

ANIKA NARAYANAN

For Now

There is something to be said for love in the wintertime
The cold hushes us into the womb of a windowless home
There is no choice but to love to keep warm
So we did

There is something to be said for the girl who
drinks wine
And the boy who drinks water
Then carries her to bed
Slowly she whispers *I can't say goodbye again*
Not yet
So they didn't

There is something to be said for being young
Playing pretend in a house that doesn't belong to you
As if it would turn into forever if they wanted it
badly enough
I promise he whispers *I'm not going anywhere*
But he did

He knew all of the constellations and she knew all
of the flowers
But there is something to be said about the distance
between the sky
And the ground
Even though the in-between melted because winter

So much like childhood love
Isn't forever
Even if you want it badly enough

Forever is so much easier when the hands of the clock
are stopped
And the house is too dark to see them anyway
But now he is tired and she is scared and everything
that meant something
Was just filling the empty space that winter had
given them
And they are still so young

I can't he whispers
I know she says

This is just for now. This is fine. It's not wintertime
anymore and we're breathing easier and light has
come out of hibernation and we're alone but we're
safe, alone but no longer lonely and it's okay, it's okay,
it's okay as long as you let it be...

Maybe not now she says *But it will be.*

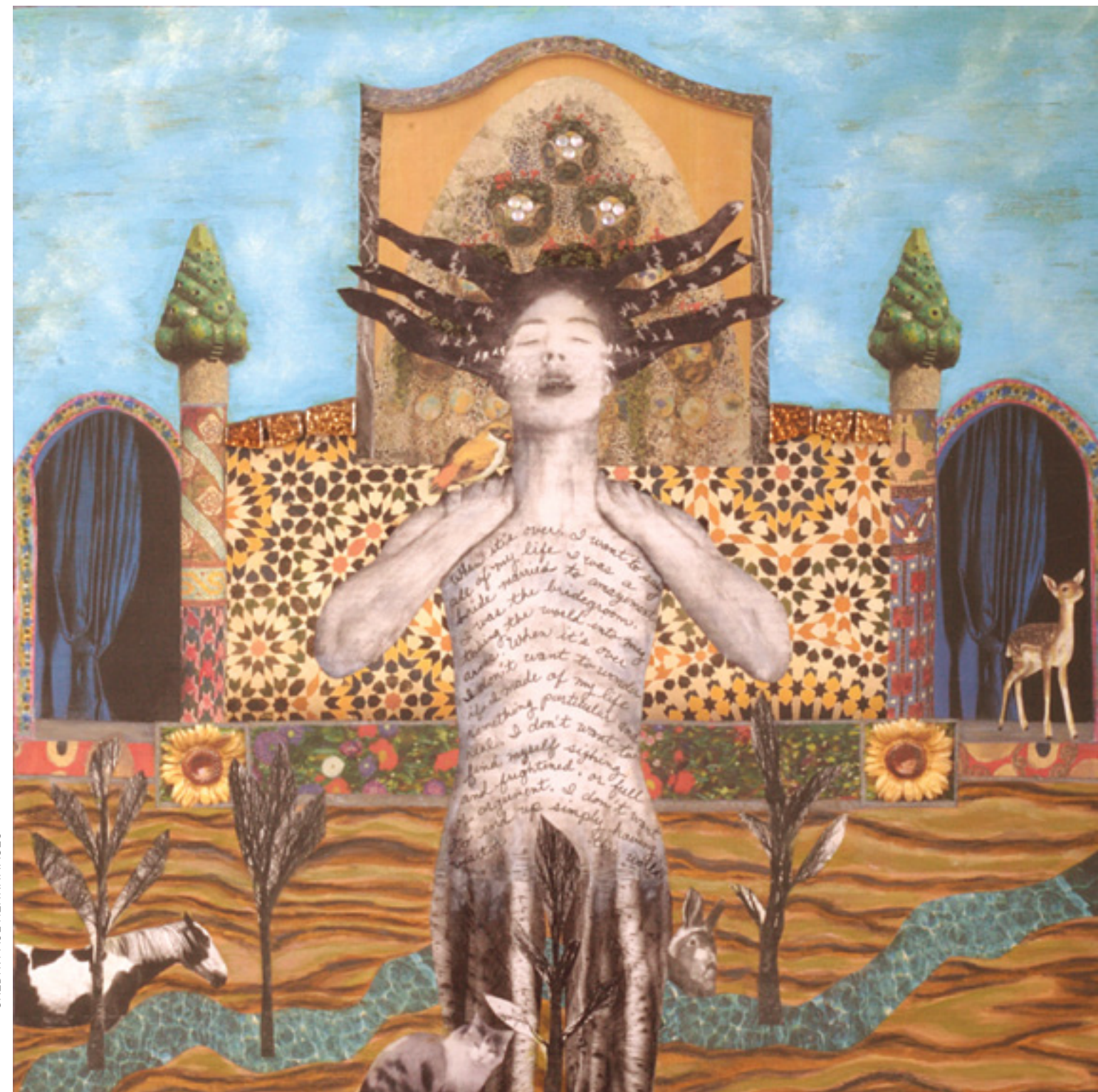
There is something to be said for love in the wintertime.
It thaws. Then the sleeping seeds awaken. These flowers
are the ones I know.

But if I could just forget those eyes and that winter
and that house—
Oh my darling I would try.

Anika Narayanan is a seventeen-year-old student from Santa Monica. In 2013, a poem of hers was featured by the poetry collective Greece at Peace. She has also appeared as a guest on radio KUSP's *Poetry Show* in Santa Cruz, California. She will be attending the University of Southern California in the fall.

CAROL GAAB

Reaching into the Edges of my Longing, 2014
Acrylic, collage, glass, rhinestones, on wood, 16 x 16 in



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