

Editors' Note

"Reading is an exercise in empathy; an exercise in walking in someone else's shoes for a while."

– Malorie Blackman

Thank you for taking the time to read the 24th edition of the *Bryant Literary Review*. As Student Editors, we have enjoyed reading fiction and creative nonfiction from around the world. The stories featured in this year's *BLR* provide windows into the experiences of people, both fictional and real, navigating unique challenges and finding ways to survive.

Engaging with these stories is a form of connecting with people and understanding different perspectives. The world has been changing dramatically over the past few years and we have shared collective struggles. While many prominent voices seek to divide us, we believe it is most important, especially now, to empathize with others. Reading these stories is a practice in that essential skill of empathy as readers confront subject matter that deals with our connectedness as humans.

We would like to take a moment to express our gratitude to those who submitted their work, as our publication would not be possible without this year's group of talented writers. We would like to thank Professor Thomas Roach who has been one of our biggest supporters throughout our college careers. His energy and passion will continue to motivate and inspire us after we say goodbye to Bryant University. In addition, we send thanks to Poetry Editor Eric Paul and Student Poetry Editors Daniel Mann and Madalyn Richardson. They too have committed significant time and effort to this edition, and we have enjoyed working alongside them. This year's *BLR* is the last edition the four Student Editors will work on because we will graduate in May 2023. We sincerely appreciate that you, the reader, are taking the time to engage with the stories and poems we have chosen to share. We hope that reading this selection is, for you, the "exercise in empathy" that it was for us.

Megan Polun, Student Fiction Editor, Bryant University '23

Grace O'Donnell, Student Fiction Editor, Bryant University '23