

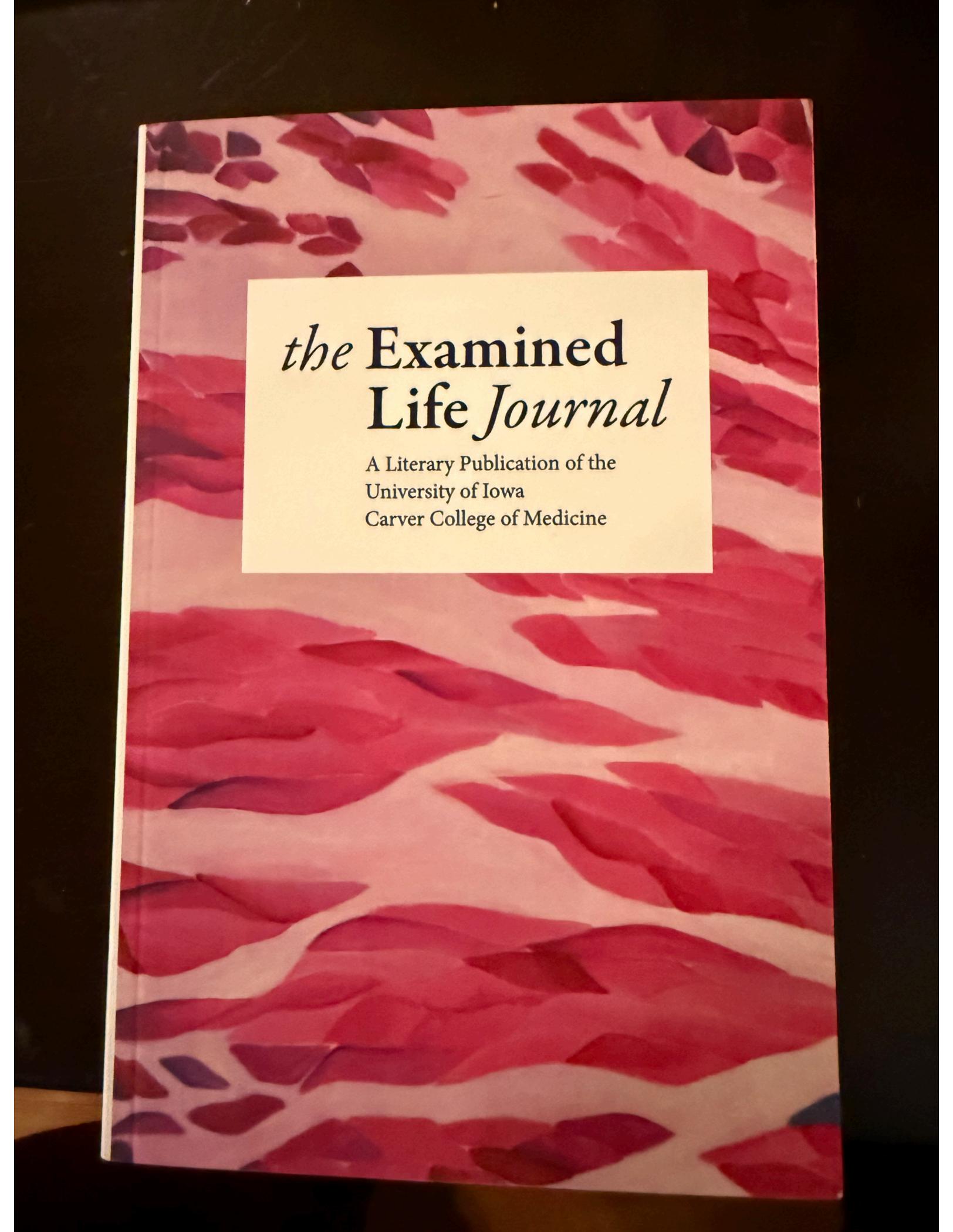
# Becoming Sky

TAMARA NICHOLL-SMITH

*Woman with a Parasol, Madame Monet and Her Son*  
hangs on a wall in the National Gallery. She is garbed in sky,  
the blue-white folds of her dress move like clouds.  
From a distance, I can barely make out the edge  
between dress and atmosphere.

Monet's women often appear as if they are about to dissolve  
into their surroundings, or as though they would disintegrate  
under the pressure of a hard rain.

Each day, my mother becomes more and more like *Madame Monet*.  
Her memory is dissolving into the sky,  
starting with dates and times, what she ate for breakfast—  
quick clouds that dissipate over a field of wildflowers.



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