reason. In the
front yard a litter of young rabbits leave the nest
and bound away, ready to eat, fuck, and be eaten.

3

200 miles south, humans mine along the fault
for their inky water. Metal meets bare earth
gently but with momentum;
in and out, in and out, until energy
thick and sweet like molasses is brought to the surface. In this
field there are too many oil drills with moving parts
but still their tenderness is steady and certain.



Grace & Janis by Natascha Woolf



So this is why I hiked for two hours

Almost a dream by Grace Nim

S chase the s sounds around a tree and into the fall
Cutting the grass, tails tangle, trip-trip, out of my mouth
The words— your words— taste better than I remember

Ending with a sob and a scream.

GREAT TREE by Hollis Teves

After a storm, a tree fell
at the ranch and
it was a great tree;
not great from size
(because to be honest it
was not that big),
and not great from
some divine awe
(it was not a burning
bush),
but great
because it gave the
animals some shade,
and because
even after it fell,
it did not fall
in pieces but
in one strong
piece with roots
skyward,
and it fell with
no sound.



I'm Legally Changing My Gender

Until August by Ale E.C.

Content warning: Animal death.

Someone had forgotten to turn off the school bell. It rang through the hallways, through the closed white doors of the classrooms, and spilled onto the yard. For the first time in who knows how long, birds stayed away from the pale-pink school building, preferring instead to roost in less noisome palm trees and the occasional tool shed roof.

In time, of course, they grew accustomed to it. One by one, birds returned to the lawns. The crows were the first. American crows are scavengers, well used to the clunks and bangs of garbage trucks. A school bell would not keep them away long. A single hawk was next, but only at a distance. He hovered overhead, dipping and circling in the wind, but never actually landing on the lawns. The crows underneath mirrored his movements as they searched for small invertebrates and seeds. A few squirrels attempted a charge through the yard. That was the first time the hawk descended fully onto the grass.

The school bell rang.

The crows ate most of what stood a chance to sprout, but still, some seeds managed to do so. And so the lawn grew as lawns do, sprouting rough patches in strangely shaped lumps, while other areas grew dry, yellow and brittle, crackling as they bent in the rare July breeze.

It was during this time that the house sparrows returned. One noon they returned in droves, skittering onto

the tile roof before making their way to the concrete edges of the yards. One crow gave chase. Six sparrows alighted. All eventually settled down. The birds mostly spent their time plucking at the ground and roosting. The crows went somewhere else to sleep, but the sparrows slept on the trees that lined the yard. The coral trees made for sturdy resting places, with their thick branches and palm-sized green leaves. The sparrows crowded together in between where the branches met, where the trees' thorns had been made smooth by sneakers and unlucky hands, as well as by the occasional rock. Seed pods swung from the branches around them. Some lay scattered on the sand below, glinting red where they had been broken.

The school bell rang.

One sparrow, a male with a black bill and throat, was the first to go through the window. Another mistake had been made; a fifth-grade classroom's window had been left cracked open. A small streaky handprint marked the glass, but it served mostly as evidence of the classroom's use rather than necessarily identifying the perpetrator. The sparrow did not seem to notice the handprint, nor did it stop to look at the letters still written on the chalkboard, or at the large and lopsided smiley face drawn underneath in powder-blue chalk. It ignored also the colorful bulletin board with its cows in uniforms (policemen, mailmen, teachers, surfers, ballerinas...), the colorful handprint mural on the other wall, and even the yellow sweater with black buttons which had been left on the last desk in the third row.

The sparrow did, however, approach the trash can, though its painted black splotches did not seem to be what had caught his eye. He hopped onto the brim and, in that time-slanted way that birds that size have, plucked a cupcake wrapper from the trash can. The school bell rang, loud enough to make him fly back out the window, but predictably enough to make him not drop the wrapper.

A few visits later, the sparrow stood inside one of the desks. It was a wooden desk, old, just like all of the others lined up in that room. It looked more like a sled than any sort of school equipment. It had a wooden box, meant for children to store their books in, and a lid for the box which served as a table on which they could write. It included, of course, a wooden chair, with legs just thick enough to support its own weight. The desk the sparrow was standing in had been left propped open. It was empty, mostly, though an ungraded school assignment was crinkled up in one corner, and some pencil shavings curled and mouldered in another.

As the weeks went on, more papers (some from the trash can, some from other places) as well as drying stems and leaves found their way into the desk. Eventually, another house sparrow (a female one, her plumage almost entirely brown) joined him in the desk, and began bringing twigs in as well, though less often than the male. On one of their trips, both sparrows flew over something drowned on their way back inside. A gray kitten, small, less than two weeks old, bobbed in the water. The birds did not stop. It would have been too heavy and too cumbersome to use for

their nest.

One week later, six eggs, greenish white and speckled with brown, the exact shade of the dry dust that had accumulated on the windowpanes and windowsill on the other side of the room, were carefully cradled under both of the sparrows. It was a large clutch, but still manageable. At night, the male roosted either next to the female or close nearby, and he spent most of his days bringing her chip fragments and small insects. Another sparrow, a male, flew in after him on one of those trips, but he was quickly and loudly forced back outside by the first sparrow. The kitten had been plucked out of the pool by then. A scattered bunch of bones, thin and picked clean, stood in the shade, close to the water. A tuft of gray fur, matted together, was stuck under the tiny ribcage, but the wind soon forced it on its way.

Thirteen days later, the first chick was born. She wobbled out of her shell, wet and naked and loud. Her mother warmed her as her father brought them both caterpillars. The rest of the eggs hatched within the next hour. Four of the chicks were male and two were female. The females were slightly larger and more aggressive than their brothers, and would jostle them out of the way as they moved. Their mother brooded over them even after they had been born, since, like all house sparrows, they were born without sufficient covering to face the cold that had started coming in. Four days after they had cracked open their eggshells, their eyes opened. They toddled around the desk, rubbing their bald heads on the smooth wooden sides,

nestling into the softness of their floor, and eating all that was offered to them by their parents. Their down started coming in eight days later. All was well.

The school bell rang.



Whoa Aliens

*Serotiny** by Rachel Egly

Content warning: Body horror, violence.

I stand tall under the operating room lighting
of my father's kitchen. Laid out as I am with
skin sterilized and cut back,
nerves and organs exposed, I tell him
I am bi.

I can smell our dinner beginning to burn.
He stands at the stove with his back to me and tells me
it will pass.

Do mountains come to pass?

I understand mountains.
Although their spines are strong,
they have been molded, soothed;
caressed as they are by water
for millions of years.
Their worn-in bodies become homes
for so many animals, plants, trees.

*Previously published by *Rising Phoenix Review*.

I read once about a kind of pinecone that will
only grow after it has been
set on fire.

Serotinous, they are called.

High in the same mountains, their parent trees
wait for wildfires to sacrifice themselves
for their seedlings.

I stand tall at your side, finally
playing myself in this grand opera.

Say I'm no longer acting.

Say the stage is on fire and I can feel
the wild heat of it,
can hear its lyric burning,

but I do not shy away like a frightened
animal;

Instead, I take your hand and sing along
while the flames finally find me.

LGBT+ RESOURCES

When we first started planning out The Fruit Tree, we considered it essential to include some sort of LGBT+ resource list within it. Somehow, in the chaos of creating our inaugural issue, we ran out of time in that regard (as well as a few others, which will hopefully be incorporated later on). Now, however, we've remedied that. Rejoice!

Note: given a lack of time, as well as several language barriers, we have been unable to fully vet these groups. Please research any carefully before attending any of their events or anything of the sort. Still, we hope this is still a useful resource for our readers!

Armenia:

PINK Armenia (<http://www.pinkarmenia.org/en/>)

Australia:

Diversity ACT (<https://diversityact.org.au/>)

PFLAG Australia (<http://pflagaustralia.org.au/>)

Transgender Victoria (<https://transgendervictoria.com/>)

Austria:

Rainbow Campaign (<http://www.rainbowcampaign.com/imprint/>)

Bangladesh:

Boys of Bangladesh (<http://www.boysofbangladesh.org/>)

Belize:

United Belize Advocacy Movement/UNIBAM
(unibam.org/)

Canada:

Egale (<https://egale.ca/>)
Pride Center of Edmonton (<https://pridecentreofedmonton.ca/>)
QMunity (<https://qmunity.ca/>)
Rainbow Resource Center (<https://rainbowresourcecentre.org/>)
Centre Communautaire LGBTQ+ de Montreal (<http://www.cclgbtqplus.org/>)
UR Pride Centre for Sexuality & Gender Diversity Inc.
(<https://www.urpride.ca/>)
OUT Saskatoon (<https://www.outsaskatoon.ca/>)

China:

Beijing LGBT Center (<https://www.aibai.cn/>)

Colombia:

Colombia Diversa (<http://colombiadiversa.org/>)

Croatia:

Zagreb Pride (zagreb-pride.net/hr/)

Denmark:

LGBT Danmark (<http://www.lgbt.dk/>)

Estonia:

The Estonian LGBT Association (<https://www.lgbt.ee/>)

Geikristlaste Kogu (<http://www.gei.kristlased.ee/>)

Bisdak Pride (<https://bisdakpride.wordpress.com/>)

Germany:

MANEO (<http://www.maneo.de/en/about-maneo/maneo-in-short.html>)

Lesben- und Schwulenverband (<https://www.lsvd.de/>)

Hong Kong:

Pink Alliance (<https://pinkalliance.hk/>)

Iceland:

Samtökin '78 (<https://samtokin78.is/>)

India:

Naz Foundation (<https://nazindia.org/>)

Italy:

Arcigay (<https://www.arcigay.it/en/>)

Jamaica:

J-Flag (<http://jflag.org/>)

Kenya:

The Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Kenya (GALCK)
(<https://www.galck.org/>)

Ishtar MSM (<http://www.ishtarmsm.org/>)

Transgender Education and Advocacy (<http://transgender.or.ke/>)

Mexico:

Mexico Transgender Center (<http://mexicotransgendercenter.com/>)

New Zealand:

Day of Silence (dayofsilence.org.nz)

Gay NZ (<https://www.gaynz.com/>) I'm Local Project (<http://www.imlocal.co.nz/>)

Nepal:

Blue Diamond Society (<http://www.bds.org.np/>)

Philippines:

TransMan Pilipinas (<https://www.facebook.com/TransManPilipinas>)

Portugal:

ILGA Portugal (<https://ilga-portugal.pt/ilga/index.php>)

Scotland:

Affirmation Scotland (<http://affirmationscotland.org.uk/>)

Spain:

Fraternidad Gay Sin Fronteras (<https://gaysinfronteras.weebly.com/>)

Taiwan:

Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association (hotline.org.tw/)

Trinidad y Tobago:

Coalition Advocating for the Inclusion of Sexual Orientation/CAISO(<https://gspottt.wordpress.com/>)

Uganda:

Sexual Minorities Uganda (<https://sexualminoritiesuganda.com/>)

United Kingdom:

Campaign for Homosexual Equality (<http://www.c-h-e.org.uk/>)

OutRage! (<http://outrage.org.uk/>)

Stonewall (<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>)

United States:

Colage (<https://www.colage.org/>)

Equality Federation (<https://www.equalityfederation.org/>)

Gay and Lesbian Medical Association (<http://www.glma.org/>)

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (<https://www.glsen.org/>)

GLAAD (<https://www.glaad.org/>)

Human Rights Campaign (<https://www.hrc.org/>)

Human Rights First (<https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/>)

Lambda Legal (<https://www.lambdalegal.org/>)

Latinx people:

Familia: Trans Queer liberation Movement(<https://famiatqlm.org/>)

To find some that are state specific, check out: <https://www.equaldex.com/organizations/united-states>

OR

<https://www.lgbtcenters.org/LGBTCenters>

Worldwide:

All Out (<https://allout.org/en>)

Amnesty International (<https://www.amnesty.org/>)

CenterLink (<https://www.lgbtcenters.org/>)

Equaldex (<https://www.equaldex.com/>)

Diversity Pro (<https://diversitypro.eu/>)

Freedom To Marry (<http://www.freedomtomarry.org/>)

Global Action for Trans Equality (<http://transactivists.org/>)

GRIN Campaign (<http://www.grincampaign.com/Home.html>)

It Gets Better Project (<https://itgetsbetter.org/>)

Europe:

ILGA Europe (<https://www.ilga-europe.org/>)

Sources:

<https://www.equaldex.com/organizations>

<https://www.lgbtcenters.org/>

WHO WE ARE

Ale E. C. (Managing Editor) is a Mexican leftist lesbian. They share an apartment with a cat, Suh, and with too many books and too little time. They currently split their days between studying English and Ethnic Studies in San Diego, and reading and writing in Tijuana. You can find her on Twitter as @sorginale. You can also see her zines at issuu.com/mossmoon. (She/they).

Bee Carucci (Editor) is a polyamorous aroace enby majoring in English at USD. They have not published anything yet, but hope to do so soon.

Csilla Richmond grew up in Modesto, California and got her BA in English Literary Studies at Humboldt State University in Arcata. She's been published in Lavender Review and Calliope, the literary magazine of University of the Pacific. She has work forthcoming in The Hellebore. She currently lives in Sacramento with her beautiful wife-to-be, two dogs, and cat. She spends most of her days reading or writing and works at a used bookstore on the side.

Grace Nim (Editor) is a woman majoring in English with a creative writing emphasis and a minor in International Relations at USD. She writes fiction and non-fiction centering around issues of immigration and race. She plans on finishing law school and publishing work in the future.

Hollis Teves (Editor in Chief) is a non-binary queer student and poet who lives and works in Orange, CA and San Diego, CA. They enjoy spending time listening to sad folk music and holding cats. Contact them at hnteves@gmail.com or on Twitter [@unisexlove](https://twitter.com/unisexlove).

Kate Minzner (Editor) is a bi cis woman studying television writing & production. She writes short fiction and poetry, and currently works as a freelance short film producer. After graduation she plans to work in children's television programming.

Lauren Glevanik (Editor) is an avid gardener and houseplant collector. She maintains an apartment--turned--greenhouse when she isn't working in an actual greenhouse. She is a third-year student at UC Davis, where she studies Plant Biology.

Natascha Woolf is a poet, screenwriter, novelist, and visual artist from Suffolk, England. Natascha's LGBT sitcom, *Her*, was selected by BBC, and she is currently one of their Writers Room scriptwriters. Natascha's fiction, poetry, and artwork have appeared in journals including *BlazeVOX*, *Chicago Record*, *Backhand Stories*, *Flash Fiction Magazine*, *Rose Quartz Magazine*, and other periodicals. Natascha's poetry chapbook, *Some Of Her Parts*, a collection inspired, in part, by Jenny Schecter's character from *The L Word*, was reviewed in *Delivered Magazine*, *Neopoet*, and *Cherry Grrl*. Natascha can be found on Twitter at [@SomeOfHerParts](https://twitter.com/SomeOfHerParts).

Paulina Sierra (Editor) is a cis bi Latinx womxn majoring in economics, with minors in political science and theater. She writes fiction and poetry in her spare time, but she also works as the opinion section editor of her school's newspaper. She loves theater and intersectional feminism, like the music of Janelle Monae.

Rachel Egly is a bi poet, engineer, and ecologist in love with all things water. Her work has previously appeared in *Vagabond City*, *The Rising Phoenix Review*, and *Ghost City Review*, and is forthcoming in *Bone & Ink*. She currently lives in Chicago with her partner and cat, where she catches crayfish, naps as much as possible, and spends most of her money on good food. You can find her @SPF_6 on Twitter or at rachelegly.wordpress.com

Raquel Robinson Bours (Editor) is our resident grower of great hair. Creative Writing and Restaurant Reviews. (she/her)

Riley Suglich (Editor) is a trans queer contributor, and he is very enthusiastic about working on *The Fruit Tree*. He is additionally very enthusiastic about the potential of science and cool animals. He has worked on a few other independent literary productions, and does some material crafts work as well.

Zan Locke writes poetry, prose, and songs and also dabbles in other artistic pursuits such as tradigital illustration, graphic design, and photography. They were cursed with an old soul, a tender heart, and a convoluted mind, and most closely identify as pan-poly-nb. Currently trapped in the desert wastes of southern New Mexico trying to scrape together enough coin to head for greener pastures, they request care packages of chocolate cake and coconut rum. They can occasionally be found following writer/art threads on Twitter @LockeDrachen and they post assorted creative tidbits to ko-fi.com/LockeNLore patreon.com/LockeNLore and the 18+ patreon.com/LockeNLoreDarker. They can be reached through email at lockedrachen@gmail.com

dear readers,

Issue Two is out! Obviously, you know this, since this is the end of it. I hope you enjoyed it! If you didn't, I place the blame entirely on the fact that I purposefully decided to halve my coffee intake during these last few months. Worry not, however. I'm still on two cups of coffee a day, and Hollis put in an inordinate amount of work, so the issue is out on time, and, in my own opinion, a pristine piece of work. Praise be.

I really loved the theme for this issue. I know that for a lot of people this isn't the case, but my own understanding of myself is based largely on my relationship with land, and the border that runs through the area that I consider home. Growing up in Tijuana is as foundational an aspect of who I am as is my gender, my race, my sexuality, or any other aspect of myself. I understand myself in the context of my family history, and that history always circles back to Tijuana

For my own writing for this issue, I actually wrote about my own elementary school back in my old neighborhood. Back then, I sat at a wooden desk like the one I described (accidentally slammed my fingers in it more than once, too). I wore the horrendous yellow uniforms. My hands were the ones that held the rocks that smoothed over the thorns of the

coral trees that lined the school yard I played in. I also saw several small animals that had drowned at that pool, though I was fortunate enough to never have to see a dead kitten. When I wrote “Until August,” I actually started writing about something else entirely, but honestly, I was too homesick to focus. I kept having this image of my old elementary school, and how empty I saw it now that I was no longer there. It’s ridiculous, I know. New students go there now. Whenever I go back home I see them in their tiny uniforms, getting picked up by exhausted-looking parents. Still, there’s something soothing, I think, to think of a place from your past being paused in time once you leave it. Anyways, that’s a tangent if there ever was one.

More than anything, I just wanted to say that I’m really proud of this issue. Getting it done took a lot of work (strangely enough, it felt three times more difficult than the first), but I love what we all made. Thank you for caring, and thank you for reading.

In solidarity and in love,

Ale E.C.,
Mexican leftist lesbian,
Managing Editor of The Fruit Tree.
(She/They)