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Editor's Note

The word “elegy” makes its own kind of cushiony nest in the ear, seeming to circle around once on itself before settling in. Elegies are everywhere in this issue, not as part of a deliberate plan or theme, but rather a happenstance of the individual selections made over a six-month period: we only realized how many elegies there were as we were typesetting the magazine. What strikes me about them now is their range—the very different approaches taken.

The magazine's opening poem is called “Late Summer Elegy.” The speaker grieves over the loss of her mother, a loss that is mirrored by the coming death of the season. In Stephen Ackerman's “My Late Life,” we do a double-take: the writer describes his own life as if it were already gone, an impossibility that drives the poem's twists and turns, its contemplation of an existence “shelved among the infinite rows,/...the Dewey decimal memories/retrieved at the dark end of the aisle.”

There is Steven Ratiner's “The Arborist,” an elegy for Seamus Heaney; David Blair's “Elegy for Richard Dawson,” the actor and talk-show host; Lynne Sharon Schwartz's elegy for her sister, “Till You Walk in Her Shoes”; Frannie Lindsay's “Elegies Written on Water by Children”; and Frances Richey's “Infant Boy 1895,” a memorial for a short, anonymous life: “...Weightless/hunger spidered with blood, I was alive./Then I wasn't.”

Samn Stockwell's arresting poem, “Mistaken Identity” begins, “I look up from my grave—” and contains a line that I've been mulling over for days: “Retrospective, we could say of every moment...” It's the truth of this observation that underscores a central function of literature: we need to capture what is constantly moving past, continually becoming the past.

In Keith Eisner's “Blue Dot” you'll find an evocation of an era. In Meghan Gilliss's “Old Money,” bitterness mixes with sweet nostalgia for a family's lost fortune. Joan Leegant's “Hunters and Gatherers” deals with a different kind of nostal-

gia—a mother mourns her son’s lost mental health, even as she does everything in her power to sustain him.

This is our fortieth issue—hard to believe. Let’s hope for a long, ample summer with lots of time for reading and daydreaming about the past, the present, and the days to come.

—Jennifer Barber