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Middled Between

Kimberly Wolfe

Course: WRT 422, Creative Nonfiction

Instructor: Troy Gordon

AUTHOR'S NOTE: I was assigned this piece while studying in London. The assignment was to sum up four months living there. I titled my piece "Middled Between" to demonstrate the process of liminality for me abroad. So this is me, disjointed, taking it all in, in London.

Editors' Note: A deep look into a poetic kaleidoscope aimed at London.

photos by Erin Buksbaum

I think about what should
be taken as keen
my gaze draws the land
seeking desires

I look down to see up
in puddled reflections
clouds catch the
sun's sky

rain lands in my hand
touched to my cheek
becomes a tear
puddles in my eye

I wish I could be
too honest like thunder
bellowing out frustrations
above cold ground
under deep sky

middled between
mixing horizons
never still
never moving

but as feet carry
sharp beams keep
squinting
eyes from opening

can't I feel the joy of light
hitting a tree
throwing down like roots
shadows long on the
ground

flocking wings
whispering to rivers
secrets told to the wind

Long shadows on the green garden grass remind everyone of the hour. How the time passes so quickly still seems a mystery. It was the perfect day. The dog ran about in her spring glory, catching the ball as it was thrown to her. The trampoline was officially open for spring, now that the protective netting was up. Trampoline ball (a game invented specifically for this trampoline) commenced, followed by laughter. Big fluffy clouds hung in the middle of the blue sky, but never seemed to cover the sun. It was as if they realized it had been so long since England had seen blue overhead that they decided to cut everyone a break. Little blossoms spotted the cherry tree giving it a fresh spirit in the new season. The shadow crept closer and closer, consuming the day as it moved. The colors of the garden were vibrant and bright, even once in the shadow of the white stucco house.

Two days later, the same garden that was bright and colorful was now white, blanketed by a layer of freshly fallen snow. What a treat to see snow in April. The red tulips popped against the white. The ground had been untouched by human, feline, or canine feet, making it picture perfect. Snow balanced perfectly on the branches. Any sudden movement and it would fall. The sky was back to its normal gray, but the snow made it light out. The light filled the room as if it were the sun. A boy sat with his back to the kitchen window, turning around every few minutes to see the sun, only to realize it was just the snow.

The smell of hotdogs and onions lingers around the corner of the British Museum. The smell produced by the street vender penetrates the nose...lingers there for a moment or two, being fully absorbed and appreciated by the nasal passages. It moves like a misty vapor from the nose, through the throat, down the esophagus, into the stomach. The mighty Gremlin of the Stomach awakes and starts roaring and rumbling, making its needs known. What else is there to do but provide for the Stomach the satisfaction it seeks. The hand reaches into the pocket pulling out pound coins peppered with lint and crumbs from yesterday's afternoon snack. 'Wait!' Just before the money is handed over, the Brain puts a halt to the entire operation, saying 'Don't even think of putting that in me!' The chain reaction then begins. Nose convinces Stomach to convince Brain everything will be all right. The mighty Gremlin of the Stomach overpowers Logic of the Brain, Hands hand over the £2.50. The deal is done. The Gremlins of the Stomach calms down, Logic of the Brain regrets this moment, and the Nose finds comfort in knowing how to satisfy his sometimes lover, sometimes enemy, the Stomach.

Pub grub: bangers and mash, nip and tatties, fish and chips...hardy root vegetables with warm meat...all seemingly named in sexual innuendoes.



Picking up the pieces of my clothes strewn all over the heavily trafficked laundry floor, no longer clean—frustrated. Spilled milk in the fridge—no time! We are already late by two hours and have an hour journey still ahead. Life today has felt like a journey. Tomato sauce splattered on my brand new, top of the line, Top Shop shirt. Scalding hot shower suddenly changed to stingingly cold—no happy medium. Today was proof that bad days happen in London. Life here has strangely comforting normalities of home; it makes me wonder if home is really 'home'.

How do you go home
when home is in two places?