

Fresh Voices Issue 2:



The Future is
Female?





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AN ODE TO HER

Lilli Cullen

Turning to face her through the glass pane separating, I see
pained eyes, pleading, whilst forced on her knee.

The Hands make for oppressive silence.

Smothering her lips, a possessive and forceful guidance
a rough grip on her voice, commanding ownership of her body,

and everything else.

We are strangers, but so alike.

I feel it,

when she learns of what separates us beyond the glass wall.

Her hands reach out longingly, fingers desperately grasping for the independence,
the knowledge,

the freedom,

the autonomy and acknowledgment that I prove could exist for us.

For Her.

I turn, and in my last glance I spy hope,

dancing around in her irises.

Cautious optimism graces the mouth of a woman pushed
into invisible silence

for far too long.

I turn to meet myself in the mirror.

She stares back anxiously, wide-eyed and
frightened, in unstable and unprecedented times.

Yet in them, I catch the spark of her dream still tucked away
threatening the world and its constraints with an overwhelming blaze
and rage
over a desperate need for change.

Uncertainty wages war in me as I turn for the last time,
and face the new glass wall to meet her
The Future.

The Hands no longer possess her throat, her eyes glitter at her own emboldened stature
and the strength in her voice. She softens,
reaching to meet my fingers on the pane with a gentle hand of power.

Her smile promises light and her posture courage, and as her eyes plead with me to keep
going, to meet her,

I turn to meet myself once more in the mirror, and with new anticipation I smile
To The Future.

CROISSANTS FOR BREAKFAST

Julie Crane

Millie Winton (née Phoenix) stuck out her arm to stop the bus. The indicator flashed and it began to slow down, spraying up a little water as it drove through a puddle. The driver stopped; keeping his eyes on the road, he didn't notice as Millie struggled to pull herself up onto the first step. She balanced her new red rose covered shopping trolley in the crook of her arm and flashed her bus pass at the driver. She waited for a response, but the driver didn't even manage a nod. She shrugged and headed towards the front seat.

There was a young man sat there. She pulled her shopping trolley along behind her and paused to consider her options.

“Oh,” mumbled the young man, and he moved to the seats behind.

Millie smiled at him and mouthed *thank you*. She made herself comfortable, parking her shopping trolley in between her knees. She spread her coat across the double seat and looked out of the window. The high street began to move past in a slow blur.

The bus trundled on.

Millie was eighty-five years old, stout but fit for her age - sometimes she could be a little achy in the mornings before she got going. She had raised six children, and a husband. For forty years she had worked two days a week in the village cake shop. Joe let her keep her wages so she could treat herself - but she never liked to be frivolous. She was adept at placing doughnuts in a paper bag and flipping it over so the top was tied secure. She could

add up money - 35p, 40p, £1.25 - quicker than a wink. And working out change from a ten-pound note - child's play. The youngsters couldn't do that. Her mind was still as sharp as a tack. She could cook a roast for ten with her eyes closed, and then, like a whirlwind, would clean up. It was always a pleasure to see smiles on satisfied faces. Married for sixty-seven years before her husband passed; it had been a good life. She had everything a woman could want and no time to think otherwise.

When Joe died, she had time. Her own time. She could sit in his favourite chair - the one that had the best view of the TV. And eat breakfast whenever she wanted. She never cared much for bacon and eggs, but Joe did. He always started his day with a cup of tea. Millie made it '*just right*'. So, regular as clockwork, that is what she did - for sixty-seven years.

In Sainsbury's, a week after Joe's funeral, Millie bought a packet of croissants. She looked at them in her basket, a forbidden treasure. Joe hated foreign food. Tucking into her continental breakfast, she sat and pondered. Her coffee cup in her hand, she relaxed back in the big chair and looked around. Her living room was tidy: Joe was never one for clutter, and she liked things 'spick and span'. She felt an emptiness. She thought, at first, that must be natural - after sixty-seven years with someone. Her oldest child now sixty-five and the youngest fifty-five - they didn't need her. Her grandchildren, all fourteen of them, always busy. The numerous photographs of her husband, her children, their children, and her parents, looked at her from the mantelpiece. The daylight picked up some silvery specks on one of the frames; she went to the kitchen to fetch her duster.

Flicking a teeny fleck of dust from the golden frame of her granddaughter's graduation picture, she sighed. At fifteen, Millie had left school. Her mother was unsure why a woman would ever want an education - fearing that being 'a smart arse' would jeopardise a happy marriage to the neighbour's boy. That betrothal had been organised in the pram. Mum gave Millie a *proper* education: how to sew and mend and cook. Her mother had so much love and fire wrapped up in her apron, no-one ever dared cross her - or there'd be a clip 'round the ear. On a bad day, she would wash your mouth out with soap. These memories made Millie laugh. Her mother had left school at twelve. Reading and writing were not important to her. Or so she said. Millie had noticed her bluff her way through fairy stories at bedtime. But she was stronger than anyone realised; Millie knew her mother had led the family from behind and she had done the same. Her mother's last days with cancer were cruel. But Millie had made them as comfortable as she could.

She straightened her wedding photograph. Millie married Joe, the neighbour's boy, in the spring of 1961; she fell pregnant straight away. A blessing. Joe never agreed with the new-fangled pill - '*you should never mess with mother nature*' he would say, with a twinkle in his eye. Six more followed. One was not meant to be, but the memory of him lived in a small corner of her mind.

She took another croissant from the packet. Joe probably would have liked them, but he was never one for adventure. She pushed the crumbs around the plate with her finger; there was a niggling, gnawing, nibbling feeling in her gut. She looked at the clock. The rest of her life lay before her. And it was hers. She wasn't ready for time's arrow to catch her, just yet.

Millie stood and pressed the bell to stop the bus; the driver pulled over suddenly, and her shopping trolley lurched forward.

“Let me get that,” offered the young man that had been sat behind her, “this is my stop too.” He lifted the trolley off the bus and offered his hand to Millie to help her down to the pavement.

“This is heavy!” he said, placing the trolley at Millie’s side. “What’s in it? Rocks?” he joked.

“Books,” she said, standing tall. She looked ahead at a big white building at the end of a landscaped path. “I’m starting university today,” she said proudly.

The young man was puzzled, twisting his lip and raising an eyebrow. “Why?” he asked.

She looked him square in the eye, “Because I can,” she said.

FROM WITHIN THE INTERSECTION

Ebony Lewis

In 2025, women in the western sphere are free.

No need for equality, because men get paid the same as me.

Toward the realm of freedom, my ancestors negated me.

Everlong was the struggle, and now white women are free.

Race doesn't comprehend the waves of equality, there is no such word when you're a minority.

Secularization prevails as religion suffocates women in veils.

Education stripped from women in the Middle East just one year ago.

Condense your knowledge of history, we've seen this one before.

Together as a whole, we are not free until we are all.

Intersectional feminism must take centre stage, they can target all women, they can target all races.

Oppression is ingrained, banned abortions, marketed pink razor blades.

Not one of us is free until we are all free.

Anarchy as a privileged woman is fighting not for what benefits us as one but what benefits us all.

Let them legalize child brides, legalize FGM, legalize femicide... but when it comes across the country it will be too close to close your eyes.

WHEN THE MONSTERS COME

Karine Wells

There's nowhere to run
When the monsters come,
Their legs swift, their eyes sharp.

There's nowhere to hide
When they start the hunt,
Their ears keen, their senses honed.

There's no one to see
When they take you,
Your tears burning, your screams primal.

There's no one to fight
When they feast,
Their fangs biting, their claws tearing.

So there's nothing to stop you
When the monsters strike,
Your fists pounding, their lips screaming.

Because there's no one to save you,
When the monsters come.
No one but you.

THE FUTURE IS FEMALE

Corey Chate-McKeever

One day, when I'm alone, it will all fall away. My swaying hair in the sun will rebel against it all. Colours will look different, smell different. The washcloth, the bed, the tapestry above it, they'll gleam through the stench of dread so thoroughly prisoned between these walls. I will dance in the kitchen; I will drink my husband's wine from plant pots and search the house for clues to my great escape. The future will lick at the doorstep when I take my plunge for the outside but for now, I go blank. My drooped face with my hanging mouth feels frozen in time, eying up my death sentence. "Do the dishes. Clean the bedroom. Hang the drying. Make dinner. Don't. Leave.". Not now, I tell myself, now it's time to rake in the loneliness like a lifeline, talk to it as though it were a person. When I'm alone I feel it all so acutely.

Dishes. I go to the kitchen and sink my hands in. I thought if I tried hard enough, I could clean myself too, I'd scrape up every inch of skin and cleanse what lies deeper. My guilt will immobilise me in the great run so I must wrench it free.

Clean the bedroom. I go to our shared room and hide under a chair. I dust and polish to perfection only Gods know in my space underneath. My life confined now to the chair below the desk and for a moment, its flawless. I bask in my own wonder for a second too long, now turning bitter. I can't stay anywhere for too long; my hatred runs deeper than my loyalty.

Hang the drying. As I string the pieces of clothing up, I wonder how my body would look like that. Christ-like. I'd sag, doubled over in sacrifice, my feet never to touch the ground again.

Next, I make dinner, precise measurements are key in this. I take it so carefully, so slowly, it may burn. I finish at the right time, just before it gets too much. I have a knack for things such as this. The waiting. My last job is to stay. This is the hardest to achieve; waiting and staying are two very different things. The waiting is mindful, skilful. To stay is to rot.

I stare down the door, take a step backwards as though bracing. I imagine the future. A future where I'm powerful. My footsteps would be learnt in their patterns, as I have learnt his. I would ravage life, taking more than I should. I would drink as though I'm not trying to savour youth, and I would spit in my old ages, steal on the weekends.

I take a step forward, glancing at the keys. One more. The door now seems closer than it ever has been to me. I go through my list. My reasons to do this. I will sink my body into the sea and only come up for air when my lungs are squeezed. I will wash this life off me if it kills me. The streets will feel like my space under the chair, perfectly mine. The hatred has always come from him. I will climb trees, lampposts even, to know what it feels like to fall to perfect freedom. My body will no longer hang. I will wait, not for dinner, but for the future. I will live as though I'm sprinting to the next day, soaking up the drops of life dangling from the leaves.

I clasp the doorknob, hands now dripping off little pearls of anger, getting rid of them before my greatest escape yet. I don't want to have sex because you've wrenched my body

dead. That's what I'd say to him. I don't want to stay; you've killed the parts of me capable of loving you. I pull the door open.

I step outside, barefoot, saint-like in my nightgown.

VOICE

Hannah Hill

You can speak, can't you?

Sign, write, think, form opinions.

Well then, you have a voice, and aren't you lucky that nobody is trying to take it.

I have a voice too, for now, but it's the strangest thing,

Although mine is so quiet,

It's the only one I hear.

*

You tell me you are a good man.

Well, it seems reasonable to think a good man would not be sitting, watching as my gender goes up in flames.

I am not saying you are a bad man. You who walks me in the night, you who keeps your gaze level with my eyes.

I am saying your attitude, your ignorance en masse condones bad men. You don't clear the way, so much as leave it unobstructed for those radical enough to go further than you ever would.

It begins so small,

Then slowly – but faster than you think – inches towards it.

Violence, usurpation, femicide.

You'll roll your eyes when I say something so dramatic.

I am not saying you're a bad man. I'm saying there's the good, there's the bad,
And then there's you.

You, who doesn't care because he doesn't need to, and when I tell you as much, you are silent.

When I state any fact you can't rebuke, you are silent. You think that's what I want. The sanctimonious minority getting to take their win.

That's what these arguments are about to you, isn't it? Winning.

Losing.

Who gains the most by enduring the worst?

Your petty privilege games.

Your own privilege, to focus so hard on the smaller picture that you won't realise your failure in this argument is your success in the world.

No, all you can see is that you are losing, and I am winning, and you, gracious as you are, fall silent.

Accept, agree, 'fine, your life is so much harder than mine',

Fall silent.

Hand me my win.

I do not win when you are silent.

When your sport is my safety, and we are playing on your turf, and the score is tipped by your grandfather's foot still holding its weight after all this time, why would I ever want to hear,

'Fine, your life is so much harder than mine'?

You may not be the cause, but your indifference is compliance, and your silence encourages ours.

We need to hear your voice. All I hear are your echoes in our voices.

Our voices, trying to justify you.

It's November 6th, 2024, and I, a woman, open my phone. I scroll through the live reactions as other women wake.

A convicted sexual assaulter has been re-elected American president. His administration contributed to a 'wishful policy' citing a ban of education on gender equality, reproductive rights, and other such 'woke propaganda'. A man who bragged of 'killing' Roe v. Wade two years following a study stating maternal death rates had raised 62% in complying states.

The white male voted in outstanding majority

Towards the right.

I, a woman, watch other women in fear as our proven oppressor still receives majority favour.

Swipe

I, a woman, watch as tweets gloating 'your body, my choice' flood my screen. (Days later, the influx of the term is reported as 4,600%, and I feel no surprise).

Swipe

I, a woman, watch another woman state that your disregard of our health is our fault.

We are too harsh, too critical, too limiting, she says. We make being a 'good man' an unachievable feat – when we always seem to have a new complaint, can we blame you for your anger? In demanding so much, we turn you away ourselves, and our oppressors accept your flaws with open arms.

That's the problem with our system, she says. We do not welcome you.

Her words when you've fallen silent.

And when she speaks, she speaks with the same innocence and round curvature of her lips as a child discovering something completely new. Thrilled, demanding approval. But what's more? She actually receives it.

She receives it, as though being seen and not heard is some grand new plan. As though the radical feminist has never been told to quiet down before, before she incites a modicum,

A fraction,

A pinch,

Of our discomfort on those who cause it.

Don't bite the hand that feeds us, that's what she's saying.

Fawn, fix, don't nag. Just pick up the pieces you drop and carry them on our shoulders dutifully. Silently.

Well, that dream is coming true not so far away, and I have to wonder,

Are the Afghan women heard now?

Now that their voices are outlawed, their bodies outlawed, their gaze outlawed. Now that they walk shrouded head-to-toe, and any sound that leaves their lips is a punishable offence.

Their pleas are silent, in fear of the new law.

Are they finally heeded?

I do not win when you are silent. Your silence encourages ours.

We need to hear your voice.

All I hear are your excuses.

"I just don't understand," falls from your lips, and your eyes don't quite meet mine, and there's not one glint of curiosity within them.

Your ears won't hear, either: that thudding weight with which your words

drop.

Mine will.

And I will see that your tongue tipped your sentence, sentencing me to your
afterthought, without a single forethought, for you
do not
think.

I can see it in your scanting glance, your fingers fiddling with the power button of
your phone, the only thing you are truly listening for in this conversation is when it will be
over.

I stand.

“We’re out of bread. I’m going to the shop.”

You look up. Take your thumb off your phone.

“Let me walk you. It’s dark out.”

I turn.

“Okay,” I say, with a brief pause. “You really don’t understand?”

“I just think you blow it way out of proportion,” you say. “I’d never hurt you, and I
don’t know anyone who would. Now, let me get my coat.”

I’ll feel anger, but mostly, I’ll feel envy.

To not know.

To not need to know.

To you, anything that you don’t know simply doesn’t exist, and I can only imagine
the bliss that is.

That you are so safe, so secure buried under wilful ignorance that you couldn’t
imagine learning anything of the world for anything other than leisure.

I feel it when you say with your so-well-meaning smile, “Turn off those headlines.
They only cause you stress’.

Headlines of my rights being taken away in countries that only seem to grow closer.

Headlines flashing all around me, 'the greatest pro-boxer, returning to fight tonight!' relentlessly lighting up the screens of my phone, TV, every electronic billboard I walk past. I'll grit my teeth, but when the devastation at his loss conquers my social media feed, I'll slam my phone down.

"Where's all this sympathy for the girl he raped?" I'll demand to nobody in particular, and you'll agree.

But then I'll see that so-well-meaning smile again.

"Stop being so aware, you'll never enjoy anything."

Of course, because anything you don't know doesn't exist, you will never understand that anything I don't know is coming up behind me.

This is not my leisure, tracking everything that treads in my direction.

This is reaction.

The first time I walked from public transport I didn't notice the danger until he was on me, twice my size, forcing me to the wall with his shoulder, keeping with my quickening pace. Noticing just a second too late the phone behind my back as my fingers, blind, dialled for help.

The second time I noticed the danger as it entered my peripheral. I was further from help, but I had the disarming answers memorised. Yes, I've lived here my whole life, I am older than twenty, a man will be meeting me here soon.

Lie.

Smile.

Offput.

Hope to God he does not come any closer, because then what could I do?

The only way to evade that grasp is to dodge punches before they are thrown.

To do that, I must know, and I agree, I know too much.

But you know far too little.

To you, my vigilance is paranoia, and you will never understand that the fervour of fear I deliberately stir within myself is essential to my safety. I cannot allow myself to feel safe, not even with you.

Especially not with you.

Because statistically, the most dangerous place for a woman to be isn't outside with the men we don't know.

It's in our own home with the men we trust.

You play that bit too rough, you move at me too fast,

I flinch.

Each time there's that look of hurt, sulking in your eyes.

You don't understand why, and though I'll explain it time and time again, you'll never listen. You hate when I flinch.

It makes you feel like *them*.

Those who you condemn as animals. Those who you refuse to think about, who you could never be.

Those less-than-men, just boys, whose spines curve towards the ground, too cowardly to stand like you do.

You'll hear our stories, shift us away from the strange men at clubs, and your mind will enter a house of mirrors stubbornly warped so you cannot see your reflection. These are *bad men* – not even really men, you'll remind me, or yourself, with an air of superiority – not men you identify with.

They might be some strained acquaintance, or that one in the group who could never quite *gel*, yes, you always knew it could be them.

But:

They are not your mate, not your brother,

Certainly not *you*.

They're the strange figure walking in the shadows at night, or they're the face you see on the news. But nobody you know.

They couldn't be.

They couldn't be, because, of course, if you acknowledged that proverbial margin between the bad and the good for longer than a moment,

You'd know it'd close tremendously fast.

Your black-and-white turns to murky grey,

And you'd hear them.

Those jokes you share in the living room with your mates.

What you say when nobody's around.

And you might realise, somewhere, at least one string in that web of dark jokes between yourselves is one of their dark fantasies. Very real, growing ever stronger with your unwitting fuel, winding around the women behind them.

You might see yourself in that house of mirrors.

You might see why I flinch.

And then, and only then, might you even see your cowardice. Your hypocrisy, your pathetically absorbed self, making light of the abuse, rape and fear your girlfriend, sister, mother has lived through.

The next day shamelessly rebutting our clear power imbalance with your worst fear – that you could be wrongfully accused of those acts you find so funny.

Of being turned over to the big men.

Because, suddenly, someone's legal power over you is a horrifying thing, and suddenly, being condemned to a life of restriction is disgustingly unethical, and don't you know what happens to men in prison?

Don't you know what happens to men in prison? (that's what you dare ask me).

The same thing that happens to women in their own home.

Not by your hand, never.

But perhaps, in the school canteen,

When your mate showed you the circling nudes of that one girl, and clicked 'send'
once more,

Or perhaps at your flat, hearing the crashing and shouting upstairs,

When you bumped into your neighbour in the hall the next day, her sleeves long and
head bent,

Or even on polling day, when the walk was just ten minutes too long, and the articles
too confusing,

And years from the next day, your friend's contraceptive failed, and her education is
cut short as she has no choice but to retreat home and prepare.

Maybe if anyone had heard your voice then,

Theirs wouldn't be so stifled now.

Your indifference is compliance and your silence encourages ours.

Please use your voice.

INCREASING THE VALUE OF WOMEN

Julie Crane

“This is great news,” the Chief stroked his chin thoughtfully, “actually, this is terrific!”

“It's what we have been waiting for,” said an excitable man in a T-shirt, jeans, and a baseball cap. He rubbed his hands together with pleasure. “It's a game changer!”

“Get me a press conference, stat!” ordered the Chief.

“Right away, Chief!” the excitable man pressed the red button on the intercom and spoke to the waiting secretary in the office next door. “Organise a press conference,” he barked.

“Yes, sir,” said the woman, immediately springing into action.

The reporters were gathered, their microphones and cameras all pointing eagerly at the Chief.

Smiling broadly, and with the tone of a man who has just invented the wheel, he began speaking: “We have discovered the most fantastic thing. You're not going to believe it. It's so great. And we've done it. Everyone else has failed, but we've done it.”

The room buzzed with anticipation; the reporters were almost off their seats with excitement.

The Chief continued:

“I think that our country is right now in the most dangerous position it has ever been in; we are overrun with illegals and gangs and radicals. We have to make it great again.” His voice was assured. “I’m going to do that; we can do that; yes,” he nodded confidently. “Our scientists, they’re the best in the world by the way, have been working round the clock. Made a great discovery. You’re going to love it. I love it. We need more pure-bred citizens on our streets, everyone knows that. Today, I will sign an order for women to be injected with a new hormone - this will induce two ovulation cycles a month. It will work, no side effects, they’ll be twice as fertile; we are literally doubling the value of women. They’ll love that. The women love it.”

“Chief? Chief?” a female reporter raised her hand and waved to get his attention.

The Chief pointed to a male reporter in a suit, “Yes, your question?”

“Chief, does this change your position on abortion?” The press conference gasped.

“Who is this guy? He’s terrible; what a terrible person. We are going to create millions... millions of lives. Save millions of lives. It’s great for the women. Women love it. I love women.”

Slightly irritated, the Chief looked around the room for more questions, “you... pretty lady, you have a question for the Chief?”

She opened her mouth to speak, but she was lost for words.

Biographies

Lilli Cullen

Lilli Cullen is a student and aspiring writer with a passion for storytelling and writing in all forms. Currently studying English in Bournemouth, Lilli writes short stories and poetry exploring a variety of themes and is looking forward to expanding in different directions with her writing.

Julie Crane

A mature student, Julie enjoys spending time with her family. She reads far too much historical fiction to have a balanced view on life.

Ebony Lewis

Ebony Lewis is a second-year student at Bournemouth University, studying English Literature. She is passionate about creative writing and poetry, and hopes to pursue a career writing nuanced female characters.

Karine Wells

Karine Wells is a final year English student with a love of fantasy stories. Ever since she could put pen to paper, she has passionately explored the writing world, experimenting with poetry, short stories, and more. Becoming published has always been her biggest aspiration, and she hopes her works inspire others to pursue their creative journeys.

Corey Chate-McKeever

A BU student, Corey loves writing in their spare time and reads way too much poetry to have a life.

Hannah Hill

Hannah Hill is a third-year BA English student at Bournemouth University with a passion for sociopolitics. She endeavours to specialise in this in a future career in academia.

Letters from the Fresh Voices Team

From our Editorial Assistant

Dear readers,

It has been an absolute honour to contribute to this fantastic project, with its hub of creatives and visionaries, and I offer my gratitude to the innovators, the interpreters and the inaugurators of this truly essential organisation. Each of our voices deserve to be heard. It is my hope that after this issue, the community surrounding Fresh Voices will continue to flourish, even in the face of the unfortunate cut to our amazing BA English programme.

I thank all who have submitted, and I would like to congratulate each and every contributor for their diverse interpretations and outlooks. Their nuanced thinking is moving, and on a personal note, the submissions have broadened my own perspectives. It requires a lot of bravery to submit personal work to a publicised paper, and I admire all of our contributors for taking that leap. This issue would not be the same without your stories. To our readers—without your continued support, Fresh Voices would not be possible.

Finally, I would like to thank my team for their consistent dedication and for making this vision a reality. Each idea, design, flyer, webpage, and social media account is individually crafted through hours of work by an intimate team of interns, and the support you give not only to Fresh Voices but to the team itself is invaluable. Overall, Fresher Publishing has been an extremely supportive and collaborative environment that I will sorely miss.

Once again, thank you to every individual supporter of Fresh Voices. I hope you have enjoyed our latest issue.

Sincerely,

Hannah Hill
Editorial Assistant
Fresher Publishing

From our Deputy Editor

Dear readers,

As we launch the second edition of *Fresh Voices*, I am filled with immense gratitude for the growing community of writers, thinkers and readers who have made this magazine such a vibrant space for creativity and discussion.

First and foremost, I want to extend my sincere thanks to our incredible contributors. Whether you are a returning writer or joining us for the first time, your willingness to share your words has truly enriched these pages. *Fresh Voices* would not be what it is without your talent and passion.

To the dedicated team, your hard work, creativity and commitment is what makes these publications possible. From editing and design to marketing and promotion, your efforts have shaped this edition into something truly special. Thank you for your dedication.

To our readers, thank you for taking the time to engage with this collection of work. This edition continues our exploration of pressing global issues, with the theme '*The Future is Female?*', provoking deep reflection on gender, leadership and the evolving role of women in society. We hope you enjoy these pages as much as we did while curating them.

It has been a privilege to be part of a publication that celebrates fresh perspectives and bold ideas. Thank you all for being part of this journey. I look forward to what the future holds for *Fresh Voices*, and I hope you do too.

Sincerely,

Amber Blundell

Deputy Editor

Fresher Publishing

From our Editor-in-Chief

Dear readers,

Thank you for reading issue II of *Fresh Voices* literary magazine.

Providing a space for undergraduate students to be professionally published and creatively express their feelings about serious world issues is something I take great pride in. Once again, we received incredible pieces, all of which explored the prompt ‘The Future is Female?’ in a unique way.

Gender inequality underpins many problems which disproportionately affect women and girls across the globe, from domestic and sexual violence to unequal pay, lack of access to education, inadequate healthcare, and more. I hope this issue is a reprieve for women, as well as a reminder of our power and strength.

Alongside our readers, I’d like to thank Dr Tom Masters, our Editorial Director at Fresher Publishing, for supporting the team in all our endeavours and always advocating for Fresher Publishing. With an uncertain future ahead for the BA English course at Bournemouth University, I’d also like to thank the rest of the English staff, for bringing us diverse and exciting units which open endless doors.

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Thank you for spending time with *Fresh Voices*. It was an honour to give creators a space to house their work, and I look forward to the next issue and other exciting things to come.

Sincerely,

Jay Caitlin Hildreth

Editor-in-Chief

Fresher Publishing

Thank You to Our Contributors!

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