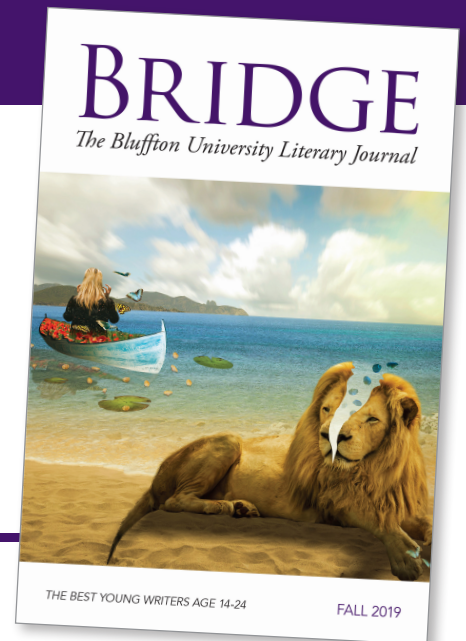


BRIDGE

The Bluffton University Literary Journal



A DOLPHIN NAMED D.W.¹

T.E. Irvine

For all the toys that never got to see the States,

The first thing I remember loving —
you,
 who taught me I was more than just myself.
 That tear upon your dorsal fin, the
 first
 of my lovemarks — *m a n i f e s t d e s t i n y ;*
 a smear of blood across your white belly,
 a coat washed out by homespun saltwater.

She set you loose in stainless steel-drummed seas;
 somewhere chasing tea towels and odd socks
 you became lost, from *not-me* to *not mine*

at all. That night I made my own oceans,
 and clicked my tongue, left the lighthouse light on.

You were replaced by a nameless blanket,

so now I string together furniture
 To stop her as she leaves for work each night.

¹ In his 1951 essay *Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena*, D.W. Winnocott describes the transitional object as “the first ‘not-me’ possession [...] an attachment to a teddy bear, doll or soft toy” that takes the place of the mother-child bond during an intermediate developmental phase between the psychic and external reality.



THOMAS IRVINE is currently enrolled in the University of East Anglia creative writing poetry program. He has a bachelor’s degree in English and American literature from the University of Leicester and Kent State University. He also co-runs a spoken word evening “Shout of Whisper” in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, England.