

Dusk in Montreal, Four A.M. in Moscow

by [Veronica Ashenhurst](#) in the [February 2023](#) issue

The bone-sore truth was that I envied them:
Two young friends sailing on their will, strong legs
Upright, unlike mine. Dawn's lace above them,
Rose facades in back. The friends linked hands, posing
Wordless before the lens, their fanning white
Dresses stained blood red. Quick, thirty seconds
To protest a vain conquest—*snap, snap, snap*—
Before police bear down with rods. No one there
Dares call the war a war—nor talk of shells
And shallow graves. The chief brooks no dissent,
Yet the women in the photo surge like ships.
Later, I grasp that they might envy me—
My legs won't take me to view twilight's close,
But still I type. No vengeful state surveils me.