

*waitif*



What is Waif.

When that noise is so white you can't even hear it.

Messy hair is waif, but so are bangs.

Waped Veed is Vaify.

Waif is when you fall down the stairs but still can't scrape your knee.

Waif is when you play the piano & you don't know how to play the piano.

Waif is when you play the piano & you don't know how to play the piano.

Waif is when you play piano really well. And drums. Because you were taught.

Kix is Waif. So is special K. Trix is not Waif.

Whores are Waif. Prudes are Waif. Dudes are Waif. Nudes are Waif.

Your Grandmother is Waif, only when she's knitting a hat for you, you Waif.

Waif is when your corn shows up later.

Gardening is Waif. Love your dead plants.

Talent shows are Waif. Throw a talent show. Invite us.

Arms that jiggle like hot jello are Waif.

Zit Scabs are Waif.

Chicken feet are Waif.

Beadv eyes are Waif.

You can't spell Waif without I.

Leave the taps dribbling overnight if it's below 30 degrees fahrenheit.

You, me, all, we're all Waif. If we want to be. And we want to be.

# ***waif***

## ***issue 16: The Horizontal Waif***

*This issue of Waif Magazine features the talents of*

*Conceived by*  
**SUBTLE PRIDE**  
*Misha Brooks*  
*Zach Donovan*  
*Brigette Lundy-Paine*  
*Mina Walker*

*Additional photography courtesy of Waif Magazine.*  
*Waif Magazine is published by*  
*Subtle Press*  
*in collaboration with Silver & Smoke*  
*and IS WAIF.*  
[www.iswaif.com](http://www.iswaif.com)  
© 2019

**Von**  
**Jillian Benson**  
**Paul Kovatchis**  
**Josh Kundert Gibbs**  
**Marissa Leitman**  
**Peter McCain**  
**Conner McVicker**  
**Lillian Mottern**  
**Mariel Norris**  
**Alexa Pignatelli**  
**Stephanie Shaffir**

*Cover Photography by*  
**Peter McCain**

*Interns*  
**Joan Flaherty**  
**Justine Engel**  
**Anna Campion**  
**Charlotte Grimm**

## **Table of Contents**

**CULTURE MATRIX** Horizontal Waif

**ADVICE** If I Broke Your Heart Would You Still  
Love Me?  
By Paul Kovatchis

**EDITORIAL** Spreads  
Photos by Marissa Leitman  
Modeled by Conner McVicker

**ARTICLE** My 18-Year Relationship with  
Climate Change  
By Mariel Norris

**EDITORIAL** Inside the Internet  
Photos by Peter McCain  
Modeled by Von

**SPECIAL FEATURE** How I Floss  
Featuring Alexa Pignatelli

**FICTION** Ferra  
By Lillian V. Mottern

**EDITORIAL** Landscapes  
Photos by Josh Kundert Gibbs  
Modeled and Styling by Stephanie Shaffir

# waif



**\* BEDS**  
Unflinchingly horizontal



**\* ICE CAPS MELTING**  
Expanding their horizons

**\* MURPHY BEDS**  
The vertical stepsister



**\* RISE AND SHINE**  
Kylie's Hit Single is topping charts across America. The ballad tells the story of motherhood, and the attempt to usher ones young from sleep to a waking state



**\* GIRAFFES**  
Mother Verticality



**\* CHIMNEY SWEEPS**  
One of a myriad of Jobs requiring a vertical posture, portrayed perhaps most famously by Alexander Hamilton in 1776 (pictured)



horizontal

vertical

**\* JUSTIN'S FALL**  
Usually one to buddy up to god, Bieber leaned down to chat with the devil after falling off his unicycle this week



**\* FLAT EARTHERS**  
If Earths on the top, whats on the bottom?



**\* BUSH & ELLEN**  
Enough about the "climate" let's talk about something we can all get into. Who's topping who??



**\*THE LETTER**  
Don't be a tough guy. Don't be a fool!

I will call you later.



**\* GINA RODRIGUEZ**  
1000's of autographed photos from the actress known for her work as "Kolka" in the 2018 film Small Foot were rendered worthless when used the racial slur on instagram



# not waif

Waif Magazine Presents

# CHICKEN OF TOMORROW

*It Could Be You*

**OCT 23**

3 Dollar Bill  
Brooklyn

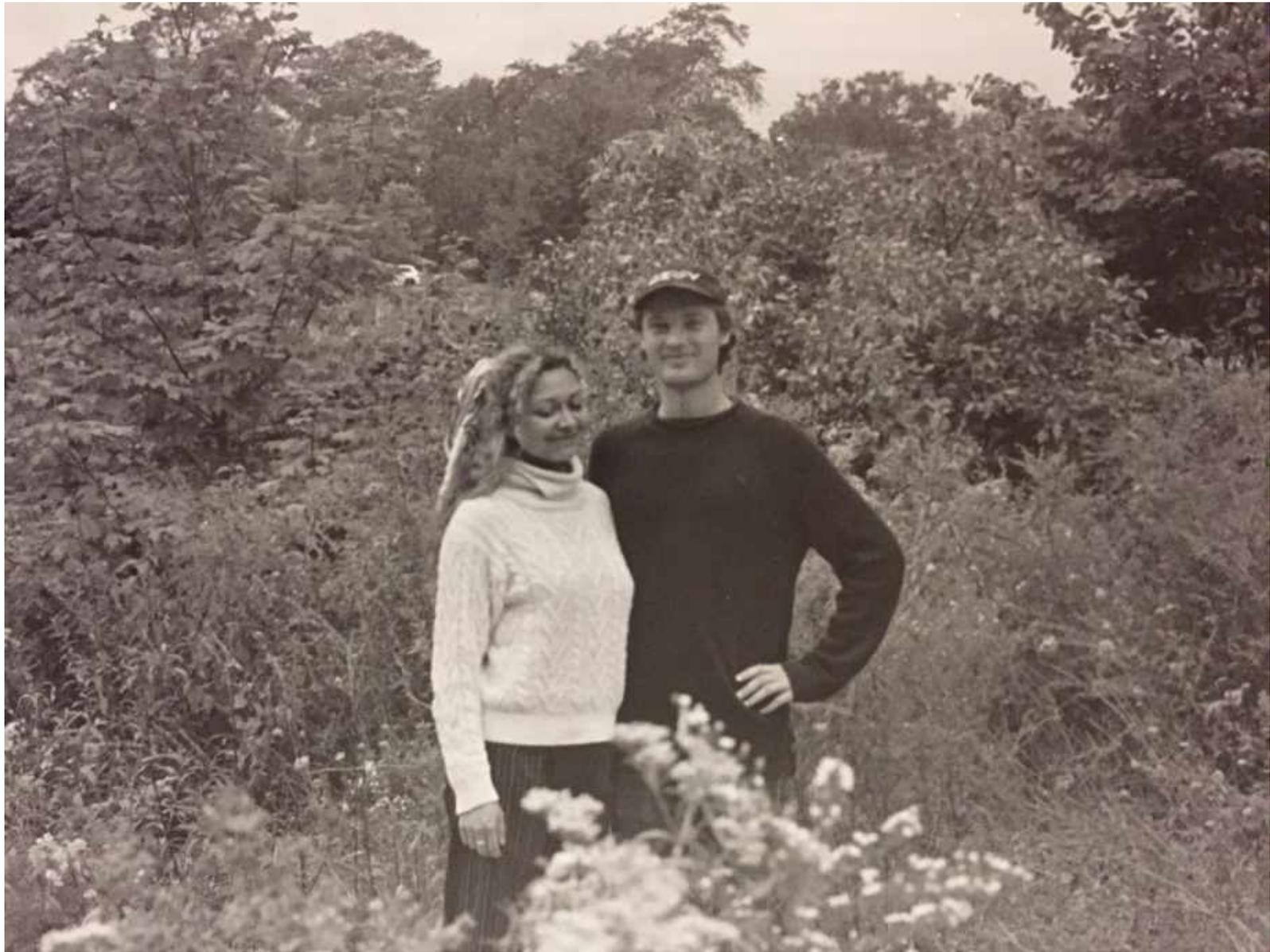


go to [iswaif.com/chicken](http://iswaif.com/chicken)

***IF I BROKE  
YOUR HEART,  
WOULD YOU  
STILL LOVE ME//***

***By Paul Kovatchis***

*if i broke your heart would you still love me?*



First things first, I am no expert on romance and its entirety. Any advice given is from experience and stories only. I know my older sister will continuously give me shit on whether or not I should be writing about such a beautiful topic. Do not take any advice given personally.

### ***your first relationship***

Everyone feels a certain way about the first person they fall in love with. While you each embrace different shapes and forms, developing yourself into the person you're meant to be, time truly test your feelings towards your partner.

The way you handle the first person you love reflects the way you'll handle someone in the future. You are bound to make mistakes, learn from them, embrace them. By all means this does not mean you cannot stick to your first partner. Although it's extremely difficult at a young age, some would rather grow with one person.

### ***social media in young relationships***

One side of a relationship may care about their appearance on social media more than the other, it's best not to worry. Bad habits exercised since the very beginning of social media are even harder these days to handle when it comes to relationships even breakups.

Things posted online might trigger your thoughts about calling "*whoever*" to check on them or make sure they're not hanging out with the one person you'd hate to see around them. The one that has a rocky history with you. Even worse, they constantly favorite their account. We've all seen it on the internet before.

Both parties should never feel obligated during their relationship to post pictures with/of their lover. This doesn't matter if one is more active on social media than the other. You'd be better off if you weren't as active.

Not just young relationships but really any relationship is more beautiful if it isn't presented again and again on the internet. Those you post pictures with online do not define your lifestyle. Most people only post the good stuff that is going on in their lives, which is why many feel compelled to continuously post pictures with/of their partner. This may just be you diluting the relationship yourself. You shouldn't feel pressured to post about someone, this pressure comes from nowhere but a bad

habit. Try not to focus on the appearance of you with your partner but rather on images and topics that are comfortable to you. The less people know the better although it's helpful to show your friends and family on Facebook where in Europe you've been studying these past six months, everyone assumes certain ideas at some point.

***“The way you handle the first person you love reflects the way you’ll handle someone in the future. You are bound to make mistakes - learn from them, embrace them.”***

Here are some tips for God's sake:

- cHill
- Set limits on your social media apps
- Isolate those apps into small sections on your phone or move them to the back page
- Whatever upsets you on the internet should be quickly filtered out

In some circumstances an unfollow is more powerful than a follow

Although it is a term I've made up, I've wondered if it's possible to get something like *Instagram Fever*, where someone you find attractive illustrates a persona to their audience on the internet that'll have you thinking it's one of the most attractive things about them. This might be the music they post, the places they've been, their clothes, their overall photo aesthetic. I believe I do have *Instagram Fever* personally or however you'd like to interpret it. I don't think there's a possible solution to this feeling, unless it becomes a problem for you. This perspective might make it easier for you to find people who interest you.

#### ***your actions will define you more than your words***

Your actions will define you more than any words could. There will be times when you might say things to your partner that you mean to say but they'll never feel those words unless you show them. This is one of the most meaningful parts of a healthy relationship however it's also one of the easiest things to abuse. When love is felt between two partners thoughts may just feel like words and actions will be left empty. This is super problematic for strong feelings towards someone as they become meaningless without action. It's much easier to say how you feel about someone than to actually show it.

#### ***factors of a young relationship***

Balancing the experience of being young and in love is one of the hardest things a young adult can do. Being pushed and pulled in different directions can haunt one's desires to get what they want out of life at a young age. Sometimes those that follow what their body tells them aren't looked up to. Great relationships come with great responsibility and so does one's love for someone. Although timing plays such an important role it's nothing you can get a hold of, nothing you can grasp. This is why people lose their purpose because they find themselves

grasping for something that was never there. Things may come around but if it was never meant to be you know the fucking rest.

***if i broke  
you  
would  
you still  
love  
yourself? .***

*write.*  
*photo.*  
*art.*  
*submit.*

*waif*

*seeks new talent*

*but please no poems | [waifmagazin3@gmail.com](mailto:waifmagazin3@gmail.com)*

***SPR  
EAD  
S//***













	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 10g	20%
Sodium 100mg	2%
Total Sugars 5g	10%
Total Protein 2g	4%

**LILLY'S**

**ROASTED GARLIC**

KEEP REFRIGERATED

100% OLIVE OIL, SESAME OIL, LEMON JUICE, SALT, GARLIC

\*Certified Organic By Oregon Tilth



***Photographed  
by Marissa  
Leitman  
Modeled by  
Conner  
McVicker***

***waif.***

***not waif.***

***fashion.***

***refuse.***

***waif***

***Read Waif Magazine at [iswaif.com](http://iswaif.com)***

***MY 18-YEAR  
RELATIONSHIP  
WITH CLIMATE  
CHANGE//***

***By Mariel Norris***

I was eleven years old when I first heard about climate change, back in 2001. My mother was the bearer of the terrible news. She walked into my bedroom with an expression on her face that I'd never seen before; she looked even more serious than she had a year or so prior, when she'd sat me down for our menstrual cycle chat. I didn't quite grasp her explanation or comprehend what climate change entailed, but I could tell from her tone that something was horribly wrong.

I'm going to tell you my personal climate change loss-of-innocence story and my despairing, contradictory, and evolving feelings on the matter. But it's not really about me; climate change is an illness we all have in common. It's too painful, though, for most of us to delve into on a regular basis, so the knowledge of it sits heavily within us. In my view, keeping such heaviness inside, rather than processing it with those in our communities, is deeply unhealthy. I'm sharing my feelings in hopes that what I say will encourage whoever reads this to do the same, whether in conversations, essays, art, or poetry.

2001, the year my mom told me about climate change, was a trying time in America, and it occurred when I was just starting to gain awareness of a world beyond myself. After 9/11, there was a sudden proliferation of American flags on lawns and car bumpers. I remember asking my dad what the point of them was--why an American flag instead of an Earth flag? Why just "God Bless America" if God could bless the whole world? I wrote in my diary that George Bush and Osama bin Laden were my two worst enemies, and I had nightmares about planes crashing into my home in my quiet neighborhood in Massachusetts. Meanwhile, I was always looking for signs of climate change--or global warming as it was referred to back then. I wondered if global warming was the cause of the gray, broken trees in my

***“My documentary-induced despair lasted a good 24 hours and then I pushed it away; it was easier to complain about homework than to dwell on such devastation.”***

yard, or the dead squirrel in the road, or the white film on the pond. What, exactly, had troubled my mom enough to sit me down that day? What did this looming monster really look like?

But my mom didn't bring up climate change much after our talk; perhaps she felt it was her duty to simply inform me about it. I had the privilege of growing up in a relatively clean and safe town, where pollution and environmental issues didn't have to be at the forefront of my consciousness. As time passed, I began to forget the urgency in my mom's voice, and what I learned in school was very optimistic: essentially, if you remember to recycle and turn off the lights, the planet will be fine once again. So it wasn't until 2006, when Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* came out, that I got my first lesson on what could befall our planet. My documentary-induced despair lasted a good 24 hours and then I pushed it away; it was easier to complain about homework than to dwell on such devastation.

From 2006 until now, I've periodically watched climate change documentaries (most hauntingly, *The 11th Hour*) and read doomsday articles. These bursts of information rip me out of my tiny work-friend-family world and into the reality of what we're facing, leaving me utterly hopeless, with the word "why" searing my psyche: Why bother writing if no one will be around to read it in years to come? Why recycle or compost if we're already past the breaking point, anyway? Why spend countless hours trying to figure out which Masters programs to apply to when the world is ending? Why aren't all the CEOs of oil companies imprisoned?

After making the mistake of reading the article [The Uninhabitable Earth](#) a couple years ago before bed, I stayed up the entire night, pulsating with fear, desolation, frustration, and rage: fear of the increasing natural disasters and climate change-triggered diseases that will befall us (don't forget that

for every degree increase in temperature, the Malaria parasite reproduces ten times faster!); fear of increasingly carbon dioxide-saturated air (the amount of carbon dioxide projected to be in the air by 2100 will decrease human cognitive functioning by 21 percent); desolation at the thought of millions, then billions of innocent climate change refugees and casualties; frustration that composting and biking can only go so far; rage at the [100 fossil-fuel producing companies](#) currently responsible for 71 percent of global emissions and the power-hungry politicians so easily bought by oil-enthused overlords.

It was that night when I reached the painful conclusion that I wouldn't have kids. I'd always longingly envisioned the day I'd have a child of my own; I knew, though, as I lay in bed with the article's devastating predictions playing on repeat in my mind, that I wasn't prepared to create a life that would likely be cut short. How could I bring a human into the world, knowing full well she'd suffer shortages of clean air, food, and comfortable places to live? My disappointment was vast and all-consuming. For weeks after that sleepless night, my chest tightened whenever parents with babies and toddlers passed me on the street. I pitied the children for their bleak futures and looked down on their parents for making the reckless decision to reproduce, while also envying them for embracing life, despite its risks. Would I never have a sleeping baby to hold or a preschooler with whom to play dolls and discuss dinosaurs? Why should I have to deprive myself of such a beautiful aspect of life when all these parents got to enjoy it? Was I not as deserving as them?

Although these thoughts still come to me when I see children, I'm trying to push the negativity away--making a definitive decision not to have kids was excruciatingly painful for me, so I've gone back to leaving the possibility open. Whether this means adopting or having biological kids is to be decided; I know that adopting would better fit my state of mind, but an illogical side of me craves a biological child. Now that

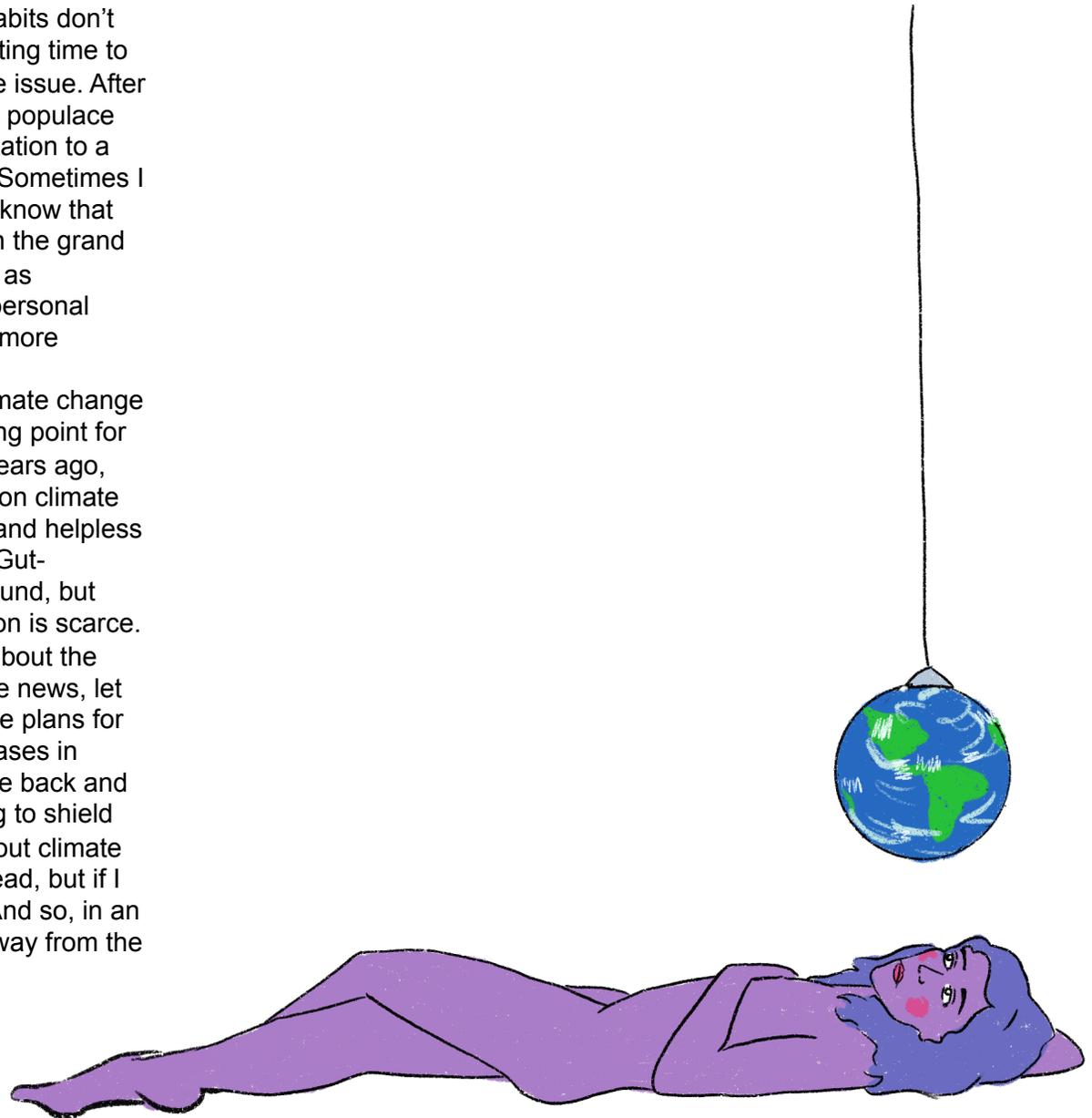
I've decided not to fully close the door on having a biological child, I'm mentally in a healthier place, even if I'm somewhat deluding myself. (Deep down, I know it's unlikely that I'll actually go through with having a baby.) I no longer judge people who have kids in 2019 because I understand the pain in rejecting this natural urge. Besides, a friend of mine pointed out that one of the babies born tomorrow could be the climate change-reversing genius we're all praying for.

If I were to have a child, I'm sure she'd know about climate change well before age 11, the age I was when my mother sat me down for our talk. Climate change would surround her, in scorching summers and extreme weather events. Maybe she'd experience health conditions attributable to climate change, such as asthma, mosquito-borne diseases, or mental health disorders. Now that schools are finally starting to add climate change to their curricula, she'd be aware of the impact climate change poses on weather and health. My mother consciously decided when I was ready to know about our planet's perils, but I wouldn't be able to do the same for my child. From a young age, she would recognize that she was born into an unsafe world. The idea of having a child that I can't fully protect is deeply disturbing; however, simply deciding to not have a child feels like giving up on the idea that there's any hope at all for our planet.

As you can see, my thoughts on climate change and its implications are confused and scattered. As a result, my actions fluctuate constantly and contradict one another. I use as little water as I can to wash dishes, but I take long, hot showers. I try to avoid lids and straws, but I frequently order takeout food, even though it uses wasteful packaging. I'm not trying to make excuses for myself, but in a consumerist, endlessly producing society in which virtually everything relies on fossil fuels, it's exceedingly difficult to have a small carbon footprint. People like me, who want to minimize their footprints by composting, recycling, avoiding driving, etc. might (or might

not) help the environment in some way, but such habits don't get at the root of the issue. In fact, I wonder if devoting time to such habits actually distracts us from the root of the issue. After all, as I see it, fossil fuel-backed politicians prefer a populace that's focused on personal carbon footprint minimization to a populace that demands sustainable infrastructure. Sometimes I find it hard to motivate myself to "go green" when I know that whatever I do will make such a negligible impact on the grand scheme of things. Other times I feel inspired to live as sustainably as I can so as to align my life with my personal values. One thing I know for sure is that I could be more politically involved.

I'm glad there's finally more coverage of climate change in the media and that it's become a prominent talking point for liberal politicians (who would have imagined, five years ago, that CNN would devote seven hours to a town hall on climate change?). However, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and helpless when faced with this endless stream of dire news. Gut-wrenching facts and figures on climate change abound, but support on how to mentally process such information is scarce. Some days, I'm paralyzed with negative thoughts about the future. Other days, I purposely avoid consuming the news, let myself fall into temporary blissful oblivion, and make plans for my future without factoring in the exponential increases in natural disasters. Ever since I was eleven, I've gone back and forth between trying to understand reality and trying to shield myself from it. If I spend too much time thinking about climate change, I'll be constantly racked by anxiety and dread, but if I never consider it, I'll be ignorant and unprepared. And so, in an awkward dance, I continuously dart towards and away from the heartbreaking truth. ♦





# HOW I FLOSS

FEATURING Alexa Pignatelli

**From:** Ho Ho Kus, New Jersey

**Occupation:** Student

**Flossing Weapon of Choice:** I have a permanent retainer, so I have that special floss at the end of a stick.

**Relationship to Flossing:** I don't do it as much as I probably should.

**Do you get a lot of shit from your dentist about flossing?** Not really, just about being sure to floss behind the retainer.

**So the rest of your teeth are perfect?** Well, not perfect, but they don't bleed so the dentist doesn't say anything.

**Do you feel like you don't need to floss since they haven't told you explicitly you need to floss?** I do floss, but only sometimes.

**Can you talk about flossing with your hair?**  
I only floss with my hair if I absolutely need to. A lot of times I'm out and about and don't have floss on me and I've just eaten a poppyseed bagel or something is stuck in my teeth. I just yank a strand of my hair, floss it out, and then throw it away.

**Do you do this publicly?**  
No I'll do it in the bathroom or in my car.



**Do you ever get caught doing it? Is it a shameful thing>?**

It gets mixed reviews - there are people for it and people against it. I feel like I'd feel more shame if I was just walking around with spinach in my teeth. I have friends who do it too.

**Would you encourage this tactic - using your hair instead of going to buy floss?**

I encourage it if people are in a tight spot rather than just leaving something in your teeth.

**It seems very 'zero-waste.' Are you for zero-waste?**

It is! I am!

**Have you ever thought about using the hair in your hairbrush? Like after brushing your hair, using what's left in the brush, collecting that in a jar and keeping it in your bathroom?**

I feel like that's maybe a little extreme, but if you're looking to lean into the zero-waste lifestyle, you definitely could do that.

**I feel like you could start a business off of that - real human hair floss. It's biodegradable, it's vegan.**

*Follow @flossier for found pics of found picks and submit your own to waifmagazin3@gmail.com*



# ***waif instant coffee***

***with real news expert  
Satchie Snellings***



***Tune in every Thursday or Friday to our brand new  
weekly news briefing at [iswaif.com/instantcoffee](https://iswaif.com/instantcoffee)***

***VON: INSIDE  
THE INTERNET//***

*The hyper pop star wants you to Cum party in cyberspace*

*Photographed by Peter McCain*















***FERR***

***-AV***

***By Lillian Mottern***

Ferra liked watching people live. It made her feel like she was part of something. Obviously, she was not. Life rolls in and life rolls out. Life is like a roll of paper towels with a nice, ordinary design printed on it and the people taking the ride don't often enjoy being observed.

Ferra, unfortunately, did not understand this.

Soon, people started taking note. It's hard not to notice when someone is standing quite close as you are kissing another person or fucking around with your belly-button ring or something. Ferra's hair was a bright, buttered-yam orange and she wore it in a ball on the top of her head secured with a single pale birch knitting needle. This made Ferra very noticeable. Noticeability is something many people strive to achieve but it's not so great when your favorite activity requires that no one see you. People saw Ferra and Ferra made them angry.

Ferra had started wearing her hair in the ball, stuck with the single knitting needle several years back and her mother had noted that Ferra's head had begun to resemble a ball of yarn. This was easy to brush off and attribute to her mother's penchant for knitting great scratchy lap quilts in her spare time, but after a while Ferra began to see the resemblance herself.

Perhaps it was this that made Ferra so immune to the odd stares and cruel glances she got whenever she was caught watching people living. As a self-identified knitting basket, it was outrageous that anybody would care if she watched them live out their messy day-to-days. Yarn is friendly and bland. No one cares is a ball of yarn watches them put their tongue in someone else's mouth for example.

Ferra asked her neighbor Lilly-Anne if there was an issue in the building. She was afraid of asking the question because it seemed so revealing. Surely a woman such as Ferra, one who wore her hair in a ball with a single birch knitting needle stuck through it would not care if people in her apartment building

were angry with her. But Lilly-Anne was next door and absent-minded enough that she would probably forget the whole thing. Some people forget everything you tell them. At least this is what they want you to believe.

Ferra stopped Lilly-Anne as Lilly-Anne was exiting her apartment to take the elevator downstairs. She was with her miniscule son who was probably named Robert. Ferra stepped up close enough to Lilly-Anne so that Lilly-Anne would know she wanted to talk but not so close that Lilly-Anne would startle and run off. Lilly-Anne was tiny and blonde and her grey eyes were much too big for her tea cup face.

*Can I ask you a question?* Ferra said.

Lilly-Anne smiled with her little pearl teeth held slightly apart so that it almost looked like she could be crying. She was wearing a small white cashmere coat with a thick, well made belt. Ferra thought for 34/50 of a second about buying something white. It might offset her hair a little bit.

*Sure.* Lilly-Anne said.

*Is there a problem in the building?* asked Ferra.

Robert pulled on his mother's smaller-than-life hand. Lilly-Anne was wearing a pair of white cashmere mittens that



# ***“is there a problem in the building?”***

matched her white cashmere coat. It suddenly struck Ferra that she had never before seen an adult woman wearing mittens.

*Are people, like, upset with me?* asked Ferra again, this time with a splash of what she hoped was girlish flippancy.

*Of course not,* said Lilly-Anne, and she smiled again, that strange, half-crying smile and then was gone as she was pulled down the hall by Robert who was wearing the miniature suit and tie that came with his downtown private school.

An interesting thing to note is that from behind, Lilly-Anne and her son appeared exactly the same size. Their matching blond hair bounced healthily as they marched down the hall away from Ferra; from afar the two could easily be the well-dressed children of pro-gun Republican aristocracy. Ferra wondered if maybe Lilly-Anne and Robert were actually brother and sister. She hadn't looked at either of them very closely. Did Lilly-Anne have laugh lines? Or crows feet? Ferra couldn't remember. She could only remember vague, general things, like primary colors and the shape of cats in the dark and the sound of people kissing.

She went back inside her apartment.

Complaints were circling the apartment building about the yam-haired woman who always seemed to appear when two people were trying to kiss each other on the mouth.

When the manager of the building got complaints, he became deeply enraged. This was because the building manager was a man of many deep thoughts and couldn't waste brain space on trivial things like leaking faucets and karaoke machines being

too loud. To prevent letters of complaint, the building manager's mailbox was fastened with a small sturdy tin lock which he had purchased from a hardware store called Screw It On which was about three miles from the apartment building. Sometimes parts of the light up neon sign attached to the front of Screw It On went out and the sign instead read Screw It, or simply, on rare and special occasions, Screw.

The building manager found this vaguely amusing, but only as amusing as one would find a baby blowing a bubble of mucus from his nose. He was not a man who frequented hardware stores; rather, as has been noted, he was a man of deep thoughts and also; dry brandy. He'd simply needed a small, secure lock with which to close his mailbox so that no one would send him letters of complaint. In planning his visit to Screw It On, the building manager had a clear vision of what he wanted. What he wanted was a lock that came with a small paper-thin tin key which he planned to fasten around his neck with a length of cord. The building manager, while being a man of deep thoughts, was also a man who valued keys.

Unfortunately, Screw It On did not stock small locks with keys. They only carried combination locks that closed with codes. The building manager was forced to satisfy himself with a lock that required the input of a short, easy to remember word in order to open. The word assigned to the building manager's lock was "SHAR".

Lilly-Anne had sent a letter of complaint to the building manager because everyone else in the building was doing it. She did have a personal complaint against Ferra though. On a small, insignificant, barely memorable occasion, Lilly-Anne had decided to kiss a young man named Franklin

# ***“Are people, like, upset with me?”***

in the elevator. This thought had come about after many months of noticing Franklin around the apartment building. He was medium-sized and had long, feminine eyelashes, a short, temporary blonde pigtail at the nape of his neck, and a sparse goatee. Lilly-Anne had timed her daily afternoon trot down the sidewalk so that her return (thirty-eight minutes after leaving) would coincide with Franklin's return from his gym/hookah lounge.

Lilly-Anne was a meticulous time-keeper. She and Franklin stepped into the elevator at exactly the same time. As Franklin's mouth (wet and tasting of hookah smoke and blue flavored energy drink) mashed against her meticulously painted red lips, the elevator doors opened and a stick-bug of a woman with a ball of yarn on her head strode in.

*Don't mind me, she said.*

That ended everything and several months later Franklin left the apartment building to work for a dumpster diving tech startup in a bigger city. (*Tech-ster: Your trash, our algorithms, one radical identity theft!*)

*What is the meaning of "SHAR"?* thought the building manager.

Ferra was growing increasingly agitated. No one had told her what was going on in the building. Lilly-Anne's elusive answer, *of course not*, meaning, *of course not, no one is mad at you*, only served to convince Ferra that there was definitely something going on. Ferra was oblivious, or at least, this is what Ferra told herself.

She decided to bring it up with the building manager himself. She also really had to speak with him because she had returned from her morning walk to find an eviction notice taped to the front door of her apartment. This was shocking. Ferra was not the kind of woman who was evicted from things. She had never been asked to leave an establishment of any kind.

Once Franklin had been asked to leave the gym because he smelled too much like Acai-flavored Juul.

The building manager spoke to Ferra through his door. His voice was muffled and crackly with annoyance. *What eviction notice?* asked the building manager in a barely-rehearsed monotone which revealed his lie without even masking it in passive aggression.

*I'm afraid there's been a misunderstanding,* stated Ferra with the calm confidence her mother had always told her she lacked.

*Jesus. I really can't discuss this,* said the building manager and through the door Ferra could hear a click-click-click as if he was twisting something made out of tin.

*By the by,* said the building manager, *have you any idea of what "SHAR" means?*

*No,* said Ferra and sniffed because that was her method for keeping the tears in.

*It's really odd,* said the building manager. *It's really an odd conundrum.* He had heard the word conundrum a lot. He'd always played around with the idea of trying it out and found he was rather good at it.



*May I come in and speak with you, sir?* asked Ferra and she could hear the sound of the building manager rolling around in his office chair.

*It's a predicament*, said the building manager, finding that every word he said sounded even better. Maybe it was the strange, forlorn woman on the other side of the door, silently encouraging him with her recondite brown eyes. Ferra's eyes were an anemic green. They were growing damp.

There was a long stretch of silence as Ferra wept and the building manager rolled around in his office chair with a melancholy little half-smile on his cracked Grecian lips.

*If I pay more rent will you let me stay in my apartment?* Ferra finally asked. Her voice lost its feminine curvature at the end of the phrase and the sudden monotone made her sound deeply, irreversibly annoyed.

The building manager was irritated that he could no longer picture Ferra as gentle and elusive.

*Very well* he said. Then; *no, actually, Ms., you have been getting complaints and I have no choice but to evict you.*

He regretted saying it. He could have said, *you can stay in the stable, madame, for there is no room in the inn.* But what if the woman he was speaking with was Jewish? Perhaps then she would be offended by his use of New Testament analogies.

The building manager wondered if he had a religion and if he did what it was.

*I've lived here for seventeen years* said Ferra, *I've lived here for seventeen years.* She repeated it so that he would understand. *I like your building*, said Ferra, *it's damp but I like it. I know it.*

She paused as the building manager spun in his chair.

*I'll do anything*, said Ferra. *Just don't say I'm a bad person. Just let me stay in my apartment.*

The building manager decided he would become a Buddhist.

*Am I a bad person?* asked Ferra, finding that this was the main thing after all.

*Of course not*, said the building manager.

\* \* \*

*"Of course not" is a phrase that does not address the issue*, Ferra told her mother over the telephone. Ferra's mother snorted a little and said, *Don't overreact, Squirt.*

That was Ferra's mother's tactic. It was not one of a critical listener. Ferra tried not to let this bother her.

*Besides*, said Ferra, *I'm being evicted.*

*Well, that's too bad*, said Ferra's mother whose daughter was no longer her dependent.

*Mother*, said Ferra, *please honestly tell me; am I a bad person?*

*Of course not*, said Ferra's mother.

The building manager had not yet done anything to force Ferra from her apartment. He had given her the proper two weeks notice and then he had waited.

Now two weeks had passed and the time had come to act. The building manager found that he was rather looking forward to acting. With a visceral relish as though he was biting into a rich



medjool date the building manager strode to the front of Ferra's apartment. This time it was he who spoke through a door.

*Ms.* (said the building manager loudly).

*Ms.*, he said again because he had never learned Ferra's name.

*I am not going to leave,* said Ferra.

*Huh*, said the building manager. He looked at the grey-brown-yellow door of Ferra's apartment. It reminded him of cat bile and of dreams. It made the building manager think about lying in a large yellow meadow of daisies, of disappearing into the daisies, of someone passionately pinning him down in the daisies-

*I'm simply here to assess*, said the building manager, *to peruse and pursue*.

*Pursue* what? said Ferra.

*Don't sue me for pervertedness*, said the building manager, *I simply wanted to make sure you weren't...*

*Weren't* what? said Ferra.

The building manager picked a paint scab on Ferra's door. He considered his loneliness and lack of purpose and the taste of the medjool date suddenly melted away.

*Oh, just dead*, said the building manager with the deep Southern passive aggression his mother had taught him.

There was a moment of deep silence and then Ferra yelled the word *LEAVEMEALONE*.

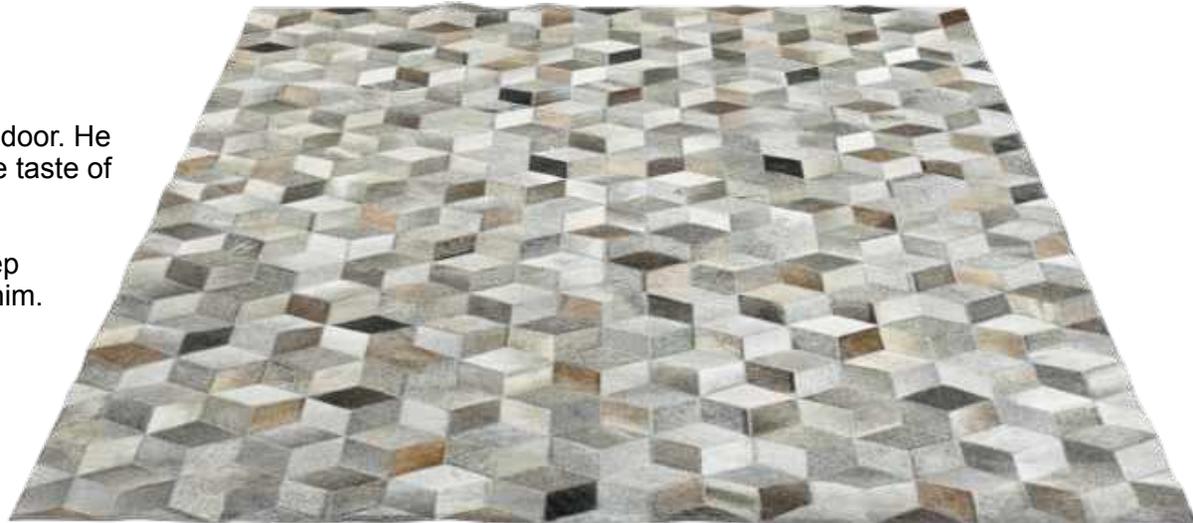
And the building manager said the word *bitch*.

And then he left.

In a strange turn of events, when Ferra stepped outside she saw Lilly-Anne sitting outside her own apartment which was several doors down. Ferra pretended she was watering a plant so Lilly-Anne would not think Ferra was stalking her.

Lilly-Anne wore what appeared to be a child's summer play frock. One of the narrow white straps had slipped over her translucent wing-like shoulder and she sat next to her front door staring ahead, grey lemur eyes glazed like ceramic. Her legs were pulled up to her chin as though she was a young French girl named Marie.

Ferra lightly watered the carpet outside her apartment because she did not have a plant. Her last one had been stolen and the one before that had died because Ferra had tried to make it into a pesto. She gradually made her way over to where Lilly-Anne sat. Ferra watered as she went.



When she looked down at Lilly-Anne, Lilly-Anne did not look up. Ferra tried not to let any water splash on Lilly-Anne's play frock, but some still did.

*Hello there*, said Ferra. *I'm wondering if you have a moment to chat*. Lilly-Anne did not respond.

*Do you hate me?* asked Ferra. She had decided to cut to the chase. *It's fine if you do. I just want to know why. I don't want to be hated. Mainly, I don't want to be a bad person.*

Lilly-Anne still did not respond. Ferra decided a secret reveal was needed.

*I watch people kiss each other* said Ferra.

*Purposefully.*

It occurred to her that Lilly-Anne might be dead. Ferra prodded Lilly-Anne's child-sized upper arm with the spout of her watering can and Lilly-Anne tipped over as though she was a sedentary antique lamp. Ferra watered Lilly-Anne's healthy blonde hair with the watering can and found herself shocked and choking up when the hair grew stringy and brown from the water.

Lilly-Anne would not move. Ferra decided that her best course of action would be to leave Lilly-Anne sprawled limply on the carpet outside her apartment.

Ferra went inside.

The building manager called his mother and told her he had discovered a new word. He hoped it would make up for not going to Yale.

The building manager's mother thought he was talking about refurbishing another fucking flea-market chair and hung up.

Ferra left Lilly-Anne outside for approximately seventy three minutes. In that time she cooked herself a large meal of mushroom ravioli and drew a picture of two people kissing in charcoal pencil.

Then she decided that she did not want Lilly-Anne to die.

The doctor had gone to Yale. He was only somewhat surprised to see a basket of yarn carrying a child in a play frock into the ER.

***“Of course not’  
is a phrase that  
does not address  
the issue.”***

Ferra signed some paperwork and sat stiffly in a plastic chair to wait for Lilly-Anne to be declared dead or alive. She entertained herself by eating a small plastic bag of shelled peanuts. She threw them one-by-one into the air and caught them in her mouth. They were salty and thick on her tongue so she drank water from a communal water fountain near the men's restroom. Some of the chewed up peanuts fell out when she opened her mouth to let the water in.

She called her mother and her mother did not answer. A man approached Ferra and looked pointedly at her ankles. Ferra had never thought much about her ankles so she looked down at them. They were cream-colored and streaked with pale yam-colored hairs. It occurred to Ferra that maybe she should shave her ankles. She looked up at the man and he gave her a long, slow wink.

Ferra felt nauseated. It occurred to her that watching people kiss each other might be similar to the man's apparently deeply satisfied analysis of her ankles. Ferra decided she would ask the man a question. She said, *why are you looking at my*

*ankles?* And the man said, *you are a pretty woman, sweetheart.* He said it like he was the only one who knew this about Ferra. It occurred to Ferra that perhaps he was. This thought made Ferra feel as though maybe she would like to throw herself off a roof.

*No, I am not,* said Ferra. She found that deciding one way or the other felt better than accepting the compliment. She ate some more peanuts and chewed with her mouth open. She hoped this would encourage the man to leave but he did not. Instead he stepped closer to Ferra. He sat down in the plastic chair that was next to her.

*I might wanna taste some of those peanuts,* said the man. Ferra ate the peanuts faster so he would see that she was almost out.

*Outta your mouth,* said the man. He smiled, like he was the only one in the world who would enjoy eating chewed up peanuts out of another person's mouth. Ferra swallowed the peanuts in her mouth and scraped their gluey residue from her gums. She did this very quickly.

*Sorry,* said Ferra, *but I swallowed them.*

Lilly-Anne was declared alive. Ferra was told to follow a male nurse in teal into Lilly-Anne's hospital room. Ferra did not want to go. She went.

Lilly-Anne was propped up on a mountain of pillows so pale they matched her skin. Her healthy blond hair was sweaty and mouse brown. Ferra found herself self-consciously pushing her own yam-colored hair behind her ears.

Lilly-Anne glanced her way.

*Good morning,* said Ferra. The greeting was inaccurate but served to cast a glow. The glow was colorful hair clips, construction paper, and glasses of milk. Lilly-Anne did not

smile but she felt the glow. It made her feel like a child again for a split second.

*I think you were injured,* said Ferra. *Or maybe you didn't eat breakfast.*

She paused.

*I could make you some breakfast.*  
It was a statement glazed in pride.

Lilly-Anne did not respond. She looked at Ferra for a long moment. Ferra sat on the edge of Lilly-Anne's bed and smiled friendly-like

There was a piece of paper pinned to the front of Screw it On several days later that only a few people took notice of. The paper was thin and grey and had been printed out from a black and white printer with a scratch on the glass that left a lighting bolt shape on the paper, obscuring several vital letters. The notice was almost impossible to read but if you squinted your eyes would fill in the missing letters.

The building manager did this. He stared at the sign with a scowl on his face. The scowl was meant to resemble the expression of DustBowl-era sharecropper. The building manager hoped that this sort of expression would Mean Something; if not now, then some day.

*Recalled,* said the notice, *all coded padlocks due to nonsense.*

*Fuck,* said the business manager, and he spit a small piece of phlegm at the sign.

*We're fine,* said Lilly-Anne, *We're fine. We're alright.*  
*Thank you,* she said, *I could have died. My baby could have died.*

Lilly-Anne touched her stomach to indicate the presence of something within it. Ferra nodded. She could not nod like a woman who understood but she could nod like a woman who could grasp a concept so she did.

*In any case, said Ferra, I apologize for any confusion on my part. Or yours, she added to even things out.*

Yes, said Lilly-Anne.

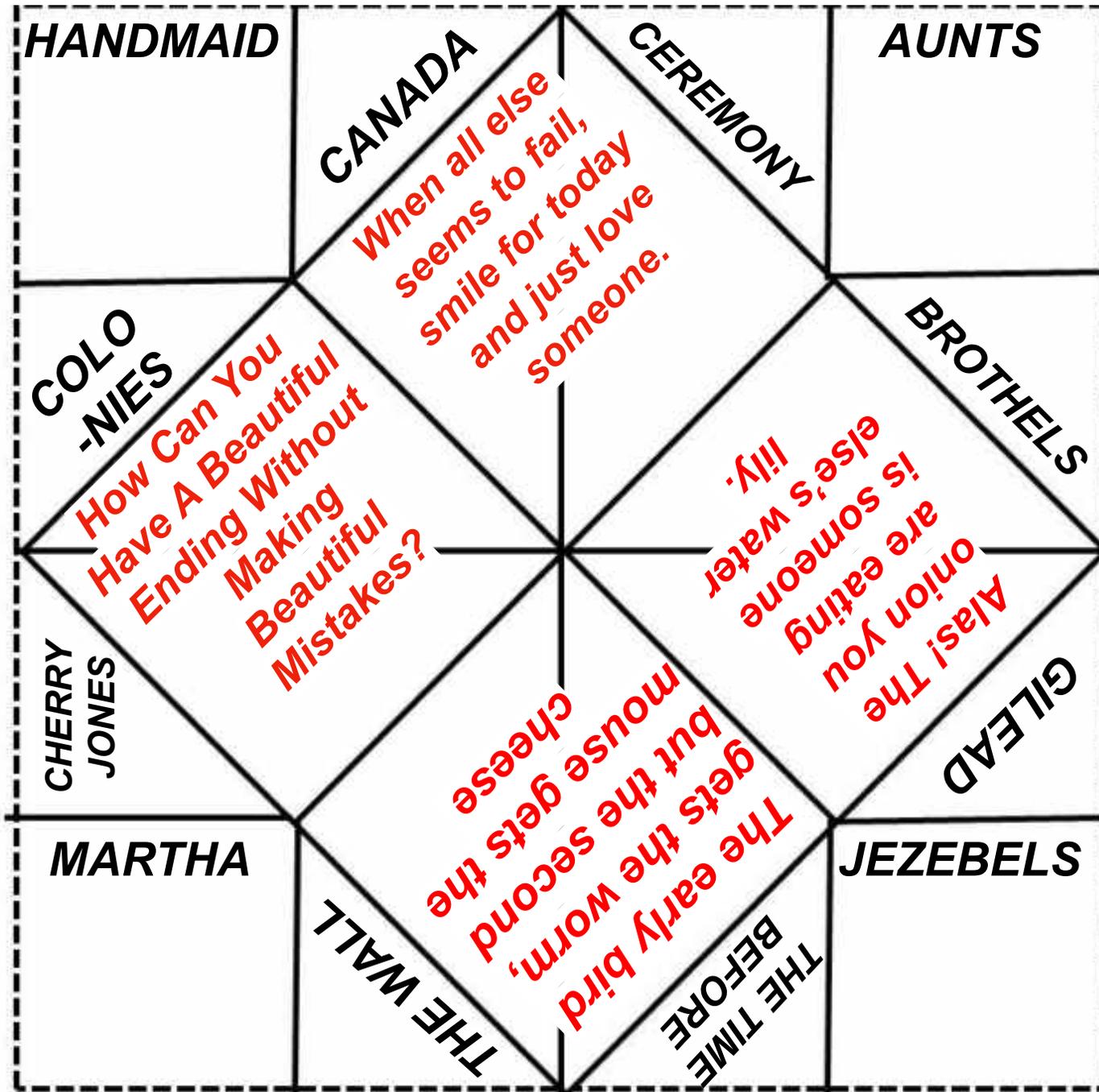
*I don't know what's wrong with me, said Ferra. Probably a lot.*

Lilly-Anne smiled (sickly but surprisingly warm) and leaned forward to kiss Ferra on the forehead with parched lips.

*Fuck, said the building manager again, I thought I'd discovered something new. ♦*



# THE HANDMAID'S COOTIE CATCHER//



**CUT ALONG  
THE DOTTED  
LINES AND  
FOLD.**

# ***LANDSCAPE ROOM//***

***Photographed by Josh Kundert-Gibbs  
Modeled by Stephanie Shaffir***







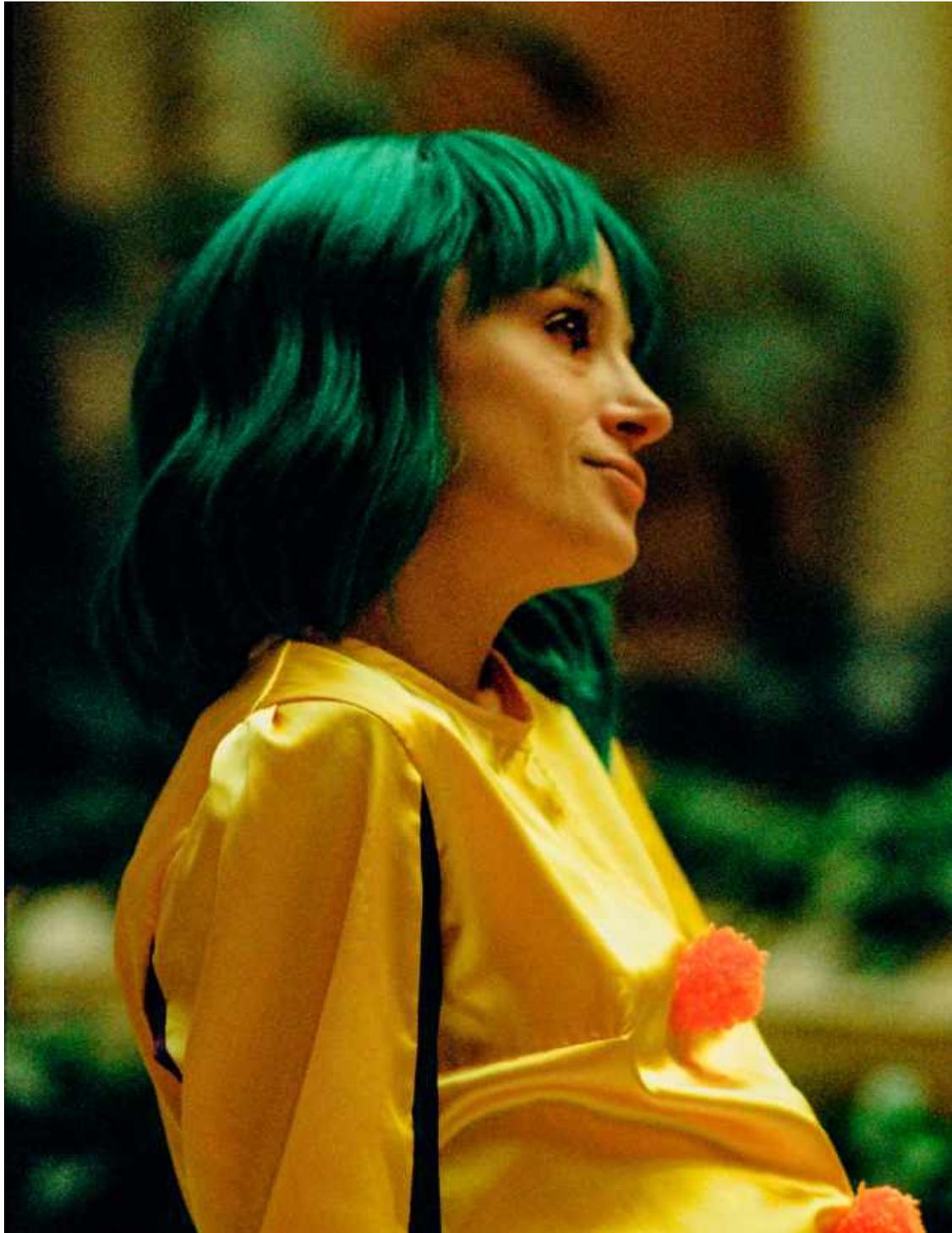








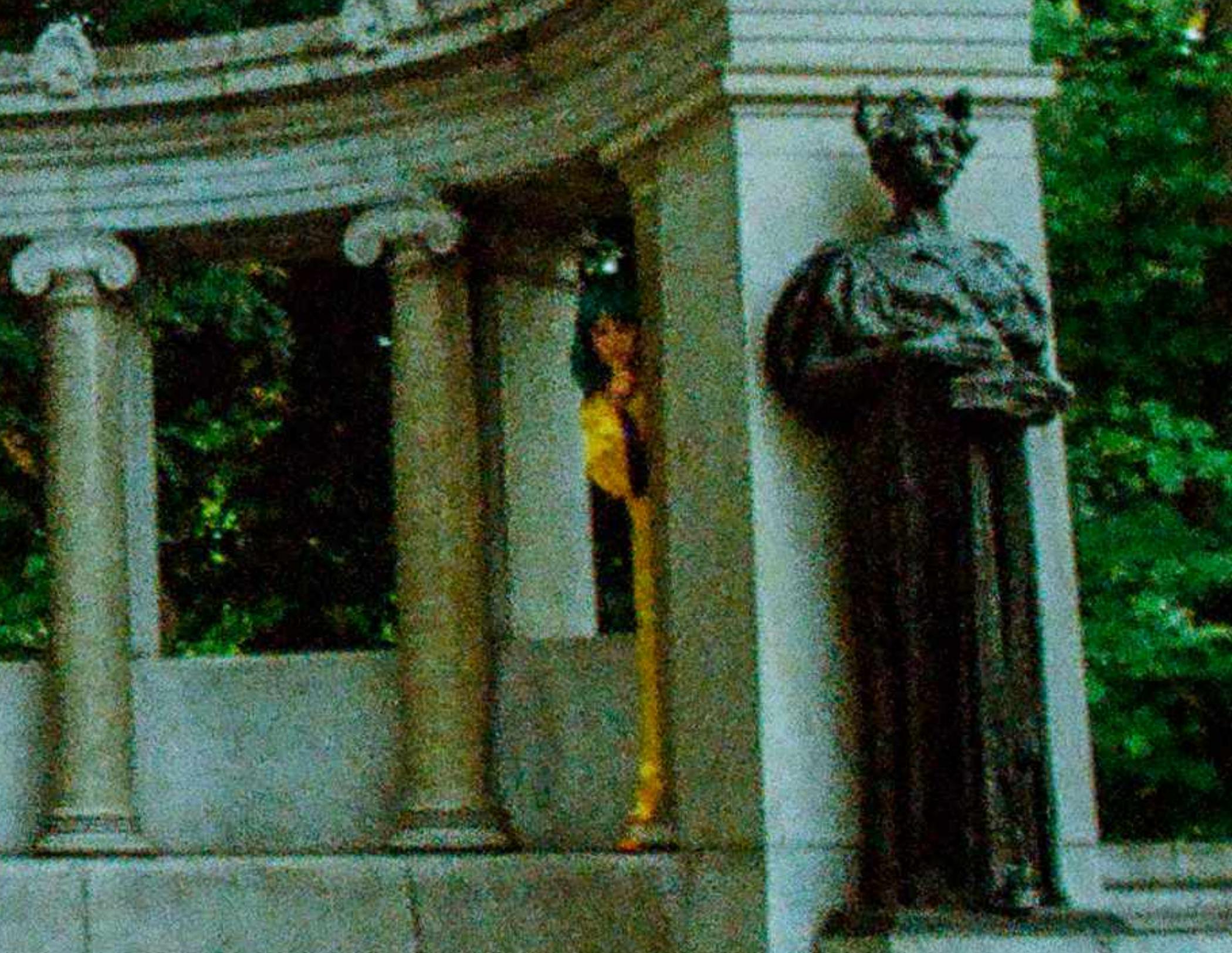














Thank you for reading Waif Magazine issue 16.

Issue 17 will be released at the end of November and also has already been released, thirty years.

Like the IS WAIF apparel featured in this issue? Order shirts and hats at [www.iswaif.com/clothes](http://www.iswaif.com/clothes)

Submit to compete in our inaugural Chicken of Tomorrow competition at [www.iswaif.com/chicken](http://www.iswaif.com/chicken)

Don't like what you read in this issue? Send us your stories, photos, artwork at [waifmagazin3@gmail.com](mailto:waifmagazin3@gmail.com).

Please no poems - keep Waif at the cutting edge of journalism.

Follow [@waifmagazine on Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/waifmagazine) for updates

***What  
is  
Waif  
?***