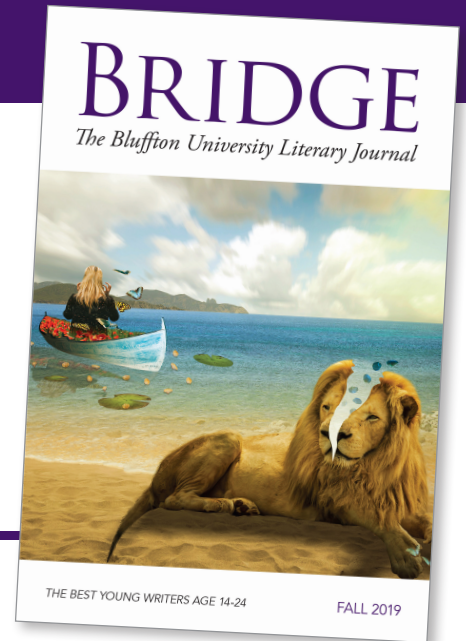


BRIDGE

The Bluffton University Literary Journal



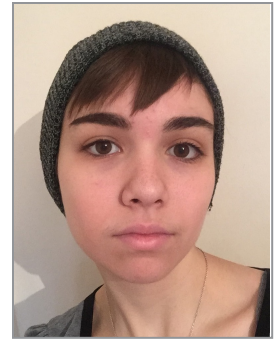
ZAHNEN

Rachel Luebke

A voice came from the quick of my teeth.
It said— Wer schützen sie?
My teeth tasted of metal,
they burned and cracked wie ein Geschoss.
Zählen sie auf Deutsch bis zweiunddreizig
oder wir schlagen sie.
I was afraid— Teeth do not speak, I said,
they are not radios or ouija boards or doors.
Then my teeth were angry,
they gripped my gums like barbed wire,
like I was meat belonging to them,
and I stuck my tongue between them.

My teeth were seeds.
Who did they belong to before me?
I thought they would fall out when I turned eighteen,
but they had grown roots durch mein Knochenmark
und Blumen through my sinuses.

Achtung! they said when I sat in the garden at night.
Ordnug! they said when I showered at night.
I learned German to understand my teeth.
Through my teeth I spoke with another time,
another myself,
across the Atlantic at night,
where I was dead on a couch in Berlin.



RACHEL LUEBKE is a writer, poet and artist. She graduated from Maryville University where she was part of the Bascom Honors Program and on the staff of the literary magazine, Magnolia. She has been published in *The American Journal of Poetry*.