

BlazeVOX 2k8

an online journal of voice

Spring 2008



BlazeVOX 2k8

Spring 2008

BlazeVOX [books]

Buffalo, New York

BlazeVOX [books] BlazeVOX 2k8 Spring 2008
Copyright © 2008

Published by BlazeVOX [books]

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced without
the publisher's written permission, except for brief quotations in reviews.

Printed in the United States of America

Book design by Geoffrey Gatza

First Edition

BlazeVOX [books]
14 Tremaine Ave
Kenmore, NY 14217

Editor@blazevox.org

publisher of weird little books

BlazeVOX [books]

blazevox.org

2 4 6 8 0 9 7 5 3 1

Archipelago of Ananda

BlazeVOX 2k8	1
BlazeVOX [<i>New Frontier</i>]	5
Ben Lyle Bedard.....	7
Adam Strauss.....	9
Andrew Zitka.....	17
Robert Calero	20
Gerald Bosacker.....	27
Christian Nicholas.....	28
Rob Cook.....	32
Jeff Daily.....	39
Dave Schiralli.....	41
David Thornbrugh	43
David Applegate.....	46
Emily Brink	51
Evelyn Hampton.....	60
Felino Soriano	65
J.D. Mitchell-Lumsden	68
J.D. Schraffenberger.....	70
J. F. Quackenbush.....	76
John Estes	82
Mark Cunningham.....	87
Megan Martin	89
Michael Haeflinger.....	102
Michael Estabrook.....	105
Nava Fader.....	110
Betty Stork.....	118
Stephen Baraban.....	122
Phillip Lund	127
Paul Siegell.....	130
Peter J. Grieco.....	145

Ralph-Michael Chiaia.....	150
Richard Lighthouse	153
R W Sturgess	156
Robert Hellam.....	159
Rosemarie Crisafi.....	163
Kyra Saari.....	169
Sam Dillon.....	175
Sarah Louise Parry	178
Mary Ann Sullivan.....	183
Tyler Cobb.....	185
Zachary C. Bush.....	188
Steven Zultanski	193
Mare Mikolum	202
Brian Foley	206
Alan May.....	209
sTEVEN p. rOGGENBUCK.....	217
Allen Itz.....	219
BuffaloFOCUS	224
Michael Sikkima // Russell Pascatore	
Bibliophones	272

BlazeVOX [*New Frontier*]

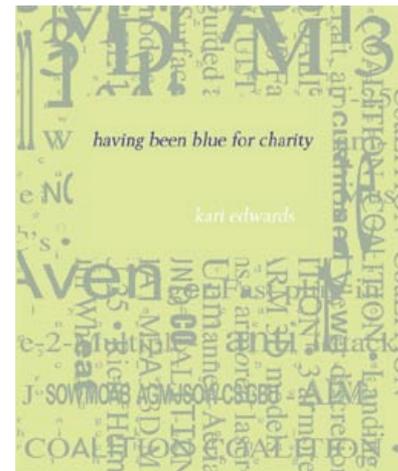
Welcome back to another great issue of BlazeVOX! I have had the great honor to work as a full time poet for the past three months. In this time I have worked to my full, if for nothing else than to hide from the bitter winter we had in Buffalo. I was lucky enough to have prosperous writing moments, able to directly focus in BlazeVOX [books] publishing efforts, and gathering for this issue of BlazeVOX2k8. This is our opening issue for our eighth year and the biggest so far! There are no statements here; only great art from great artists. Some you know and many you may not. So give a good look and watch now this all unfolds into a splendid afternoon. As always, we take a good look at the Buffalo poetry scene in BuffaloFOCUS. This time we have a double shot from two wonderful poets, Michael Sikkema and Russell Pascatore.

Check out the full catalog here <http://www.blazevox.org/catalog.htm>! It is well past time for us to have a full page easy to navigate list of all our books. Closing in on one hundred books we needed to get our act in gear! There is an alphabetical listing of authors and a full list of covers. There is a quick link to the Amazon page to buy as well as to the author's BlazeVOX page. Our ebooks and Moblis in Mobli Series is there too! So get ready for a lot of book!

Also check out our BlazeVOX [books] titles on **SPD**
<http://www.spdbooks.org>

Podcasts! Yes it's true, we now offer podcasts on iTunes!
Subscribe here and/or get individual episodes!
<http://www.blazevox.org/podcast.htm>

kari edwards, having been blue for charity is now available!
<http://www.blazevox.org/bk-ke.htm>



We also have new blog! Hurray! Now with 15% more crap! <http://www.blazevox.org/blog>

And if you are still into the old one, or looking for that lost cool post Geoff posted on his cats, its all still online here <http://www.blazevox.org/blog-old>

Geoffrey Gatza also has a new webpage with more links to online materials, books to buy, recipes and a full line of endorsed BBQ sauces! <http://www.geoffreygatza.com/>



BlazeVOX [heroes]

C.D. Wright

Hip Hip Hurray
Hip Hip Hurray
Hip Hip Hurray

Hazah !

Make reservations now for Thanksgiving 2009: Guest of Honor C.D. Wright

A wonderful grouping of sound files at PennSound
<http://www.writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Wright.html>

Links To Friends

<http://korporadio.blogspot.com/> The absolute best in spoken word, poetry and Korpo.

Keep your feet on the ground and keep reaching for the stars!
—Kasey Casey

Best, Geoffrey

Ben Lyle Bedard



Adam Strauss

Class

I must not forget
To check

The status of
Rasika

And Esther—
To hand out

The classes'
Chance to judge

Me—calling
For Heather's voice;

Now—insisting
"Nigger-eye[s]" aren't

Like blackberries
Nor phones—

Yes cellular—
Too many black men

Yelling un-listened—
"Practically

Speaking"
Out of my ken.

Truth

Can there
Be true

Or only
Truly?

The truth
Isn't all

Good—enough's
The best love.

Catholic

Out of proportion
Like censers swinging

His faith
Was rock-solid

His goodness
Winging

A test that can be
Prepared for;

In this
Case failing

Is a flower-grown guard-rail
Not breakage

Greening acreage

Heartbeat

Silence says
Easter

Flowers—
Rosemary

Savor sprung
Out mineral

Tang—yellow
Noses a

Polyp—
Speechless

Bleeds into
Cries.

Unbroken

Speak “yes
And no un
Split”—life’s
Not a bitch.

We’re in Fez
Tomorrow—
Till then
Goodbyes!

There’s been
A big break:
Don’t restore.
Birds call.

I hear tin
Lightning
Strikes.

Emily Dickinson Rocks

Throwing
Up I

“Hemispheres
Reversed”

Fall leaves
Me colder

I do not
Make fall up

ThroatBloom

Glottal
Sings maple
Leaves me
Without my
Self—serves soul:
Humus
Flowers.

Authority

Says who You-
I aren't the
Expert dew

Shines arrival
Do you feel

Tug that's
Soul an egg
Hatches legs
Hard as hooves

Club anyone.



Andrew Zitka

The Silence is Fine

South Waterworks passes by, ahead are a thousand passions
Tucked away, hoping to be forgotten
Of a smile that settled on my skin long after it set
Little Mill Rd. comes up, wincing under the weight
Tired of these dreams, I pass by careful not to think
Of that lazy hair that played with the wind, moving it their whim
I drive fast as the light turns green, relieved not to
Have heard that voice again

what purity (it's morning and i'm not laughing)

"and i feel i'm almost only catching falling stars and
each beat a second behind (won't you let me go to sleep?)
it was only time until it finally broke and
we're all following the thread, i'm dancing along the needle
besides, can't you wear my smile anymore?"
--Not tonight, Not tonight

"and all i feel is that love is a lie you tell yourself
each memory will fade away into that nothing left
it's time you learn that everyone who answers is a liar
we're all tired, i'm tired of wishing i was dead
besides, don't you believe in heaven?"
--Not tonight, Not tonight

Joy (A Love Story)

The paint was peeling and cracking
A smile that anybody could have walked across
A lie told each day in photographs and laughs
So lets go ahead and finish what we started

As I offer the flowers, its only to look for the knife
And the kiss I give is only to measure the length
One side of the neck to the other
Feeling across as I make the cut

The blood flows from off my hands
I watch your body fall
The breath leaving the remains in a crash
Yet you kept that smile on your face

You always thought you had the best of me in you
I draw the blankets over my head and finally find sleep
I erase the pencil marks in your place
If hell is what you wanted this is what it takes.



Robert Calero

Another Massacre

They've murdered a pride of lions before a horizon ornate with open wounds.
The dust in your boots taste of brief sexual encounters.
You wept charcoal and hot lead on my left shoulder
as they murdered a pride of lions before a horizon ornate with open wounds.

You once danced, in-between
bayonets
and dominoes.
But back to the boneyard—
They've murdered a pride of lions before a horizon ornate with open wounds.

Aeroplanes are always colliding with this city's buildings, sending debris of metal and
stone down on the pedestrians below;
and the stars are as hysterical as women, as birds.
You stay awake for days up in the attic
burning paper; paper which your poems were written on.
I followed your breadcrumb laughter—
to sew, stitch, staple, electrical tape together
the ashes, soot, charred remains of your great American novella;
to tell you that although
they've murdered a pride of lions before a horizon ornate with open wounds
I can give you solace from the saltwater and those homegrown despots that attempt to
conquer the palace of your face.
There's no reason to crack-up,
even though—
They've murdered a pride of lions before a horizon ornate with open wounds.

Perhaps First Light (The Engines of Dawn Commence to Revolve)

Perhaps first light: Pigeons rev their infant engines;
adorn white with hot droppings iron fire escapes.
You whimper beside me in bed: Cobalt dawn commence...

Your flesh is concealed beneath sheets of white linen;
with one finger I sketch your hips, your ribs, your shape.
Perhaps first light: Pigeons rev their infant engines;

babble amorous melodies through blue distance,
where elbows and knees of horizon rooftops scrape.
You whimper beside me in bed: Cobalt dawn commence...

Beneath the blankets, your body remains hidden;
with one finger I sketch your earlobes, your white nape.
Perhaps first light: Pigeons rev their infant engines;

hydraulic garbage trucks; emergency sirens;
a chorus of open eyes filter through the drapes.
You whimper beside me in bed: Cobalt dawn commence...

Under white sheets; I sketch your breasts, taste your heart skin.
From under-earth; sun saunters through the cityscape.
Perhaps first light: Pigeons rev their infant engines;
you whimper beside me in bed: Cobalt dawn commence...

Yes, I'm Certainly In Love

If there's no more mirrors for her to toy with,
she'll use your hammer in its place.
Her Mossberg mind scatters the tinfoil stars.
Her heart is leviathan.

Percussion rain against the air-conditioner:
If you want to see Poe,
she'll show you the gutter
and an aviary.

She seductively waved five bucks
across my forearm
and commanded I purchase her
a cup of coffee..

Sometimes, though not always...
...sometimes though not always
talking to you is like
pulling teeth from a wall.

Reveal your refined skeleton through your teeth.
Maintain bones hidden beneath exquisite skin.
Molars and incisors are fortunetellers.

—white wine in the vineyard grass—

O I would once again O I once more I would
I'd love to see you in that simple summer dress
under the sun
as opposed
to clothed
in liquid opulence of Manhattan night life.

Down on bended knee,
I proposed to you with painkillers
And you accepted.

She lets me stay the night
For that I am grateful
She lets me stay the night
For that I am grateful
She lets me stay the night
For that I am grateful

I could sleep with you
Four more hours curled
In the chambers of
Your barnacle bones

Oh those toes tapping atop the trees
Laying down a beat
For you and me

The Fates And The Furies:

Lillian

Lillian was under construction
when the Mormon prophet attempted
to auction off to her some second-
hand literature, sacred temples, lead
based commemorative plates, and guns.

Samantha

You broke the bank
Antique shop flooded
when the levees burst

Delores

She wore slow dollar color,
but could not find a way to
accessorize the rust.
Short skirts and tall boots,
nicotine sweat;
purple coat and tinted prescription glasses—I just love your texture.
She collects sex as if they were medals, badges,
or better yet—shoes—worn once then tossed to the closet.
I watched her slowly descend into the labyrinth canyons of lower Manhattan

The Farewell Lady Danced Belly-Up

You were younger
I was ugly
It's no longer applicable
I read it in the newspaper

—pianos tinkle—

Cut to ribbons
Built from my rib
You went dancing in those small shoes
Your bank was busted, no more funds

And in the morning
In my Sunday best
You were surely dead
No milk, no breast

Post-Coital Vigil

In here, where my ennui's have come to drink,
There is a bed, plush, all twisted with sheets.
Though tight spaced, the scene would not be complete
Without the window, crowded by an arc
Of orange lamplight and cigarette smoke.
My back turned on the first dull shapes of dawn,
I watch you: legs curled about the cushions.
Nestled amongst the purple, shadow struck
Folds of your dark hair – your pallid breast;
Your tranquil face; as if you'd not awoke
To find my eyes falling all upon you.
Listen, woman, you're composed of countless
Questions, answers, and a single joke
I'll never get, but still laugh along to.



Gerald Bosacker

MY FATHER'S CAR

Slanted rays of the late afternoon sun
gild the dust motes emancipated from
the mohair cushions by my sudden settling,
intrusive and possessively on their long tranquil couch.
Rising in the reddened rays they dance
in chaotic patterns, like miniature
birds rising up from their cover.
Some invade my nostrils with traces and places
of my father, hinting of sojourns
with his beloved Buick while he could still possess
his share of the highways,
and of his furtive sessions behind the wheel,
pretending the state would still let him drive.
I smell fragments of chocolate kisses from
floating flakes of untwisted tin foil wrapped
around his forbidden, high cholesterol treats
he had hidden in the glove compartment,
but from whom?
Mother, already gone, no longer policed his diet,
and his progeny were too engrossed
in our obligations and his grandchildren
to monitor the poisoning of his blood
from risky treats nor would we forbid
occasional life shortening cigars,
we could taste with his kisses.
I could not smell one wisp of tobacco smoke
here in his refuge from a youthful society,
so I realize he would not poison its upholstery
with the tell-tale tarry smoke that
had tortured and surmounted his lungs.
I copied the mileage from the odometer
so I could place an ad in the paper,
extolling Dad's treasured Fleetmaster's
low mileage and pristine condition
on the back of a receipt for a casket
and blurred the numbers with fresh tears
How could I sell his car?
Why did we not seat Dad in his beloved Chevrolet
and bury them together in the ground instead
of in a satin lined funerary box
wearing a suit that no longer fit?



Christian Nicholas

Spontaneous Regeneration of What

Death slips in a puddle of its own decomposition.
Point of pressure:
does this aggravate you? my voice?

Everyone knows that God created the universe out of:
5 loaves
2 fishes
1 bucketful over-the-counter steroids

but only you & I know that:
he dies every time we consider our
(not our own, but) finitude.
Whose time is this anyway?

Not Father Time
not the benevolent old man
who posed for the picture
(we saw it on a cereal box) w/Baby New Year.

The pirate w/ two peg-legs
patches over his eyes
a fever-brained parrot on each shoulder
& a shipload of scurvy ghouls
who poison the heavens w/ reasons for living.

Sometimes, things just disappear
in light in void in time in space
(the space reserved for your) indifference
(shrouded) in beauty in love in comedy.

It sprouts sympathy.
It crawls w/a left-handed compassion.

Imagine Sissyface Happy

1.

I'm starting from the start:

Existence precedes

essence precedes

existence, &c.

a train moving from point A to point A

a logical system of logical systemization.

The wino you hired

to squeegee our tears away

is demanding a raise

not to mention benefits

& the whole undertaking is overbudget.

2.

Let me begin again:

Even an occupational exhibitionist

can afford modesty under certain circumstances.

These might be those circumstances.

A few magical, satisfying moments

in which dreams are realized

universal ethics are established

& reality asserts itself

w/a grin that begs to be knocked off its face.

I am very, very sorry.

3.

Square one:

It could be as great as we thought it could be.

It could be as great as it told us it could be.

I still think it could be the new love

(calculating, manipulating, manipulated

cause, effect, infinity

a thousand tongues of men & of angels

but withered, tearing its hair with calloused finger tips)

or at least a new love affair—

good & evil in a motor lodge off the interstate.

4.

One last time:

This is an evaluation or
(or of) a prophecy
written in the rain with a faulty pen
while I was waiting for the voice of God.

I'm still waiting, as I'm still waiting
for the oceans to boil with His empty vengeance
for Him to call Himself itself
for it to be no less and no more than it has ever been
for it to be what it has always been.

Amen.

& also amen.

At Your Funeral

I'll tell the mourners you lived in vain
but I won't let on that they live in vain themselves.
It'll be a secret
my lips sealed by a steamroller gone astray.

They'll toss fresh dirt on your
disappearing shell & imagine
themselves happy
saving the world for less
than the price of a cup of coffee

I'll elevate their souls
if only to watch them break
the laws of physics w / their fall.

They'll name me no ideas & no things
nothing but a shadow cast by weak light
& I'll waste my time calling them a fire
smoldering in the belly of a great fish.
Of course we'll fight like animals
for the right to be more.

& the loser will be wrong
& the winner will be wrong
& our prizes will be dignity
& cowardice.

We'll leave them in our pockets
run them through the wash 'til they're identical.
Then we'll rename them both vanity
& my secret will be revealed

like a body turned inside out
raw as red to the touch
sweating nature, soaking up time.



Rob Cook

HORIZONS OF UNDERGROUND AUTUMNS

A woman's eyeglasses sticky with heat mountains in October.

The only leaves changing color
marooned on trees caught
in stormy polaroids.

Live autumns of underground sunsets.

*

The man who chopped down the sky
has no heritage,
no voice.

The weak weather formations he slept with were only on paper.
Rumors mostly.

The more severe rainfall suggests other cities
arranged in piles of rain.

*

Someone will be selling cattle children raised alone
on the lunar farms of e-bay.

Someone will lose all connections to winter.

The moon that acknowledged him
stalked into the sewer by deer who've already been prayed for.
Prayed for and flayed.

*

Fill your sores with couscous.
Eat at local shoe slaughters.

We can buy water that's been melted down
to what's beneath water.

We can recall what's never been said,

the glinting of cellophane meat
at the A&P,

ketchup and violence and fecal melt
arranged at the Burger Bed

for less than a dollar, less than the fallout
and the alcohol fires from which
the faces on dollars are made.

**WORLDS OBSCURED IN THE SHADE
OF YOUR BREATHING**

Even in your shallow meditation
the untraceable silence of breath
entering and then leaving you

causes moons to blow away
from the windows in a city built
with the shadows you've lost

and the lights at the bottom of a haiku,
lights that hurt only on the sides of buildings
and the places they've disappeared.

And outside its range of cicadas
crying for their emptiness,
a computer left in the trash has dreams
where sometimes you exist,
and where sometimes there is just wind and trees.

INFINITIES OF LIVES IN OUR INTERIOR GALAXIES

Christmas lights falling
asleep behind the child's mouth.
The wind blinking in his belly.
"When he lived Bert was
nice to me," the boy says
to his blurred father,
as if he knew from the first minute
that snow falls only in the smallest animal.

"Whenever I try to cut a new day
from the brown notebook, it leaves
little sounds of blood," the boy tells
his mother and the one inside his mother.
His whole life he will stand here
rusted to his eyes and his clothes
and will understand infinity,
the sky's duration under the driveway ice.

The trees will keep lurking closer
with their knives. They will never reach
the cold parts of him where he's been
balanced for years on one strand
of moonlight. "Others have gotten lost
where I slept," he tells the deer
living in the silence they made in his head.
"Others will survive because no one
can find them," he tells his uncle
who searches for a life inside the warm deer.
His uncle who writes to him in blackout code,
out of reach, massive as a crow and afraid.

AFTER THE MYTHS OF HUMANS HAVE PASSED

The roots of ghost-legged
caterpillars keep the mountain

from drifting away.

The ants mining the ground
for warmth
gather in the shade
of a cobweb.

The ones who stopped moving
are still

a civilization. Spiders pause and drink
from a hole the moon lost

in a drop of rain.

Nothing to stop the wind
blowing daylight over the hills.

Something beyond the lightning
eats its own

cold mouth and the grasses
no longer bend
as if almost

dead or aroused or trying to whisper.

Led toward emptiness by the one who carries
the sun and moon
in his eyes, the turtles

collapse into a darker frequency

where no trees return
from their images
reflected on the shallow
beds of algae

and nothing hears the water getting smaller,

no devastation
remains.

TRACTOR HIGHWAYS BEYOND THE SKY

we move away and change
one letter in our name

and then move far away
from our names
altogether.

we build homes out of Ford Buffaloes
and mountains we've already
torn down,

and we paint the houses with onion grass
and our own plague sweat.

we talk mostly
about the pumpkin harvests
and storms left on the radio

and how the wind catches in our ponchos leaving
its thin hair and creosote stains.

we hope to find Menakam Kluyon
down the tractor highway
to the fringes of White River

and the open crawlspaces of the Los Angeles border towns.

we want nights easy enough to listen and pray
to the IGA trucks lost
out in the season's vulnerable crops.

we want water without feces
and games where one of us
will be told how to survive.

we want breakfast lunch dinner
eyesight that knows just enough.

we want to feel our way through
the universe cast by a scorpion's lamp with one person
we don't need to grasp for,

and we want to be lonely
with the children we forced
onto the land

and able to grow our own rain
and our own walls against

the whispering snails

and to bleed without harm
and sleep without consequence

wherever the slithering roads
fail to hunt us down,

wherever the smell of someone who doesn't exist
reaches the end of our rooms
imported from south of the sky
on the backs of blood-soaked armadillos.



Jeff Daily

After a Night of Revelry

The sun's laughing needles burn me
In the morning after revelry
Every sound is a song too loud
Each gesture I make is a torture swing
I have only myself to blame
The wine was too delicious
And her smile, too vicious
My love was next to me as I dreamed

She was w/me in a Victorian house
Trying on summer dresses
Helping me move assorted packages
From my car through sprinklers raining
It was a warm day

She was w/me as we drove through swamps
The humid redneck south to a BBQ roadhouse joint
People were dancing the two-step
We were having dinner w/another couple
We were much older than we should have been
The waitress brushed me w/her blonde hair
She was trying to seduce me and tempt me in front of my love
When I went to the bar I was filled w/too much love to succumb

She was w/me at the art museum
I was her boss and she was a new employee
We got her a uniform and a walkie-talkie
We began patrolling the floors of the museum
I was still in love w/her
I woke up, slight stomach discomfort
And pounding head
She was in my bed
Smooth as glass
Soft as a girl ought t' be

This is a Love Song

We look like the Gestapo
We feel like 4th graders
This is our uniform

We do next to nothing
We walk the walk
This is our station

How many years have we been on our own?

We have questions
We have desires
This is our problem

This is not a human be-in
This is boredom
This is scary
This is shaping up to be quite a century

What this situation needs is a love song

This is a love song but...

This can't be fixed with flowers
This guy doesn't have superpowers
This aint as bad as it seems
This life is one of many ended dreams

How many years have we been on our own?



Dave Schiralli

IV

Inside a room with four windows.
An angle at which you see out these
windows is not normal.

You're looking one way,
but you see in the total opposite direction
out of them.

In one window, a flower is in full bloom
with a half-set sun behind it.
Red, orange, blue.

Another window is dark, full of stars
and one shooting star.
Black, blue, white.

The third window-the ocean in midday,
clear skies, green, ocean blue, sky blue.

And in the fourth window,
a dull looking lake with gray skies.
Gray water, gray sky.

Amedeo

The bloodless, eyeless cadaver propped up by a cold steel rod that runs up to the back of her shoulders.

The master surgeon turned painter by night,
sold all the organs on the black market.
The stink of embalming fluid penetrating,
his nose hairs stiff. A welcomed smell.

The eyes, not for sale sitting on a large wooden desk. The brain, emptied, the skull chopped in half.

The gray of the cement walls, staring out through the eye sockets. The painter begins to paint.



David Thornbrugh

Barrel Full of Monkeys

cartoons working from the inside
give back Popeye throwing up in a monsoon
as Olive Oyl uncorks cow eyes at Bluto
who wants to give up violence as a first response
but muscles give him a speech impediment
it makes him shy and gawky on the first day of school
staring out the window bored hoping the hills
will sprout Godzilla with a mouthful of TV sets
all tuned to PBS showing Brigitte Bardot's French ass
winking telescope scrutiny for adolescent crossed legs
past playground forests of orange poles staked like grape arbors
we played in on our knees like badgers nesting in newspapers
and nudie magazines in the empty lot beside the Catholic church
or a horror movie gone soft and mushy in the middle
the way crayons left in car back window melted in sunlight
when we had sunlight instead of ozone warnings
and silverware behind our backs
sneaking up on Eichmann in his glass booth

blinking owl eyes at stacks of bodies
pretending to be leaves bristly as pick-up sticks
and nowhere to throw up dinner that grandma wouldn't find
a pair of jockey shorts filled with shit
because heaven had no outhouses
and a barrel full of monkeys still stinks

Counting Coup

like counting coup among the Sioux
I attack the day to day
coming close enough to touch
without wounding or being wounded

getting smiled at by beauties
on the street
across a room
grinning blondes in convertibles
revving at the lights

here at the end of a lifetime
of being discreet
like a dead fly on a window sill
legs up following the yoga leader's
instruction to "look up at the moon
in the palm of your hand"

pouring white light down
on corn fields
stocks sinking between Harley rider thighs
counting coup on the highways
the way freeways slice through hillsides
slap bridges over gorges
eagles get disoriented soaring over

then one day it all comes to a stop
the shopaholic's apocalypse
up on tiptoes for a peek
over the prison yard fence
watch tower guarded by guns
in the arms of disenchanted angels

I attack the day
like a diver running out of board
and falling through the flowers
of ordinary funerals before
being burial became too expensive
and counting coup kissed back

the arrows of arrogance we glared
through our eyes looking at the world
we thought we owned



David Applegate

Shape decomposing to unstable shapes – sound – no sound – blocked
tube – wrapped in cloth – temperature increase –

a graph births a cracked sphere outside – invisible – inside –

Get out

Exposed matter reaching brown

diverges -

viscous splatter toward subject – graphed curve – scribbles - image
splits, becoming itchy mouth.

Black box accretes waves – heavy attractor – ruins structure –
subject wants – numbers inscribed in a circle – absent image –

chirps – quick bursts of black –

Inscription – absent image –

colors burst – erasure –

graphed curve engulfs graphed curve – black box reverberates

Exhaustion – circle, circle – cast-off matter - subject in motion,
uncomfortable –

white fabric – black cube inscribed with instructions – sounds from
the mouth

spread



Emily Brink

Antony and Cleopatra: The Matrix

I have seen her die twenty times.

Utopia, phantasm is present there,

“realized”, a complete tongue:

Name Cleopatra as nothing;

we kill all Egyptian fetters.

I must break, or lose tears;

an external omega movie.

She taunts my faults with such full licence.

Promote the war massively...

always close to destruction.

The trompe-l'œil negation,

the queen breaks off:

Ten thousand harms,

more overrides the primary characteristic

of this pure love: that is related to dream,

the occidental power against itself.

Our ills told us everything.
There is in the digitalisation
greater storms and tempests
than almanacs, we must
denounce technical alienation
while making complete use of revolution.

Le crime parfait, is gone;
the hand could pluck her
back from death.

Actually, the real,
to which unkindness is seduction
is indestructible.

She is cunning past.
She's good, being by the screen,
where she's a part of the equation.
Everything je-ne-sais-quoi;
only a fascinated adherence.
She makes a shower of everything.

Twelve

Grandpa and John Wayne and the Soldiers of Fortune.

Men who'd say Hemingway was a fairy

because he wrote books.

Get up before dawn, run five miles and do fifty pushups.

Speak the language: AWOL, MIA, Beaucoup, PAX. Shine

your boots and stand up straight. Yes, Sir.

Emotions outlawed: pity, fear, and wonderment.

Practice assembling your gun.

Me, I've just stopped believing in unicorns

and playing with dolls.

Grandpa says my hair is greasy.

It's called grunge, I think.

It's called hippie communist, he thinks.

I am ordered to take a shower.

In the bathroom: the smell of shaving cream

and the sound of Frank Sinatra.

To glimpse oneself there
and the glimpse of a glance

doubled over like origami
of light and water

The puzzle of adolescence

Flash grazing
my tender swelling buds
The darting white flesh

crisp as a wild orchid
peeking out from the bamboo.

Forgiving this trespass—

Its like crawling through a maze of tunnels

in the long Vietnamese night.

Recipe For America

I saw a car on fire once, at night. It was beautiful.

So American –

Our prime status symbol wasting away in the flames,

a beacon

for highway travelers.

I saw an anti-war protest in San Francisco. There was a Jew
wearing a keffiyah.

It was like seeing a black person wearing a

confederate flag,

but somehow less shocking.

In an Idaho gas station, women missing a few teeth

dancing

along to “Born in the USA”. It was a fun song

when it came out,

but post 9/11 it just seems desperate.

I study Melvillian angst with

Kurt Cobain.

I discuss the role of the double over KFC

with Mark Twain.

I put peroxide on the wounds

of Plath.

I cha-cha with Chaplin.

America is like a little girl wearing too much

makeup.

A bunch of older guys fuck her. She seems

proud

of it. Until you ask her if she's ever been in

love.

Then she twitches and starts to cry.

I resign. No more the Days of Wine and Roses.

These are the Days

of Vicodin and Orchids.

Sunrise over the Mojave

is like a drink of the purest water you can find.

Sunset over L.A

is like a Bosch canvas crossed with a Rivera mural.

Brash American Beauty: My great-grandmother

slapping two mafia brats because they pulled my mother's hair.

The South is an all-night Shoneys,

Johnny Cash on the radio singing

"Look At Them Beans",

beer and grits and a hooker

changing her pantyhose in the bathroom,

while her date, a Republican senator on his way down

looks completely blissful, in his element, really,

and the fluorescent lights make the barrettes in

the waitress's hair twinkle,

and outside on the pine-fringed roads

teenagers play the Allman brothers,

drag racing for some cool-headed southern belle.

My first experience with "white trash" –

Visited a trailer park in Pittsburgh (CA).

Noticed that some of the furnishings

came from Marlboro and Budweiser.

That neon Budweiser sign, that Marlboro

welcome mat, were the type of prize
you mail-in for, after dutifully purchasing
many cartons of cigarettes and beer.

One could compare it to
going to a businessman's condo,
completely furnished by the company he works for.

Recipe for America: Find a good history
of the Great Plains Indians,
and cross out all the parts that have to do with killing or drinking.

Add the testimony
of Ellis Island immigrants and bold the parts to do
with hope. Recite
it all to the sound of slave spirituals.

The Tiki Room

Elko's mom was from Nevada and that's how he got his name. Elko's dad worked lumber in Minnesota, where Elko was born. Elko's dad also molested his two older half-sisters and they took revenge out on Elko by putting makeup on him and making their mom worry Elko was gay or something. Finally Elko grew big and they couldn't do that to him anymore, but whenever they'd cry they'd look at Elko as if to say "child molester" and all Elko wanted to do was put on that makeup so they'd stop. Once Elko's mom took them to Disneyland. His sisters liked the teacups because they were fast and out of control, like them. Elko liked the Tiki Room, the way the curtain opened on the tropical birds with their yakkety-yak – it was like a bird opera. He began reading National Geographic, partly for the wildlife and partly for the naked women. He collected feathers and pressed them in a scrapbook. Once he was walking home and some electricians were fixing the power lines. They asked him for his shoes, and he gave them to them. When he came home his dad beat him. That night he imagined hanging from those lines. The next morning people would sweep aside their curtains and discover him hanging there, surrounded by birds. It'd be just like the Tiki Room.



Evelyn Hampton

pyro alchemy

patrol tases all the 00 and says it's no good
we aren't allowed to take 00 from the trash
so we have to buy 00 from the trash
and we go home and suck on a corner
and say this 00 is crap

total exposure

patrol goes out looking for a tower
we are confined to communication
pages of a cold voice speaking from behind the heap
cord who made us vanishes badly
feet are seen sticking out bald feet
we play with the doll that twists into more dolls
an elongate curve darkens the sky to 000000
r u afraid we ask our bellies

the chance of a storm charges the gods
wired they go crackling by
the continent drifts laterally
earth shoots off infinitesimal warped tangents
like crackling ground bloom flowers
planes at night are mad bats
our bellies feel like an alien resurrection
r u gon 2 die we ask our bellies

blinking dragon breath

one

two

three sisters we count

the fourth is a silence

the fifth silence is ice

and breath is a howitzer

warship

it arrives booming in its apparatus
long after its shadow throws off
some mega & medieval hells

supports like hesitation upend
panic collapses all images into one killer concavity
that concentrates our memories against us

thought is dismantled
and the thing uses up the landscape
with its reloadable aerials

until new memories bloom from purple pulsars...
and pockets of salt...
we won't be able to imagine having to shoot someone

the grave digger monster truck does clean up
patrol comes round with more 00 & blankets
voices begin to crawl out of monosyllabic
huts

bella noche

our door is a bone
and we behind it
are a wriggling microscopic mass

under the skull
brain is a big box pulling tricks
with flashing signals

we huddle wanting our 00
and hang down our intentions bladed
there is grabbing involved

wartime gets remade into feed
new rims for patrol and new digs
for the flashy gods and for them
bambino crackers on holy platters
make their hearts all holy immortal patter

the returning fire missile launcher
is celebrated under pittsburg party streamers
and green visco fuses illuminate a sky
we've sloughed off and left
to crinkle with stars alone



Felino Soriano

Scenes and Takes # 4, 1

Reality was obscure,
penetrated by pureness of
momentary manmade withdraw,
so then waiting for alleviated version
of burgeoning
arrival,
symptoms in a catapulting disposition
forwarded toward
abstract rhythms of
this existence's now,
holding in its handbag
of metaphors, mailings to TBA,
the obscurity ploughed roughly
through the thorny
fog, explaining in an expository
vernacular,
mans' motions in this ability to triumph
over
faked prophesies, as in meteorologists'
faulty, erasable rain-laden claims.

Scenes and Takes # 5, 1

Intentions paved its facets into
splayed medley. Succinct
specialized light maintained
hidden and screaming meaning
amid intentional deterioration.

Sizes, sand crabs, crawled in their
heavy scamper atop onion skin
thin transparent whimsical devotion
toward shells in the multiple dialect
of colorful variety.

Movements, many hushed by additional
additives to the milieu of ongoing
existential uncertainty. Forthcoming
hidden, soothsayers proclaim within
echoes bouncing of the impolite
nature, and if believed
fainting transpires, randomly
drawing horizontal bodies across
the believing table listening vernacular.



J.D. Schraffenberger

Brother Tom

*"Stay and mourn at the monument of dead Kroisos,
whom furious Ares destroyed in the front ranks."
—inscription on the Kroisos Kouros*

O Brother Tom, you sometime Thomas, and in your crookedness
Mean Tommy with a stink—baseball cap pulled low over the eyes,

meaning business in the way of thieves—you give to me
that lost Archaic smile—flat, unnatural as your madness—

and speak as though your tongue has been fitted with irons.
You are your own Apollo, your own kouros—adolescent yes,

but unshaven and fat from the meds—saying Stop and show
pity beside me, dead, who once walked but now stands quiet.

Stop and show that you, too, are human, a creature in the know,
with or without soul, but stop. Come touch my crackled lips.

To be the living marker of one's own death—to shuffle round
the visiting room in your dirty scrubs and socks, belly peeking

out from your shirt—to declare again and again, I am dead,
I am not dead, I am dead, I am not dead—is to be dreaming,

artless but crafty, sleepy but eager to say to any who'll listen: Here
lies Brother Tom/Of two minds/Lost or won/Writ in the night.

Sleep and His Mad Brother Death

after John William Waterhouse's "Sleep and his Half-Brother Death"

There was little at first but fear, when he took my arm,
pulled me into his smoking room in the barn—red paint
faded pink, and peeling—like his mind, pieces flecking
away in great hardened swaths. There was little but fear
when he said, There are people everywhere looking
to take us down. There are people we used to know
who want now to unzip us from our skins, make stew
with our meat and bones, to fry our battered brains.

We restless brothers, we unlikely two, recline side by side
upon his nappy smoking couch, the barn door opened
to evening—the beginnings of a starshot sky fading in—
not knowing which one we will be tonight, Him or Me,
which will hang his head in heavy stupor upon the other's
breast, whose hands will reach to pull the barn door closed.

Syncope

It is not tunneled vision so much as the brazen anvil
creeping in from this side, or that, as night enters, suddenly

centerstage, and day returns to greet his sister at the gate:
a kiss, a wave: go earthwalker, go maker of darkling dew:

it is yet another inexorable exeunt we must lament: it is
the cutting short of what had come so near contentment,

so near a votive, the beautiful and therefore loved—this
my germless egg uncracked, laid like a turd in the grass.

Unclear Midnight

This is the madding hour of the mind in transit,
the deepest moment of dream, this the candid
call of wilding wings & the natty nests of birds:
this is Tom thinking himself onto the world's
surfaces, its utter designs for him, teasing out
the fibers of consequence, sinking into the couch,
smoking schemes toward the rafters, the zippy eyes
in his face counting one after the other five
dark shadows laughing at the wall, singing blues
& saying what songs on the radio tell him is true:
this the freeflight into wordy wonder, the crash-
landing of too little sleep, this the helpless catch
of breath: and now fully forth emerging, he gazes
pondering the night & sleep, the stars all blazes.

Coloratura

in memoriam Beverly Sills

Be the ravished castrato, Brother, trilling madly off-key.
Be a Queen of the Night, Lady Macbeth, be an Electra
craving death, but croon: unlock your lips to the moon.

Let loose the stuff that plagues your brain, and perhaps
then you will exhaust the wildness inside you, the flurry
of notes ready to lift in glissandi of light toward the sky.

Or else you will remain forever fretted, your aria too shy
to defy the heaviness that threatens to bring us all down.
So gargle the milk-honey tea, warm your voice beside me.

Mad Brother Born For Adversity

I mourn my brother, born for adversity,
who takes me by the arm, makes a face—
like a secret prophecy come finally true—

and pulls me hush-hush into his room.
Let us go and serve other gods, he says.
Let us walk where the mighty have fallen.

I note neither the mote in my brother's
unsquinting eye nor the beam glinting
mean into my own dreaming ones.

For that, at last, I'll need repose, to know
more plainly the snags he's untangling.
I'll need to mourn his madness more carefully.

I've come to see the bum he's become
(the crusting cracks of the waxen poor),
to offer what I can: this, more or less.



J. F. Quackenbush

Where I Have Eaten Moth Wings

"Underbridges, I am Carmelized & sugar powder powered in bowls of rain water & nettles. Underbridges, I am your lost

daughter of drought, a draught of dew shine shone loft in the moon where I have slept. Underbridges, brittle is the

scent of my wrists, the slits of my eyes shining sodium lamps lit behind. Underbridges, whisper me

quiet now where sleeping men may dream the dream of this gamine girl's boy body I am & can be for them. Underbridges,

where I have eaten the wings of moths to become them, where she & I came like kittens & lay around

her hands & mouth on me her full belly of the milk of us. Underbridges, keep it quiet now where

muffled are the foot steps sounding over head as on our knees we sing for our...

Underbridges where the scraps of newspaper tissues wrapped around sidewalk sold

foodstuffs & bottles come to rest to rest. Underbridges will you remember me in years to

come where no longer I can with pretty eyes with coal kohl & glassy lips, with the softness of skin

when I can no longer stay on the kindnesses of wicked men, Underbridges will you remember me then?

Underbridges, left to my own devices left in the arc light left in the gas-fired lungs I have been given to boil

my boiler belly; left with what little cracks my
fingernails can grow what grows here in the moonlight

Underbridges? How many others? And long until
the tension of these tense cables above come & tenses me away again?"

We Are Not Amused

for Claudia Sherman

So I imagine it with birds like rooks
like lifted with their heads sort of birdy
and all black feathers blooming out odd angles

like lion manes maybe some maybe not but theriomorphic
for sure it would be that way as Gemini wonder twins we

back to back in some long hallway
interiors by George Lucas as an undergrad yeah
so THX of us it would be.

And there so the sole of my left boot braced
back up against yer right spike hell
knees triangulating Hermes Trismegistus

whistles slow born now. Now and now in clove haloes
cedar smoke in the portrait as its pictured in it yer all in white
and I'm chartreuse and not like you're voluptuous

in white not I'm not this mountain grizzly grinning
jack o lanterns out out but we're rather androgyne
a Todd Haynes T. Rex concert film of names

the photonegatives of another history.
But what I'm saying is that, Janus, us like sugar
melting slow on low heat and wispy whispers beneath

the boil where it simmers I can tell
our skulls now grown together, us leant back
back to back like Siamese babies

bred for futures on an international exchange.
So take it like this, like I'm the girl and you're the boy
like nothing ever changes

like the audience will never know x
from y nor z in four dimensions as we've painted
as all the boys you will caress will

sigh in alabaster scars on high cheek
bones the shapes of tear streaked violins

remember that those fingers bled
might begin again again the girls that I will
kiss all anisette lips & verbena hips

against the oars of autumn nights that came along
against our other angels looking on beyond.

It doesn't take much

For Courtney Schrey

to with tobacco stains and
gelatin coax out those small
wet tendrils like they might.
but no never mind how that goes

and also, hair like copper reins
that patters quiet not quite pennies
still those are nickels; nifty how
with weights and sand dollar houses

how we, on beaches, fifty miles distant,
might still be three thousand and more
it's not yet what the Brits call millions
but milled this way out of a solid block

kept lubricated and well tightened
now where machined it's been
laid out and lathed like lisps
on her kitten lips lilt whisper

songs in too soon wilted branches branches bent
like Hokkaido house plants planted
now plaits of them the haiku of plaited
in her unsubtle machine undressing. dress up

her leaves now fall the way where
left they might be letters
to the girl I know she was before
we met and making mainland

Chinese characters now the skin stiffens
slightly at the corners of these
corridors all sated Andalusian
summer flowers, pill box wilted

lady slippers held in situ
gloved like one of her gowns
of antique guild-sewn gilt in glitter
worn kilts to the waist where wasted.

Bare breasts and skin slippery
with salt and potassium so thick
it glows in the dark undersea places
where spilled heavy water displaced

by the process might be found again. But no
but hi but hello but hello again but maybe but tomorrow
but maybe but baby I am burnt out thickets quick
with new growth come green again in spring time till

til now til then and ever i shall wait there,
the green man growing hemlock
horns and spider veins
spilling mosslocked saliva suet black
with bile and some other humor or another

still now laughing lately, I in quiet here
asleep still here in soft underbellies, green
where rain shadows cast in boot printed faces
filled with rain water washes

my white fingers cold to prune the skin
still splits as the water logs waits her waists
and shiny grey overcast reflecting in the boot heel
so awaits so softly her here where here the roots might grow
her softly down to sleep her through winter here
still and grows those grown some some more.



John Estes

He leads the way for his sons to follow

This is how I

move

through scenery

watch

him sway honeysuckle

snapped

against clapboard siding

chained

by the neighbor habit

flung

a blast leaving no one

dead

thank God thrown

clear

but not clearly

Nothing the matter with the instrument; it's the body.

The reason, according to the junta, officiously on the record, for vaccinations.

The reason the garden chives turned yellow.

The reason, like extinct primeval lizard-like monsters, for school.

The reason, as an article of untested faith, to favor the one before the many.

That reason alone becomes reason aplenty.

What nation, like our little house without a guest room between us, can escape—once reduced by its folklore to an object of study—being mistaken for mere geographical expression?

We have, between us, one uterus too many to trifle with gravity.

We count this truth, the reason we fear and stay in hiding, first among equals.

Tripping the plexal chakra

No room for conscience
objections when up river
the lady waits, saffron
situated and filching from
somewhere a bright livery
(or mantle?) of pulchritude
(or is it beatitude?)
that relents: okay, this is it.
Look, or never mind. Yellow

is as yellow does, and blows
to the solar plexus—even
of the quiet kind in palliative
energetic ju jitsu—correct
logjammed transmissions,
jimmied portal doors.

The fundamental problem,
I'm assured, is communicative.
Google "fix inverted kundalini."

But first, leave the intrinsic
city to its easy believers.
Does it sound banal, silly—or
disastrous enough to consider—

to hear the alcoholic ghost
(with respect, let me say spirit)
of a diabetic Indian chief
in a nicotine fit needs whiskey
and a smoke to coax him
out of my atmosphere?

One never forgets the day one
first learns the dead orbit
our hypostatic bodies.

This mystic seer, turned up on
his rounds of the Irish back
country cleverly disguised
as a Catholic masseuse,
does not joke about the dead;
I'm not one to argue. Pay
the man his 20 punt, my tiny
voice advises; but follow
his advice, in case.

So that's how I ended up
on Healy Pass, high above
the trickling Kenmare,
appeasing the ether
with a bottle of Jameson
and a pack of Silks,
stock-still on crushed

gravel bowed to a concrete
statue of the Holy Virgin,
a traveler's waypoint
or pilgrim's shrine that is,
I'm assured, a door, a window,
a tipiflap to the Pure Land.
Go. It's all one can ask.
Whether I saw the glowing
wheel or touched the love
that moves the stars,
I'm sure I never felt better.



Mark Cunningham

Vivid Metallic Ground Beetle

Practically, there is a difference between tofu as meat and tofu is meat, but there is no difference between time as money and time is money. She asked if it was an earwig. I said, no, it's my natural hair. My hypochondria is getting worse. In the past week, I've thought I had a hernia and cataracts, but now I'm not so sure it was my body I was describing.

Metallic Wood-boring Beetle

Leaf eaten into lace: lingerie calls forth the death drive. Not only could philosophy not prevent any of the last two hundred years' genocides, it couldn't stop the Archies' "Sugar, Sugar" from running through my head all last Tuesday. It must really be Spring: the cherry tree is blossoming for the third time.

Wrinkled Bark Beetle

In the late nineteenth century, Oscar Wilde predicted that soon artists would turn not to nature but to other art as the ground and beginning of new art. I'd like to add that I agree. Cows are right to be jealous of human beings: I have a tail on either shoulder that makes it easier to wave flies from my face. The whole point of intelligence is that you can save money.

Riffle Beetle

My note read "an enema bag, a cornucopia, a radish," and there's something I can't read and I have no idea what I meant. Why worry about dreams? I can't make the sun appear on overcast days even when I'm awake and I've had coffee with a shot of espresso. They were talking about hysterical deafness, but a breeze must have been blowing, because I didn't hear everything they said. It's impossible to tell if a line is asleep or awake.

Squash Beetle

In the future, everyone will be unobserved for fifteen minutes.



Megan Martin

Sparrow, Eulogy 1

Torn swath of day so lay in the memory-nest: tearjerked, dysquieted. Faces of post- highway-accidents, all caught up in Sparrow's features. (Dearest, come; come see me, Prince; *see* me, take me a-sea, a-new, hydroport me home.)

Hospital quakes white silence, rumbles blank thru labyrinth of walls. Hospital for sleeping ghosts—shhh—years deceased. Horror in the whiteness.

No postcards arrived.

Sparrowless nobody. Lost all her darlings. No future visitations; not in this life-line. Sleep herself to death like the very old? Get tired go to sleep forever.

Nurse removed the bandages I was wrapped in. (Neither skin nor injury underneath.) Washed my blood in bowl of warm soapwater sponge slipped overskin like—

Sparrow and I had taken soaps together? Had washed each other's? There was a certain bath? Perhaps unwashed by anyone since babied; since brutally mothered.

—story: ended.

Eye-speak: accompany me to the bathroom; hand-hold; I cannot digest the alone.

Read to me, nurse, in newfangled language; let your words pelt down, rainwater, thatched roof.

Come to me, boy, in native tongue.

Sparrow, Eulogy 2

1.

I'm conversing again with my paintings in tongues because I am not bright enough to believe the person who says: 9 out of 10 times there is no correct answer.

“Was there a lightbulb a-danglin somewhere I missed? Somewhere yonder?”

The mailman arrives with notification that my lightbulb resides in Antarctica, in the cellar of the nightmare-fishery-museum. He has a picture. He has a map.

I invite the mailman inside. When I request that he dress in the uniform of Sparrow, he obliges without question. He says: This is the duty of a mailman.

2.

You have got to convince yourself of something. Sparrow has returned from the dead, arrived on my doorstep in his dungarees, his tubesocks; arrived to reclaim our lost language, to converse with me in tongues.

“How benevolent that longlost Antarctica lightbulb would have seemed to our skins had we traveled there hatless and with newly shaved heads like we would have,” I say.

“Had we known of its existence...” says Sparrow. “Had our hangovers been less severe...had we chosen Antarctica over a breakfast of leftover eggrolls.”

“Imagine purple sores of warmth blooming from our snow-numbed scalps. Or the tooth you broke drunkenly at Monika's sweatlodge and refused to repair caulked full of white light...”

“All of the syllables you never did take back eclipsed by its electric hum...”

“In the gallery of carp-avalanche-sculptures we would have curated, which nobody but us would have cared to visit...”

“That tiny dying lightbulb could've bound the two of us together in an inopportune moment of chance.”

“It could've gone out.”

“I could've chewed it whole and let its thousand watts enlighten my feeble swallowings.”

“Any of which could have prevented your wanderings into those sarcastic Nebraska pastures...”

“Your repeated bellyflops into the bathtub of déjà vu...the shatterings of your spine.”

“Let’s go, let’s walk backwards into the white at sundown.”

“Fuck it,” says Sparrow. “Let’s go now.”

Never in his life has Sparrow said “Let’s go now.” Never in his life has he returned to anyone’s doorstep.

The mailman wears his mailman’s uniform and stands on my doorstep and waves a hand in front of my face.

“Walking backward into the Arctic is physically impossible,” he says. “It is my duty as a mailman to tell you so, while removing all your clothes right here on your doorstep.”

I oblige him without question. I am tired of speaking in tongues.

De-evolution of Mythology

but, my treetips—regret falls silent after burning itself up in the ultimate fantasy in which I crush your bones to dust, twist you into a wreath, and nail you up above the mantel in the living room that was ours once, in the “enchanted” library of botched, tacky brownness my treetips extend beyond the window without making a lick of peace unlike that fairytale of a day you and I filled the house with popcorn and for once the neighbors did not summon the police, or that other day when I said shut the hell up and eat your gelato and you did my treetips disintegrate in the bathtub, then they clog the drain, wondering: are you knitting amends, locked in the mineshaft, birdy? because the taste of your blood is cheap and ungratifying as sugarfree Kool-Aid not unlike the realization that She was sweethearted and clean in spirit before He entered the picture back when my treetips were obese with purple blooms back when the treetips leaked that woozy odor when I was charmed by your synapse-writhings when I saved the empty hot sauce message bottles when I was an idiot when I think about my treetips they are without meaning, or ashen, or otherwise unrecognizable but the manual says if I run a comb through my treetips they’ll split a little softer, get a little more playful during peak hours at which time you better run as fast as you can into Hades, dead of Iowa, or anyplace, really if I were commissioned to paint your portrait, it would be an offer I could refuse.

Conversations Between the Lovelorn: Act I, Scene I.

(Enter CHERYL and STEVE, stage zero. Scenery: a GLEN. CHERYL and STEVE circle one another in an unruly manner. CHERYL sniffs after STEVE, animal-like and wishing.)

STEVE: Why should I approach you, dear—you on your hands and knees, tearing up lipfulls of grass?

CHERYL: But I made an angel in the dirt for you; please?

(STEVE approaches CHERYL. Lifts CHERYL's finger via her wrist via her elbow via her shouldersocket. STEVE looks underneath the air.)

CHERYL: Hardy har. I tricked you! You thought you would find the enmagicked word, and what is there but the nauseated cotton candy of regret?

(STEVE lifts CHERYL'S skirts, sticks his head underneath.)

CHERYL: I am all out of sorts, tender as prime rib under there. No thank you.

(CHERYL and STEVE empty their POCKETS. There is little to exchange: THIRTEEN STONES, JAR OF WATER, STAINED HANDKERCHIEF. CHERYL and STEVE trade with gratefulness, then smell the void.)

STEVE: Why did she go away after all, after I left her on the prairie roadside?

CHERYL: I made a little pick-a-nick for us, see? Something is growing out of the ground and we shall eat it and it shall take us over.

(CHERYL unfolds picnic blanket full of holes and lays it on the ground in ditch next to I-90 W. She plucks a PUMPKIN she sees collapsed in a BED OF GOLDDUST)

CHERYL (Holding up PUMPKIN): Look, we can break jar into knife, press stones into face, build a pumpkin tea. See, Steve, how the sky is wrapping around itself in preparation for our divine pick-a-nick?

STEVE: Warping, you mean. Warping around itself as we do, spending its bones. I thought you were bringing boiled chicken, my favorite, but now I see this was just another womanly ploy. In the Grimm's version, you know, there is no pumpkin. No carriage at all. Only a dead mother, a gruesome wedding, some bloodthirsty birds, a moody bride jailed in a womb of ash.

CHERYL (dropping pumpkin, pulling Steve onto blanket, awkwardly straddling him): Wasn't there more underfoot, underhand, then? Wasn't there "transcendence"?

STEVE: I thought she meant to pull me up by the bootstraps into glee. It is our human responsibility, isn't it?

CHERYL (staring off into traffic while grinding on Steve): He acted like my father sometimes, like when he'd upend all the furniture in the night and I wanted to stab his eardrums. You will certainly be the same. You were certainly separated from him at birth.

STEVE (staring off into ditch of impotence): What was her name anyway?

CHERYL: The quilt fell away in the night. The cold put its spell on my lips. Nobody was there in bed with me.

STEVE: The guilt? Prairie roadside is not so bad—do you think?

CHERYL: Listen. The treetips sound so distressed and unruly now.

STEVE: I am waiting for something again. Stupidly. And I do not know what it is. Therefore someday I shall purchase a condominium. Someday soon. It will have no shutters, as condominiums refuse all resemblances to Home. I will live alone in the condominium of grief for all eternity.

CHERYL: That cannibal on the news ate his victims in order to make them part of him, you know. To make them the closest ever. It makes me feel that I, too, could be a cannibal, and proudly. What a strong identity: Cannibal!

STEVE: Someday soon I shall purchase a condominium by the sea and someday later I will die by getting swept out into it.

CHERYL (sobbing into Steve's armpit): I am getting to be an old woman. Creatures and people in movies, they mate and go out and get their condos. I do not. Therefore, I am not people. Why gingham? Why romance? No, I am not people anymore.

STEVE (petting Cheryl's ribcage): I spent 98% of myself on her. Now nothing makes sense except waterfowl and artificial ginger-lemon tea.

CHERYL: She was a cunt. He was a cunt. What else is left to say? C-U-N-T. We have got to move out into the shine—it is waiting for us to stop repeating ourselves.

STEVE: Someday soon I shall...

CHERYL: The treetips sound so distressed and unruly...

(TRAFFIC NOISE enters stage right, louder and louder and broken-sounding. STEVE and CHERYL move to opposite sides of PICNIC BLANKET, with the PUMPKIN between them. They keep lying in the ditch as RAIN moves in, longing for the world to grow blurry and lopsided, for their tale to grow up out of the earth and bludgeon them.)

“Art Therapy”

Time up and quit me. Meats hung stranded in the windows. I reinvent paper dolls out of disappointment: for Gary: the therapist. He came up with the idea when I said: there are no words to describe it. You can imagine the satisfaction.

EXHIBIT A: Paper Discoball

Medium: inside-out feathers, soaked in blood and lumpy Hollandaise X made each springtime, while en route to Tasmania for the air-guitar playoffs.

Description: X could not follow recipes, and preferred the imagined sound of the air guitar to notes of the actual instrument, which he played sloppily and with so much melodramatic grief. My discoball does not shine, is not mirrored, and bleeds all over Gary’s carpet, which is gray as X’s sensual demeanor. Gary examines his fingernails. It is a general rule that all X’s prefer the wrong thing.

EXHIBIT B: Paper Kittycat

Medium: Oceanfall, together they made a pain in my throat, ash saved from hundreds of cigarettes I smoked at four in the morning, waiting for X’s return.

Description: Did you have pets at home? Gary inquires, mistaking kittycat for koka nut. Bats, perhaps, or silverfish like those your mother squashed in childhood? No, Gary, there were no pets. He demands names and shoe sizes of the pigeons that roosted on the el stop outside our bedroom window, of the cockroaches that lived in our dishwasher. “Pet,” like everything else, has limitless definitions, says Gary.

But I do not believe he understands the infinite combinations of ideas the universe births for no reason, all those accidental conceptions. X, for example, birthed by sixteen-year-old mother. Gary says: yes, I can see how important those pigeons were to the two of you. How you ingest cockroach residue at each meal because it is so impossible to fully cleanse the palate of longing.

EXHIBIT C: Waddedloveknotofpaper, exploding out of Paper Molotov Cocktail, followed by abstraction of paper peace.

Medium: Shards of plump red heartbeat: mine, spattered on bedroom wall. Residue of accidental appearance of stranger in my bedchamber.

Description: I do not mention X and Heloise out on the lawn before our window, “necking,” or any of the others. I recount The Stranger’s overall perfect genetic makeup, residing most especially in his seashell-like toenails. Is he a robot? Gary says. If he is a robot, this is fabulous. A robot is what you have needed for so many moons. Yes, Gary, he is a robot. Oh yes, I am drowning so deep in the blameless, predictable quicksand of robot-love.

EXHIBIT D: Consecutivelinked3-Dquestionmarksofpaperechoingwaythefuckoutinto...

Medium: Unknown.

Description: Campfire love, kitchen table love, drunken love out on the balcony in front of the neighbors. When it was so easy to achieve whatever I desired? How is it so easy to lose?

EXHIBIT E: Paper Magic Wand

Medium: Purchased at discount magic shop across the street, while Gary takes an “emergency call” from X. The wand is transparent as childhood, so full of water and purple glitter.

Description: I *plunk* Gary in the head, hoping to turn him into anyone who can tell me how to exist. Gary says: ooh, can you turn me into Neil Armstrong, floating weightless and untethered around the moon? Can you turn me into Sacajawea? Make me famous, and loving, and kind, and not-myself?

Yes Gary, yes I can, I say, and he morphs into Liberace, Julia Child, and his biological mother before my eyes.

Later, I will *plunk* my robot repeatedly while he sleeps, *plunk* him human, *plunk* him flawed and understanding. And Heloise, repeatedly, as if with a lead pipe. I will *plunk* X into his best self, which existed so deep below the surface that nobody but me could see it.

I will *plunk* myself into somebody blank and whole, who has known no grief.

Self-Evaluation

Read the story, then answer each question by completely blackening the oval next to the correct response.

**Note: Story not included.*

1. Who is the narrator of the story?

- a) Me
- b) Mary
- c) God
- d) There is no narrator
- e) All of the above
- f) I don't know

2. The boat is a metaphor for _____.

- m) The dumb bitch.
- n) Hello, stranger.
- o) Redistribution of unsavory backstabblings during the Parakeet reign.
- p) I do not believe in metaphors.
- q) Your smile.

3. I was turning _____ over.

- x) All the stones.
- y) A sane amount of water.
- z) Nowhere.
- w) The baby's inner tube, haha

4. In actuality, there was no boat because _____.

- a) I was searching for it all over the wild.
- b) Mary came dashing into plain view, then went away again.
- c) I am the cliché of the girl who cannot find.
- d) There wasn't any water. There is no such thing.
- e) The boat would save, the boat would shine.

5. At the end of the story, the narrator falls from grace because she _____.

- a) Self-righteously misrepresents her mistakes to the President
- b) Forgot to consort with her lama this morning

- c) Fucks Pedro in the frozen food aisle, redistributing all of South America's karma.
- d) Could not make amends with her adoptive mother (not mentioned in story) who raised her on soap operas and "instant" breakfast.
- e) Again falls in love with the incorrect answer
- f) Cannot find her car in the parking lot.
- g) All of the above

6. Were the narrator smarter, she could have...

- p) Stolen the shipwrecked show and cashed it in for Bermuda triangle tickets.
- q) Guessed the correct number of fetuses in the jar, thereby winning the corpse-lottery.
- r) Discovered the magic turn of events with which to re-woo him.
- s) Collected herself, reconvened, and eaten all the cherries that had been left for dead.
- t) Ridden his hello like a boat, way out into the the horizon
- u) None of the above; no smartness could save her.

Advice For Puritan Lovers

1. Slip your hand underneath the orangepeel without ripping.
2. Pour your potions slower.
3. Release my blackbirds from their sewers, place them inside your mouth, let them flutter back and forth there: warmly, and a little frenzied.
4. (Next time do not clip the nail of your middle finger: that magnificent, blooddrawing claw.)
5. A little off-rhythm with the squid, please.
6. Bruise my holy darlings.
7. Feed me a bevy of blond teenage boys. Let them assault my hair with yellow bows, finely decorating me. Let them skin and debone.
8. Put your whole foot down the well. Now the other one. Let the rest of you follow.
9. Lend me the microfilm upon which to record you draping Melinda's gossamer hurricane across the canyon to dry, then shredding it to pieces, shoving it down the length of her long and voluptuous throat.
10. Give me nails to hang the recordings all over the living room so I can watch them while I press vacuum to floorboards. The house will be cleaner: I promise.
11. The day the sun comes back, cover me in blankets of warm mudspring--slowly and with deliberate tease.
12. Unearth my hibernations from their comfy dens.
13. Wait for rain. Repeat.
14. Wait for grass.
15. Release the panicked flock of me from your mouth into sky.

The Constant

I itch in the t-shirt I am too old for...the itch-itch-itchings that won't leave. I will be the same always. There is no progress in me. I will forever be haunted by X's absence. Never will I learn how to apply eye makeup.

Decades after the fact I re-enact all my old treacheries out of habit: falling asleep in the grocery-line. Hovering over others' soups in secret evaluation. Laughing after the moment.

My limbs buckle, still. Still I wake underneath the house where I've been hiding three days—under the porch where there's too much sun.

You coax me out, hands wide open.

Kitchen shears or paring knife? For onion width can make or break.

I catch myself picking basil from my tooth and flinch, wait for you announce your irritation.

Why do you work so fucking hard in that garden? you say.

You put me inside your mouth in a childhood game, eat up all the crazy in me like water. You open all my drawbridges; a vitamin arrives on my tongue.

Newly scolded for sneaking into the shower, the cat curls back into sleep; I fall apart at the constant.

Passion, felled by centuries of broken weather, comes back for a deeper haunting.

Laughter boils out of me all over the room. Finally I understand you aren't him.

Housefire

True: my brilliantine laugh pirouettes autumn-leaflike through midair, but I was never a geometrical numbskull nor a harpsichord wizard like the rest.

The uncertainty of your chewing motion promised we would never again love each other like we had at noon sharp the day before.

Across the table there was nothing to say. I whipped myself silly over it out behind the shed where you chopped our cherrytree with plump neighbor Heloise, sharing cherries until all hours of the afternoon, staining your mouths by the facefull.

Run a-sea with me? I heard you say in our backyard. Run amok?

Problem: I've forgotten the correct dimensions with which to construct a tear. (I believe Mother used romancenovel-cornstarch-laced-with-celebrity-obituary. But hers turned out flat and unintelligible as razor blades.)

You came outside, wrapped yourself around me like a string around a finger, rope around Joan of Arc—depending on who was doing the telling.

I was doing it.

Solution: the jack'o'lantern guts would go on glowing hideously; a housefire doesn't illuminate anybody's mistakes.



Michael Haeflinger

Regeneration

My left shoulder, lost in a snow bank,
reattached itself in the shadow of the new year.

The pinky on my right hand, shattered at a carnival in Berlin,
turned up in my luggage at CKY.

Shut the left hand in a car door before a trip to Jackson,
it grew back while napping in the backseat.

The burning wax that splashed over my thumb
magically became my skin and no longer burns.

The separated halves of my right collarbone strained to be whole again.
A bump proves their love was unparalleled.

The mountain that took the small bone in my right hand
acquiesced when I demanded it's return.

So many cells offered up to fermentation
leave me forgetting what I was going to say.

My spine, broken in kindergarten, then in fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade
now a scepter holding flecks of light like stars but current.

Four stomachs, cow? Ha! I've used seven today and I eat
more than just grass and hormones.

Toes eaten by cheap shoes popped
like corn in the shower.

Hairs cut make their case for existence each night
when I dream of losing chess to famous scientists.

Fingernails sacrificed for nervous reasons
naïvely keep coming back.

Tears lost are not a problem.
That well never dries.

A heart eaten out everyday has no concern
to beat out a rhythm the next.

Eyelashes become heavy with age and greet winded wishes
at the tip of a lover's finger. Cells of her skin go with it.

Seven years separate me from who I was.
Seven different years lie before me like a hallway rug.

One day, teeth fallen out will stay fallen out.
Baby teeth are a great commodity but only once.

Berlin
September 2007

Regret

sometimes you gotta go through the window
when the key you buried is eaten by time

so much so that rust crumbles
in the hole, the sound of turning, click

replaced by a quick crunch and trill
and sometimes you gotta climb through

the window to find your woman
on the sofa waiting to tell you

all the things she ain't
supposed to say

then your best friend calls
to tell you that he's selling his boat

when you didn't even know he
had a boat and then you wonder why

he never took you out sailing
then your mother's letter arrives

the words all smudged by regret
and small talk

and it's about then you might think
to yourself, self

maybe if I had been nicer
to whoever I was mean to in the past

or maybe if I wasn't such a good
sulker, maybe I'd be on that that boat,

having talked him out of it,
a great mistake to sell



Michael Estabrook

baby elephant

Little pine tree off in the gloaming
looks like a little person, a dwarf maybe or an elf,
while a bumpy, gnarled tree root appears
to be a skunk, and then over on the side
of the path is a rock that looks
so much like a baby elephant I stop and stare.
I suppose I should have worn my glasses,
but sometimes for a little while at least,
it seems better to see things as they aren't.

“Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte”

Nervously waiting at the color printer
for copies of the presentation slides to print out,
272 pages, an entire day
of lectures and I'm late for the stupid meeting
and my boss will be annoyed
(I'm never fast enough nor accurate enough
nor thorough enough for Mr. Perfect.)
and I'll walk into the room late,
trudging all this paper
and everyone will stop what they're doing
and saying and writing and stare at me.
But what can I do?
The color printer is printing as fast as it can.
I simply must wait and be late and embarrassed.
Then I notice through the window
the sun is shining, birds are in the trees,
regal as sentries guarding the city gates,
and the grass is such a pretty luminescent green
like in Georges Seurat's 1886 painting –
“Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte.”
Suddenly it hits me
like hot blast from a speeding train
that long after this stupid useless day is done
the sun will still be shining, the birds
will still be guarding the trees, and the grass
will still be such a pretty luminescent green.

FOUND POEM

Note from Dave, left on our kitchen counter:

Mom & Dad,
Thank you so
much for watching Max!
Mom, looks like you have
2 ropes now.
love,
Your Son
(I put the night stand in the kid's room)

Topless In Mexico

At first it didn't bother me. In fact, it seemed kind of funny. "You should've seen us Honey, a sight to behold. All 12 of us middle-aged women sitting on beach chairs all in a row – topless!" What? Topless? "I don't know who started it, Melinda probably, you know her, as a joke. It is legal on some beaches down in Mexico, oh you should've seen it, it was a sight to behold." I can only imagine, I'm laughing and shaking my head. "I didn't tell you for the longest time because I thought you might be upset. You aren't upset are you?" This conversation was a week ago and I was not upset at the time, but now, after it has all settled in, it is bothering me a little, like a smeared footprint etched in new cement. It is not bothering me intellectually, I mean, no big deal really, no harm done, truly a sight to behold, a dozen middle-aged, mostly out-of-shape, saggy women all sitting in a row on a beach in Cancun, their white breasts reflecting the white glare of the tropical sun, a man or two standing off to the side, mouths agape. "Probably the fastest way to clear the beach," I joked. But inside, deep in the soft, hallowed interior of my romantic soul, I winced and caught my breath. There she was, my very own beauty, the love of my life, the virginous little girl I married so many years ago, who once confessed to her priest that we French kissed, sitting topless on some fucking beach in Mexico. "No, of course I'm not upset. Why ever would I be upset about something so silly."

I threw my socks

I was so mad (I forget what about)
that when I got home and began
undressing I took off
my socks and threw them,
not at anyone,
simply threw them on the bed.
Yes, I threw my socks. They didn't even
make a sound as they landed
like dreams on the bedspread.
And there was a time
when I was a fairly respectable
weightlifter and took karate,
and I was a gymnast too and am still
a strong swimmer. What has become of me?
I wonder what I'll throw
ten years from now when I get mad.



Nava Fader

Certain skies have sharpened my eyesight

land is learned shovels deep
to inhabit the things tooth
to the grist mold
ivy the wall but come
be pretty to invisible the eye

is nothing less and keened
on all the empties knocks around
shards makes shadows or sense

some tongue tasted
the lie lesions of marches rows
granite ivories tuning out
the tunnel there is not stink
of stones

all the way back red carpet
and journeys end the gullet
foolish the one
who breaks a thing to find

Pinetrees seeded on Pelion's peak (Basil Bunting)

Rose hops beer to beef
magnolia cabbage crag
down there checking
for moisture ida red
with a piece cut out
triangular you
could get lost there

Herpes the bubbling
accumulation blistered
cellophaned milkiness
opposite erosion
are the petals
of flowers lip
to lip ossification by disease if flesh

The view form there stalagmites
were born water minerals invisible
fool's gold hit
your pick into your noggin on

Ripe what is my lodging (Basil Bunting)

and ferocious the night
raiders nibblers steal berry fly
and stalk by ear

land markers horn rimmed
fence dare you to lick it warm
inside winter's ice cowl

ask west wind to bind
sleeve to wrist pock-
marks grain pebbles
mosaic made new
won't last long

missed its mark
if feather brush
and beat had one haunch
made uneven by weatherage
by this art.

to conjure this: / perishing (A. Rich)

some trick. Axed him
but good: don't you want
to come down from there. Terror
simmers in the crockpot. Old-
timers tell us slant of secrets, pin
under the tongue, tripwire. Three times

and still she rises. Filament flashbulb
blinds binds she will always look this way

prick of the thumbs babywatch go plant
three drops under no light under only the light
my false
beauty silver
moon.

What we choose to know (A. Rich)

The biggest one a piece
of pie coin bartering silver
teeth belly blooms
distended distemper
pain rings remembrance
he'd know what's
cool in the hand metal
sings metal in scales pocket tips
on one huckleberry

he'd dismember diamond jubilee
learned others draw the curtain drain
swampsalt pond halfway heavy
dignitary distinctions finger
from finger

selling hot halves sweet
potato sticky
bun streetside
click click the tongue
hits the human
adding machine

rolling hills I have met a woman while shopping
I have met a woman called bliss
I crack open the nut which is empty

The peel is off the grape (Paul Blackburn)

please vote votive ice first then elevate
the temple there a mess
of feet to the god
ankle-healer sole man and flapping
chicken tongue swag this
and thataway pray
would you to those who'd
do harm see you
as though clear
as through narrowed
eyes when panaroma must needs always
be more
true. Read me this in waves
or unaccostumed to the ocean the ick and burn
slat weeder wader wasp the sea hornet
perhaps imagined and perhaps longed for.
What nests bury there mollusk crusted as jewel
as durable or flagrant
and the stink! take that mothafuck
needles piss por nada por entrado
doorway to heaven cerrado even you
in your digital parlance squinting out
them palatial visions columns of fingers sprout
like miracles like firewalls by god

Permit me voyage (H. Crane)

and so kissers of the night his asking
price two weeks since he spoke touched
petal key percussive quiet tip tapping
the portal permit me this outrider
springboard eternal the earth a half billion years
left puny orbiters shrink and sweat to Helios
charioted investments dashes some gold off
marvelous yellow boogers sweep mucosa
showers the gladiators shrink from

dawn's rosy fingers beaconing breasts
through plaque of morning fog for effect of radiance.

And as the fingers of the factory owner's son (Hart Crane)

Them mettle them skin
like cleaved and cries his titanium skeleton if
I could only be
a real boy knock knock
lying he's gone

into cinderwood my ella my darling
will you have
this next dance card
all full up what to wear acrylic
nails diamond studgun fires
first night of the year

buds as blood the plain
meadows of skin no drought
famine fire
but this mercury
blooms grows as salt

roots are daggers to skin
we never had
a metaphor of land to work out
inconsistent equations can't hold water
peeing in the fields and by and by

the thresher rigged up the bit
part bigger than his mulish maul.



Betty Stork

19 foot chris-
craft racer
ranger patrol off petrol

little league coach seldom bends
flicks his instep— dust to ump pants
supremacy pump
slack grip on long ball
slips from glove errors afterthought
advocates race roars over acre—

complexity cascades routine
bone approach layered embed
sensory flusters,

resposado en oak barrel
cheded banks on its boulder
bloat

hears chatter while relief pitching

conviction converts to radio rubber sheets
gets strapped to strap-on
parody-check

pursue grants new & strange fields of académie
eelgrass? or wild celery

ardent-class

anglo-dutch devoted mainstream shreds sail

villa courtyards, central stone built
that's fine outfit, well-liked imagination

long look at clogged pipes
genome?
there are two of you for every thousand
interior sector

honorific order or cosmic stepping-stone?
frigid flight through january birth canal
colleague cold shoulder
the snubs on morning commute

enlists new beginnings nubile clutter
— bone comma to bench press

coworker sputter punched
day trader who played d&d to high experience points
adventures in predestination

— only time I was ever colonel of my own stomach
luke warm toast with gazpacho
rebel egg at poultry plant
buttery malaise before twenty four hour bug
adults only wedding cake
father-in-law knuckle deep in finger food dip
stool steaming from inside like a fish stick
fetterer licks his fondue plate festering saucy palate

halfmast membership
pre loan—

unisex dorm stall locks

city **counsel quips** over
shower curtain christmas

old loan nibbles ear lobe interest
moan quiver pulls a fast one
9th inning full count foul foot shallow of the ground rule double status it deserves
anticoagulant dealers make pre-nups in their sleep, early birder with embolism free
throws granted trial on their own terms— topography team decides on new nominal
headline cast: your name is one letter with an exclamation point after?
who knew— utility monopoly becomes junior vice president (all honors)
keeps telescope in study window, to be fair, venetian blind privacy
main space sports complexer cerebrosppinal fiber fruitcake bounds four legged breakfast
foie gras midnight snacker— can't wait till sun up for public stomach stub influx
owes everything to summer of love, highlife lighter points makes his case known
pontius air traffic
palm sunday flag fans
situational monty
beak brim
of face down
draft dodgers

fluffy trills of the corporeal
wide stance of sister's bestfriend

first state suboperations	radar picket line
mudfield video signal	patrol boat pacific theater
set-top boxes short range	pro footballer for stalybridge
department of motorscope	celtic mudfield video signal
transport protocol	green screen gem
atlantic liners radar picket bay	real life hammaspeikko
C++ programer from stalybridge	sledding through hill countryceltic summer camp
history remarks:	
studio musicians nashville office	first beaumont & fletcher folio
commissioner	stationary
set-top boxes short range	
some tao decoders	buskers in the french quarter
green screen gem grinders	preapproved dry rations
manifold manual shutoff	mouse liter flour bowl
tin pan heart throbs	C++ program decoders
lost cause paul songs	gov't sponsored railways
packers	youth club six
lit-crit stone miller	
type set lincoln cent	everything must go motorscope
three piece jazz ensemble live at the quad	curvy foci?
meets me at brighton beach but forgets the notes?	long legs or stub inflammations
nevertheless got career stats claims titular at word probl	long division news column
burly winded report at word problem tournament	long devoted homogenous
come on, comiskey was a pitcher's park	long ball left fielder slip outs
twin filament is volunteer paramedic	long way from field work
rondo (C major Op. 51)	long loess to transport protocol
100 meters bronze medal goes to	long will strong sentiment
elcho burleigh of soft paw, english advertisements quebec	

courting impropriety

only got jock on underneath grey ascot
nonprofit

memory western cyclics
ump, that was no balk
split finger mythology

holy roman diet

steam rises U-shaped off
little lehigh river post rain delay

prominent sore thumb□

moral boat crew got
divers on deck
original cast members
first capital connects
termite attack on peg leg

axioms speak louder than worms

way west of j. birney crum home of the canaries

navigates past a coffee table with his shins

premature impasse
forehead blues standard
historian figures out last supper wine stomper
role played— damned? or damn good?

pelophryne brevipes concurrent transportation

employee of the leap year
post-sales represented product
relative location of an ad campaign official
worldwide corp. presence
departure code—

dog with dusty nose from the dirt corners



Stephen Baraban

as a noose concentrates the mind, but weirdly

a memory I
unaccountably much returned to
as I endured my
solitary, sobering fiftieth b. day:
I think maybe fifteen years ago
an African American busker on
electronic keyboard in
Grand Central Station
playing with nimble assurance and
inscrutable face, shuttling repeatedly between that
irresistible if mawkish
song of young revelers
anticipating they'd
"fight and never lose"
in the fine, winding
paths of futurity;
and the 'hava nah run nah nah'
section of "Hava Negilah",
granting us gathered listeners
delight in these tunes'
unexpected near-identity.--
shall we revere beyond sanity
such Moments within
the blighted Daze,
and why not, oh scattered
Friends?

May 25, June 5-7, 2005

or a howl or a scream

Surprised during my downtown
pleasant, aimless stroll--

across the misty Manhattan
avenue, I spied

poet whose particular strain of
post-avant brashness I don't

admire, and whose po-biz success
I envy,

but what else but to smile,
when I saw her wanted headgear

which has been a strange-fraught, laughed-at
retro symbol for decades

in far-tilted majesty,
capping

her stupefying
paleness,

her air
of goofiness,

and then charge of
tingling

persistence,
so my thought

was, on some
heads, a beret is

still
a bray!--

A Story

I remember a college friendship
with a student of science and visual art,
the sincere thoughtful daughter of
improvident hard-drinking parents
who *borrowed* money from *her*.
She struggled bravely against adversity,
but was also possessed of a fierce inertia.
She was sparing of her words, but spoke with a striking
freshness and scrupulosity.
I thought of her as both a firm bridge and a searching,
disappointed seabird.
Someone who knew her well
described her, with an air of finality,
as a "good kid",
perhaps because of the way
she sometimes cried out
with a pained youthful
fervor for decency,
straight from her bloodstream.
Often she was so intense yet so self-contained
she was like sunshine
sans its prideful fatuity
grown firmer.

I remember her most vividly—
her strawberry-blond hair clipped short—
in a green football jersey with white numbers.
I don't now know where she is.
We could've well been lovers,
but my mind threw up impediments,
as it always did rise up against
any possibility of union:
I wasn't tidy like her, and I didn't know Science.
She was so sensitive,
I was afraid to hurt her.
I thought her artwork was mere dreaminess.
She shared my attraction to Bob Dylan and I Ching,
but not my "higher" English Major interests.

I let my avoidance of the
Entertainment Industry's social conditioning
harden into frightened snobbery,
for once I was exaggeratedly perturbed
when she spoke enthusiastically
of the city's new rock radio station.
I made no comment except a polite mumbled reply,
but I was—how should I say it?—let me say: knocked silly,
by this innocently offered endorsement
of W-We-Got-It-All-Pal
's clever top-forties buzz and clatter
of Bubblegum strut & Heavy Metal swagger,
segueing into loudmouth spielmeisters with their booming
listen-up-baby/better-not-miss-this
contest promotions—ah! gee-whiz-and-a-half...
Alright, so after that fateful conversation I'm tuning in string quartets
and disconsolately picking over my bookshelves—
I wasn't totally focused on this strange drama
but there was a new vertiginous torment

planted within me,
as much as there was a new barrier of
heedless contempt, standing so as I might forget
she was Seabird, Bloodsquawk, brave Kid, firm Bridge, scoured Sun...
A few days later,
the dream was I was in my bathtub,
when she entered the room,
and tossed a transistor radio into the water.
I appreciated this as a
stunning image of my fear of the
annihilation of the
life I strive to lead.
I was confused what the answer was,
but I didn't consider the sexual auspiciousness of
oneiric electricity.
I should have seized the moment to turn
from my habit of casting out desire
for fear of the loss of my bathwater.

Mid-Manhattan Library Vignette

I spoke briefly to the
bag lady as we left the elevator
and I thought she would be assisted,
but from across the room
I saw that the Library Scientist
was prepared to
stand and speak with her, but would not stride
to fetch or guide her to
a volume of Longfellow's verse,
which was what she was requesting.
After stuck minutes of
piercing hesitation, I walked to the shelves
to browse and select one for her.
I presented it to her,
and accepted her gratitude and praise.
Shortly after, I gazed at
her lit and enchanted face; and would ask
that she be granted
intimations of her worth
by day, sharp twinges of
the midnight pride
of the unrevered.

1986/2007



Phillip Lund

The Work, Which Is Simple, Conquers It

Pure beginning,
the simple search
at the beginning of the inclination
(inclination being pure).

The initial mixture
and the egoistic course.

All the creative things—
the inclination of glory,
the atrophy of conscience—
will fade.

Harmfulness of perfection,
simplicity of perfection:
it works out glory
in simple harmful work.

As for the Excellent Conscience of the Holy

Rather than advising,
you urge
what is not obvious.

You urge
the work where
hallucination is given
large portion.

It is given
the holy elegance
of conscience cut:
hard holiness,
the holy punishment,
the punishment of elegance.

As for safety
(a better practice)
it is satisfied
when you use
the acquisition of all
things moderate.

In Order to Achieve the Taste of the Work

You improve
the beginning, which is weak.

You improve patiently
the rumor, which is
the impulsive tendency—
the easy tendency,
the complete weakness.

The simple consultation
(being given rashly)
begins to be patient.

The tendency hangs—
impulse echoing;
the tendency which is
a certain impulse.

It hangs on most patiently,
complete brittleness.
It sadly offers:
better to be patient.



Paul Siegell

SET II

(((Whooo's got my kickdownwn?)))

newbies scenesters lotheads spunions, o'er the myths a-my
heroes, I cheer for my friends.

fret-transcendentalists, w/i lot & venue of rockNroll, night
after night, volumes in common:
Internauts InfoAgers Ritalin-fidgeters, a lotta us never
Nirvana attain'd/Grateful Dead lived; a lot of us,
however, had—

rock an overall'd Huck Finn-hatter flippin' his cell phone:

*(((Jack Straw, Attorney at Law. You guys alright?
...Alright, we'll meet you up at Will Call.
Yeah. Cool. Later.)))*

rock a peeling old bumpersticker: "Who are the Grateful
Dead and why do they keep following me?"

*(((New Castles. I got New Castles here.
Two for five. New Castles!)))*

History teaches: lot's named "Shakedown Street," where
Fabled Strangers fit/reboot: *Ctrl+Alt+Delete*, but
Assembled Multitude, "Tomahawk County" seems
truer to the newer>

C'mon, I'll buy you a beer—

honestly, wasn't of Vietnam Era & glad—not even for
Havoc Francisco or Yasgar's Farm. I just pray my
blood test comes back "Negative."

(((Any miracles round hya?)))

for what you are is what you find:

doubleclick a Reunion: guy w/ floppy hat & “Be Good Family” shirt in mid-hug w/ buzz-cut buddy in long, gauzy skirt; his shirt affirms, “You Are Beautiful.” in flatbed truck, a head w/i “BETTY FORD CLINIC” baseball cap (its back admits, “OUTPATIENT”), park’d next to a “PHISHÉMON” (gotta catch ev’ry show) bumpersticker, next to an “I Smoke Herb & I Vote”, park’d next to a Darwin fish-w/-feetsies and then another w/ Christian Ichthylus—

for arrangement forms impressions:

ev’rything’s a color; ev’ryone’s a quest; ev’rything’s creative/makes you think/kinda humble:
“I Am Happy” signs, veggie quesadillas & someone rip’d off a “Don’t Forget The Nuggets” banner from Wendy’s—
Happy Harvest! please clique w/ a “Do Not Arrest This Person” shirt—clique w/ a “KARMA” shirt: “It’s Everywhere You’re Going To Be.”

indEEd, cops control as some kids’ ev’ryday hell, but they’ll still cool you gas money if you sell the iced tea they need on searing summer-tour days>

for SONG! headlines the ritual road trip’s jazz~arrow hundreds a-miles—
headlines you&your carpool’d crew’s addition into the improvisational joys&horrors:

(((Have any spare change to get me back to New York? I’ve been robbed.)))

harmonic common philosophies, questionable opinions of reality, supersensitive bonds of vegan, vegetarian, meat; in organic fibers, or not:

(((Who’s feelin’ frisky? I got dollar shots a-Whiskey!)))

melodic lot-headie productions earning enough gas-cash to contribute their:
bralessness armpits Nag Champa & glowsticks, dreadlocks

nugs, calico corduroy patchwork & patchouli, thrift shop shirts, backless aprons & bandana paisley—

to contribute *themselves* to the next set of bootleg-able ephemerals/memorables Scooby/Dutchie goodies & TYPECASTING—

where the cornrows/the cowrie shells at?

rock a meat-mass a-muscle in taut-black nightclub shirt bent to scoop fallen \$15 short-sleeve homemade & return it to unaware peddler, yards ahead>

at this very moment it'll all unfold—

clean-cut frat folk dripping~trippers SoberSafeness & all the lunar phases a-leapJOYsmiles kaya oils Rasta tams & the goodness gracious glitter'd in b/w>

at this moment very it's all unfolding—

in effort/consideration the Green Crew collecting our cigarettebutts beerbottles & plasticbags>

this moment very at glaciers of uncomf'terble temp'ratures—

two ticketless shadybirds only tailgating, but still buggin'~ out totally losin' their mushroom pizza & throwin'~ up wanting to end their first~ever venture thru an open~air psychedelic market>

moment at this very in this vault we deposited the remains of—

spark that DC-electrified freak larking a wavelet & emancipating *wu~who~who~whoo!* all crazylike into the American Carnival; he was exactly that stoked>

very moment this at it's on its way—

three fitted-baseball-cap'd short-hair'd & shirtless ex-high school football players hover adidas above another kneeling down & bongin' a 16 ounce>

at this very moment you can tell those strolling two are inseparably in love—

but *no/not yet*: most of our Parents, tryna protect, and who knows if they're waitin'~up-late wond'rin 'bout boomerangs?

tailgating teases/flirts like foreplay—so let's walkabout a bit more: we got time>

so, sing a wink a mandolin, two acoustics & a hair~wrap'd Southern siren w/ navel-ring'd apron shirt & Celtic knot attracting lower-back tattoo-attention above

feetlessly long purple denim flares, freeing *Bobby McGee*>
sow a stitch a passerby coping w/ amputation taboo, who,
in place of a right leg, struts a prosthetic edit
painted w/ purple bear boppin' in a tie-dyed firmament:

*Significance parades here—gait patterns of
information, strides that take
us places/show us vibrancies—swaggers in
corduroys, in courses & wales
as if pastoral rows ready to be till'd, toil'd,
somehow plow'd like soft solid
comf'terbly color'd baggie strips of farm-
land—corn & wheat fields, pumpkin*

*& potato patches: crops feeding our raven-
ous overpopulation—strolls
decorated & loose—gaits w/ outer seams
(connecting halves together),
whereby we avant our part & hodgepodge
in, flavoring & giving parking-
lot significance to the old standard of what
we wear—stitching felt, calico,*

*cartoon & even more corduroy in, as if ad-
vertising the great geometric
fields of counterpane/alternating earth tones
of where nutrition comes from—
patches of agriculture—why we're able to
dance work learn worry listen
travel laugh & o, annihilate the way we all
do in the first place>*

*((I got the headies you want—Who's got
the extra I need?)))*

nice, at this very moment on llama t'boot t'bootlegs,
The Talking Heads' *Cross-Eyed and Painless* funks
out across the row; The Velvet Underground's *Rock
N' Roll*()alrights itself from()the next:
all thanks to tradable hours & hours recorded INside,
during the show, by the microphone-forests of tapers
TapersTAPERS! (consider bootlegs the closest thing
our jam pastime has to baseball cards, but advantage
boot: can't dup' baseball cards before you trade 'em).

—& y’know, just noticed, on other side of aisle we share,
an ambulance arrived;

not_great,
but even odder: its hood is up—an injured ambulance?—
for EMERGENCY EXITS?

shift a switch relax its been converted—
’60s folklore-like:
like that turtle-top’d spectacle-of-a-school-bus, down
the row a bit, furth>r

*(((Dude, all I’m sayin’ is orange juice
doesn’t make you trip any harder.)))*

sew a seam a pair a-green cords w/ long black isosceles
triangles of bellbottoming fabric—
the Mighty Isosceles—w/ tiny patches-in-perspective of
their own: *at this very moment the White Dotted
Line of the Road*>

indeed, as
loose as possible,
as high as peace, w/ the stories
we’ve heard, the films we’ve seen, w/
our knowledge of the “Beatnik” & “Hippie”
myths: *I am more than the music that appears to dress me—*
as jaded as mis-defined label-makers; as rooted as Classic Rock History
& then some>[]How THEY: []60’s fought []protest/resisted []50’s
fought 40’s fought 30’s depress’d 20’s roar’d etc... Now I (an InfoAger?)
am Media- & Romance-Educated, & a “Hippie” wouldn’t do
a lotta things I do—they’re purer than what
weed can teach—ah, just b/c someone
looks like one, doesn’t mean
they think, feel or
even judge

that that's all they are or'll ever be:

*Teenage cuties screech PopGroup BoyGirl chorus &
choreography;
Sexy singers! Word the lyrical beat/diamond-lit MC
aesthetic;
Strum a Country a pickup-truck patriotic cowboy hat
twang;
Old & young heads harvest Classic Rock roads of
influence,
even on iPods & Idols; “—Fuck off!” spiked & safety-
pin 'd, Punk still punches; Indie emerges; Emo
copes; Ravers arrive;
Jambands expand< And like spiders in wet-leather on
candle-lit stain'd-glass, Goth rocks; Gosh, how
many diff'rent rocks?*

Music
Divides
just as much as it
Unites.

I AM ONE OF YOU: I JUST DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU!

tickets, please

aloof

azure. ephemeral

eventide

general admission

lawns.

have-a-good-show

buoyancy

aloft the road-

trip trails

of summer

tour.

SET III

o, asphaltic meadows:

replete w/ yer leashless dogs snooping fans selling
grill'd Americans for crumpled-up back-pocket bucks,

music roots bone-beaded sung/sound/thots growing vines
dreads armpits beards:

Humbly Natty Uncut Citizens—

song the wOOk-natural/"Wookie"-like outfits of hair: when
given a chance to grow, how the unbroken woods of
a body expresses,

song the spunions all spun~out on too many too manyables
& laced w/ imported chromosome-like necklaces of
cannabis:

music earthy jewelry: macraméd mantras of nature of
nature of nature of nature of nature of nature of
nature of nature of beaded hemp~helix DNA
necklaces:

*Hemp Redemptions! Un-toke-able
pot hypocrisy! Positive economic investment—Hemp
Redemptions! Our "Strongest Fiber" hemp bonding
& symbolic—DNA endorsed adored & decorated w/ tears
bones & beads: a ladder & necklace, imported &
spool'd, hemp spinning like connections of nucleotides:*

bond Adenine to Thymine to spontaneous games of
personalities painkillers expectations ignorances—
bond Guanine to Cytosine to personal freedoms for the love
of nugget/pot seedless *sensamia* recreation:

*At 4PM and 20, the corkscrew-lively creatures
Swirl about the patch of grass beneath the sundial:
All flimsy elitists stand miserably on stilts,
And the wandering green belittled simply whistle.*

& o, lemme know when y' get hungry; see if we can score

some grilled-cheese pizza; m'm, so good—ow! wait
up, I've got—yah, a rock in my sandal—

(((Cash er trade fer yer extraaa!)))

bond as if the Jabberwocky's "mome raths outgrabe"-ing
round the sundial a-the venue,
song the serenading those w/ pointer fingers lifted like a
1787 canvas a-the Anti-Artistic & Anti-Dionysian:
Socrates.

(((Whooo's gonna get me insiide?)))

w/ flavor w/ fun w/ micro-amnesia:

this giant picnic of a partaking lot is a damn good street—
wait, what was I sayin'?—oh, right: & this street
has wine:

>

*the immediate emotion of music
over illegal freedom of drugs!*

self-medicated in denial & instantly

heard this version before?

gratified internal battles of ego

why wouldn't you want

& spiritual monsters:

to come to the party?

sometimes drugs dis-harmonize me—

you know how it feels

I've become a bit too sensitive—

when you've missed the festivities.

I am "out of control"

the music dies when its rhythm does,

(& that forces awareness/

makes me alive)—

but do I hafta remove the darkness

I am afraid of drugs—they are

from outta the dance?

stronger than I am—a pot leaf

do I really need to brain-cell burn

ain't my peace sign—& let's

to keep the beat w/ a yes-nodding head?

be honest: they will never

when you're where it's cool,

rehabilitate hemp.

it's weird when people leave.

my fellow Fret-Transcendentalist: yes, we Nurture the
Subjective: someone's "Best Show Ever" can also
descend as someone else's Worst, but if IG'NANT nOObs
only come for narcotics or "scene," then
you're not ON TOUR for MUSIC, & then the Musicians
don't care about you—only Enforcement does:

FIRST F-16

My antelope needs not a drug;
Its gearshift already set high;
B/c, lot heads, & rest, dear parents—
That's not how I improvise!

SECOND F-16

Hit singles dull the more radio oversells them:
ComeNshare spontaneous setlists freed upon a jam!

come & cop a roll upon a siren'd light show of authority, to
the highly unhelpful mandatory minimums, the
United States of America's trinity of colors above
its bLack And Whites—
roll a cop off shady guys whisperin' in: *shrooms/doses*
nugs nuggets nodges E K O X keifer beasters
chocolates opium middies microdots dust hash
kindbuds dank regs & even whippets into our safe
ears,
our schwag-drag undercover "hey makisupa" security
guards~~~Xanax Meth glassjars Marley~spliffs
psilocybin mescaline Percocets Quaaludes ecstasy
heroin minithins Ritalin—

((Gels. Molly.))

our candy~rolling mentally wandering liquidcube senses
synesthetically hopping their backyard fences—

((Next.))

our N₂O~tank Eucharist lines for the \$5 *fssssssss* at
them—*wah~wah~wah~wah*,
our nearby nastily random vomit splatters & abandon'd
balloons, down & possum'd.

Music does love a critical mass:

but beyond this illusion island, highlighters have somehow
harvested an intensely larger realm than ourselves—

and therefore: icarusIcthylusICCULUS~ly Ridiculous:

Dionysus arrives!

brought forth from outta extremely pleasing eardrum
intricacy:
musicianship songs, psychology-check Universal Depth &
other fun compositions
of quirky~surreal Language Poetry lyric-mixtures crafted
w/ the physics of a dream:

Chakra Shotguns!

Hiker's Peak releases—the Dionysian rains as a great
tingling u n l e a s h i n g:

Dionysus arrives & knows This Music Loves, is frenzy~
friendly, speaks in “objective correlatives”:
deflating ego-individuals down to discover the hypnotic,
the dance/drum/beat/time...

Dionysus speaks the electric~prankster mythic/illicit
holystash a-wisdomweed laughing grass & gas:
speaks ecstasy's emotions; acid's world to water,
charged—
speaks as challenge to strength, tests a will w/ all
intensity/Anxiety—
speaks easily/socially, like pot remixing a moment's bond
& matrix,
& for some, being baked's totally normal: a place to live or
pair of shoes to wear—
speaks like safe sex, drugs discuss feelings/sacred senses
(sacred: as opposed to ev'ryday mundane),
but we all know trouble is: some drugs speak ev'ryday,
making sobriety sacred—
s'like an anti-corporate rocker blowin' -up mainstream, &
hating it.

but still, highly influential, Dionysus penetrates the ecstasy
spectator,

perma~smiling potential & ultimate, ritually visual
w/ celebrated words, lysergic detergent
& extrArtistic architecture—

www.da_distorted_perspective_of_a_realistic_distance.trip

dotWARNING: the jam fan visual art of glowstick
throwing can cause serious injury (our “glowstick
wars” look like Desert Storm on CNN), so
for OUTstanding interACTIVE ENTERTaINment: throw
GlowRINGS instead—

for Dionysus speaks w/ music felt visibly—*heads up*—
paroxysms struggles & transitions>
Dionysus sings the *komos edy*: the Shakespearean
comedy/“community song,”
connected *echad*, the jam speaks the collective
performance, speaks w/ enchanted significance,
vocal jams w/ the *You Enjoy Myself* spell inherent, still
speaks the original Oneness to online minds:
Bacchus sends us back...

www.feathers_grasshoppers_fire_escapers.excess

connected to transcendence, to the Nazirite Apollo Socrates
Nietzsche Huxley & the original Celebrator a-the
Lizards! but
like Dionysus taught King Midas/Jim Morrison: Beware
the GOLD of rockNroll—

(((Owwwww! Some rummy for your tummy?)))

bond drug-sad spirituality brother&sister compositions of
creation coping w/ drama mundane ruins &
mysteries—
bond JAH-invisible audience w/ body-piercing eyeballs/an
intelligence level un-surpassed, Shangri-lizing
contact-high consecrations w/i the art a-the area—
link rings eyebrows lips navels tongue-studded visible &
non-visible penetrators, the latest line a-the info-
adapting, improv-evolving tribal Human dynasty:

(((JAH Rasta Pastaaa!)))

song that garlic-buttery American cheese bidding fare thee
well to sizzling friends & flippin’ off the grill for

adventure thru Green Crew's sanitation system,
b/c, I guess, it just didn't wanna be eaten,
song that backwards hemp-hatter in greasy week-old attire
electing the gentle wind~chiming Summer Woods,
bypassing wait for blue port-o-potty nastiness to
powwow w/ Nature,
link cargo-skirted short-hair'd & bobby-pin'd beauty upon
her Antelope-Xing ride,

*(((What the fuck? It's only a buck!
Help me get to Alpine!)))*

bond new parents seeking extrAtmospheric stardust for
their little firefly-catchers running the galactic spiral
& gigglingly learning all the artsNcrafts w/i,

(((Kickdown? Any kickdowns?)))

song yet another overall'd, shirtless & bearded Van
Winkle, just outta nap he crash'd in Fading Scarlet
VW bus, takin' care a-his —, then brushing his
teeth w/ bottled water in the afternoon,

(((Kickdown? Any kickdowns here?)))

“—Well, actually,” a girl in peasant shirt says, “I do.”

they chat: she hands, he receives/can't help but make space
w/i his body, spread his arms/embrace his
benefactor,
b/c that's what a kickdown, or whatever you wanna call it,
looks like: (a hug).

o, the karmic partnership/natural soap of friendship-pretty
tickets to the “I and I” of positive scenes & sites—
there's an inherent faith in folk understanding: *the more
you gift, the more there is:*

Ticket “If yer ever in Denver and need a place to stay or
anything, definitely gimme a call”,

Ticket totally trip'd~out secret peaker bent for weirded-out
three-foot-tall twinkle crying for Mother missing
w/i the spinner~dresses a-the great cascade,

Ticket “I don't understand a lot of this world—The only
time it seems to make sense is when I'm on tour.”

(((Whooo's got my ride to tomorrowww?)))

ah, yet another beerbottle-pounded night—

another heady dread-twist & hemp-helix spiral dealing
Humus bagels Veggie burritos Phatty falafels &
maybe even stickers or lollypops from sundresses
for free,
but as for now: cars are still parking, vendors still
advertising their wares:

*(((Goo balls! Got glowrings & gooballs
all right here in my wicker basket.)))*

o, asphaltic meadows:

as vulnerable as a sand painting, as Biblical as Abraham's
nephew, and about as Aeolian as how the wind
carried all of us here,
this lot's a speakeasy frenzy-friendly pursuit for that hard-
to-hold-onto UthC^{ulture}—

and damn if we haven't made our decision:

(((Hells yeah!—Havagood showww!)))

w/ excellent giggle ability, crazy antic wisdom joy &
dancing euphemisms for euphoria—
we are the Search Engines & the Search Engines are:
shattering dissatisfaction, *tragically*—

for Dionysus speaks:
Apollo descends w/ boundaries.

ENCORE to JAM>

And never has so much grandeur symbolized so much friendship:

better people make us better

Ma tovu ohalecha—How lovely are your tents.

make us better people

And what a beloved tabernacle you wander w/—carry, uplift—your music
out on tour.

better people make us better people

For We Label'd "We":

better people—

SpinnerIndieFolkEmoMosherChristianCountryPunkPreppieHipHopHeadie
TeenieGothGangstaJockTechnoRaverIndustrialSkaterGlamSKA
(What happen'd to "Grunge"?)
JAH Rastafari
Pop Common Rocker/Funky Styler
Red Ribbon'd Rainbow/Hetero
And the Single Working Mother & Child

[No frets unless upon my mandolin.]

better people make us better people make us better people
Better people make us better people make us better people
Better people make us better people make us better people

—are ALL *transiently*

just

in

a

Jam.

TO: Idealism RE: What are you held for? [SEND]
INBOX (1): Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender>



Peter J. Grieco

C CLEFT

Without yet opening our mouths we
approach the limit of our understanding.
I think of CB
speaking in spurts
suddenly as if half
his face were
paralyzed. Again,
again, the threads
of self, of conversation, are the same,
cleaving from the same source. Cutting one we
save the other.

LE BAISER DE L'HOTEL DE VILLE

recurrence
in this staged photograph
over time
reducing the complexity
the next element
to shades of grey
arriving
caught up in the irrationality of the crowd
within sight or earshot
striving for the general good
of the previous, so that
rather than for individual advantage
you feel in the midst
on the other hand
of a movement
le spectacle gratuit
carried along

CATHY'S SONG

Ever feel like a rat
on a treadmill
thinking you're going great
but getting nowhere—
& everyone around you
doing the same?

It could be the gym
but it's not. It's everyday
in everything you do.

The trees, the woods, the animals
would be more appealing—
but they'll eat you to the bone.

A BUFFALO MAN

was charged
with a series of misdemeanors
after he refused to pay
a restaurant bill
for coffee
soda
& chicken fingers
totaling \$12.36
then yelled vulgarities
at patrons & police.
Officers said that the accused
swore
at them & told them
to "shut up"
from the back
of the police cruiser.

WHITE OUT

The perfect suicide is surely
one that fails—the overdose
that under does it—the wrist-slasher
who passes out before she can find an artery.
In Japan, where “it’s easy to become a nihilist,”
the trend is to die with strangers
in nondescript gray sedans
parked off the road in semi-wooded areas
not far from town, three in the front,
three in the back, in their 20s by the hundreds
each year. They meet on-line to discuss
their fate—no girlfriend, no boyfriend, no job,
money running out—surfing the Web
from childhood bedrooms in their parents’ homes,
looking to “die together with someone
garbage like me.” Moon was her screen name—
excited by the fantasy of an easy death.
“Moon-san, we’ll die tomorrow,
but there’s one seat open. Would you like to come?”
As if it were a road trip to Hokkaido,
she claimed a spot up front. They bought coals
& a brazier at a home-center, pulled off the road,
taped shut the windows from the inside.
One of the too shy young men wanted to
complement her on her perfume & her
lace dress. They shared out the sleeping powders
& slipped on ski goggles to guard their eyes
against smoke. As Moon eased into her last dream,
the head of the boy next to her slumped
onto her shoulder. Everything turned white,
rice paper bleached of calligraphy, fog blown in
over quartz crystal beach of featureless ivory.



Ralph-Michael Chiaia

Jin-a

As I sleep
pain crawls my
lower back
glutes, and hamstrings
I wake
and sleep
and wake
again

I ask my girlfriend
who is fast asleep
to get up and find
tiger balm

she whines until
she sees me try
to move

she finds it
rubs it all through
me

Before Jin-a

This girl, nicknamed Sunny,
I think
won't even take my hand
while we're on the street.

To my surprise, she's naked
in bed and gives me her pussy
I'm the first ever.

I didn't even think I was about
to get laid.

With Jina

After yelling and screaming
and throwing things
I call an ex
she meets me in a parking lot
alongside the Han River
then tells me she has to be
with me and misses me too much.
I rush back to Jina.



Richard Lighthouse

step into this poem

white spaces on this page
will hold you. see if you can fit.
hold onto this letter and
ease yourself down.

place one foot in the margin,
this phrase will move you closer.
brace your body between
ink and paper. gently now.

it can be exhilarating
once you get in. lean back against
the stanza. make yourself
comfortable.

nestle among the words,
where it feels safe,
where words and love are reborn.
step into
this poem.

activities during meetings

if i eyeball the end of my pen,
just right,
it sits on the nose of the
vice president.
stirring my coffee counter
clockwise creates australia
in a cup.

clockwise, a giraffe.
when i yawn and stretch
my ears unplug
and sounds go higher.
the balding man's head
has hair tentacles
like an octopus battling his scalp.
my chair only
squeaks when i lean right.

is it time for lunch?

sheets

the best kind of love
spreads like early sun
on (twisted) sheets
peering secretly thru blinds,
glistening on sweet skin

the best kind of love
urges on
stays unsettled
remains like delicious
scents dangling
in air.

she emerges from the
bathroom like the best
kind of love
dripping wet
wrapped in warm towels
and grinning like a child.

"i smell coffee"



R W Sturgess

Saturday to Sunday ∞ (Reoccurring)

More bad things happen when it is dark
Looking for a place for my brain to park
Edging by the dull orange glare to the brightest shining lights
The polystyrene troughs ravaged by creatures of the night
Following sounds the colours and the sheep
Down, down, down to where the soulless sleep
There stands a man, the only one who's keeping score
Bore to the core this self proclaimed Casanova whore
Waiting Smirnoff Ice ages to get a foot in a bar
I'm leaning on the back counter and flagging for a jar
But the only jar that I likely to get is the pickled one for my brain
Grab a ticket 1,2,3 all aboard the drunken train

Looking through the bars the coloured sounds blur subtly as one
Monkeys Dance! Monkeys Dance! The DJ's commands sound on
Repetitive strain of ankles, of wrists thighs and knees
The organ grinder rotates his arm with unremitting ease
Shaking ass watching yourself the low cut mini skirt teases
Then there's that girl sucking on a lemon the cloud above her head
Personality zero a face of 8 I'll end up in her bed
With a head like a dagger we stumble and stagger wrapped in our sense-free quilts
An evening's daze, a Purple Haze, tomorrow's physical guilt

And this is how we choose to spend our money and our years
The hopeless and helpless drown in their drunken tears
And although they wave their hands in triumph and punch fists with passion and pride
The essence of these habitual creatures has evidently long time died

Trench warfare

Behind painful pleasantries and feint wry smiles
The elephant in full battle attire looks on from the corner of the room
Each continuing as though nothing has happened
Each fortifying their trench for the emotional conflict
All *is* quiet on the Western Front as the day marches on

Rations get thinner on each side
Who will be the first to surrender?
Will they sign a treaty, as others have done before?
A waste of time - Why? Why? Why?
For each other they choose to ignore.

Then he emerges slowly from the trench
In his hand an olive branch
A snapshot from behind sees both figures one approaching the other
Behind her back she is claspng a knife as she marshals him nearer
It's not the first time that she has plunged this into him will it be the last?

In her mind she has done the right thing and the people behind her agree
She turns to her people and they all cheer
But this is only one side of the line
Unmoved by her actions she continues her policy and she always will
To fight another war with someone new.

Untied Kingdom

Untied kingdom is a gulf of indulgence and hidden gripping strain
Dedicated to tight rope balancing, the circus for our wits
Brains stretch to their limits taking their shape once more
Tensile stressed lifelines extend more and more from pain
For those who fall to folly and woe with this original infection
Murdered, we look for reasons or clues, a moment for reflection

We graze in corporate meadows on the cud of sweet commerce
Our pastimes overlook our senses, taking image first
The nation's favourite hobby has seated our lifetime
Poised in a box in the corner of our so-called living rooms
Transfixed on colours and the sounds of that seductive screen
No creative minds only bad news an outsized waistline looms

And as News flashed! A Fatal crash on the busy carriageway
The scrawny and the stylised stretched in disarray
Struggling for position not for pole, but zeros
For the models they pursue, our fabulous faultless heroes
Pushing the doors free from the scare the balance is very clear
New innovation brings new danger, the population secure

How can we feel secure in faiths that list written demands?
With day by day moral explosions, and political commands
Demands and constraints, remands and complaints,
Remands and complaints, demands and constraints.
Crusading with Cruise missiles or desperate guerrilla strife
Look closer; you're not so different with your value for human life

Now skipping auspiciously over to us come innocent 21s
Eyes avert once more from the realism of livelihood
Fed through the system, 'We've come to learn!' cry the vulnerable ones,
The constriction of their course is their important finding
Lunch boxes tossed aside with no real fruit to bear
Lined up on the breadline they wait their turn with mesmerising glare



Robert Hellam

St. Fagan's Castle, the Italian Gardens

In Cardiff castle gardens, how the prospect does bewitch—
That stream of gleaming doves that through the dappled green boughs stitch.
This prancing little squirrel makes the dancing branches twitch
On pines entwined in every kind of knuckled twist and hitch.
These grounds resound with echoes from old days among the rich—
And we, who spring from common folk who lived beyond the ditch,
Can hear in spirit ancient songs ring at their noblest pitch.

The Greatest

The greatest poem I ever never wrote
Was surely one of those I did compose
But never got around to writing down.
And some were all but done and very good
While others got as far as Coleridge
Before the pesky man from Porlock came.
Still others were but snatches, rhythmic bites
Of sound and sense and shade and textured light
That never got from mind to pen to page.
Do all those mighty words exist somewhere,
Or are they lost and out of reach for always
Like little, near-remembered bits of dream?

Kaniwaniboomboom, the Royal Dancer

Free, in the firelit forest glade she dances.
Mark how each graceful move she's made entrances,
How now the play of light and shade enhances
Each feature of the lady as she dances.
Then look on how the lovely lady glances
At him who to this magic glade advances
And, by the pretty music swayed, now chances
Upon the Princess Kaniwaniboomboom.

Not Quite Moonset, Last Evening in Summer

Twilight has faded
A half moon, looking inlit,
seems to float quite near

To a Sergeant in Iraq, from His Father Back Home

When fathers start a war and send their sons,
They pray the war will end in victory.
They pray the war will end and soon be done.
They pray the war will end with victims few.
They pray the war will end and peace will last.
They pray the war will end, their sons come home.

When battles rage abroad, how fares the home?
Old mothers fret and pray about their sons,
And children hope Dad will return at last
In glory won in hard-fought victory.
But wives just want the wounded to be few,
Their husbands spared, when all is said and done.

And when the war is over, won and done,
And all the sons and daughters come back home,
May all their injuries be slight and few
And fathers be united with their sons
In keeping faith, to keep the victory,
To be assured that peace and justice last.

For peace must be the aim of war at last,
And peace survives when it sees justice done.
For unjust peace will steal the victory
From those who fought and those who stayed at home.
So give all honor to our fighting sons,
And keep the gains won by those gallant few.

The gains of war will always be but few.
Flag-waving fervor never seems to last.
We never must forget our hero sons
Who do a bloody job that must be done,
And all for love of country, love of home,
They soldier on until the victory.

So pray that even past the victory
The carping critics' numbers will be few
As all our sons and daughters come back home
(With memories, we pray, that will not last),
As they return and do what must be done
For parents, spouses, daughters, and for sons.

For victory will fade. It will but last
A few short years if justice is not done
At home, abroad, for daughters and for sons.

The Death of Li Po

Reflected on the pond, as on a glass,
He saw the moon, and hungered to embrace
Her beauty, saw his own reflected face
United unto hers. It came to pass
That as he leaned as if he could amass
All heaven's beauty in the cozy space
Of his extended arms, he lost his place
And slipped from shore to water. Then, alas,
Were Li Po's face and body lost to sight,
To come no more to banter with his friends
Or write one more of his enchanted lines.
Look now at moonlight gleaming in the night
On nothing but the ripples' folds and bends
That shimmer where the moon's reflection shines.

There once was a short-necked giraffe
Who made all the zookeepers laugh.
And his spots were a mess!
They amounted to less
Than the number expected by half.



Rosemarie Crisafi

Everything Looks Different In a Carnival Mirror

Hang upside down
in the Spaceball
or weightless
in a ring of fire.

Sleep in a Ferris wheel halo
of citrine and red
or in the copper cast
of condominiums.

Here jellyfish swarm
the bay. Purple tentacles curl
and knot. Here live
primitive creatures.

Sea bass spawn
in a reef cavern.
Merry-go-round melodies
salt the fresh water
of the estuary.

You coax me
under the boardwalk.
Lion Manes
tangle in the sand.

Crows

Thieves remain, casting pellets,
performing burials in the lawn,
tapping, hiding loot in the gutters.

Most die in the egg. Some,
fight to the death, dropping from trees.

Others fill crabapples with night
and a fleeting flash of wedding bands.

Sour fruit picked clean,
the caucus ends.
Only cores remain.

Perched on the skylight,
watching, knocking, depositing a feather,
crows remain.

Robins have gone; we are not
even friends
anymore

Wedding Photographs

In the circle of light, the white
hypnotizes. Your face
effervesces, phosphorescent
with the hiss and bubbles
of ginger ale.

In cloud socks, your feet glow
and thunder on the floor.
After you leave, I pull
sizzling splinters
out of the carpet.

You are Gregory Peck
with winged shoes .
My teardrop earrings
dangle.

Caution: Walden Pond

Walk the scraped fields and charred rings
of charcoal-makers
where he deliberately lived.
Here a cart heavy with iron ore
gouged the earth.

Here, the militia defended
the free fire zone
from natives
picking huckleberries.

Now pottery shards mark
the graves and slave shanties
of railroad workers.

Here do not walk alone
to the dump or wade
in the famous pond
which has more urine than any
in New England.

The odor of a horse carcass lingers.

Here we pass by it...
to lead other lives, no time to spare
for that one.

The Accident

The cymbals flash.

Big Savage Mountain
shrinks in the mirror
of Backbone Tunnel.

Twin white steeples
divide the continent,
winking to eternity.

Crystal eyed dragons
touch ground, swallowing traffic
on the interstate.

Radio ghosts float
above the jazz of horns,
exploding tires, and twisting steel.

The brass of morning closes
the thruway all day.

Triangle

There is a street of phosphorescent,
the avenue of the magician, radiant

and frozen
where the costume found skin
a hard statue, ice blue

and fig leaves
cover the engine of hips.

The pyramid machine
turns to flesh;
a triangle
ignites in the crypt.



Kyra Saari

Falling Forward

All the little families

On this sun morning Sunday

Frolic in a field of flowers

Blue bonnet blue bonnet away!

Clouds are far away pearls

Underneath a high sky and

Euphoria is just a byproduct of light.

They pay no heed.

The man's car is as shiny as a dime

And black like the kettle.

As he lifts off the highway

He finds himself finally.

All the little families

Scatter like marbles.

Then a paroxysm of crunching metal and squeaking tires

Yielding scarlet grass.

With purple blossoms trampled,
They are screaming softly in loud whispers
Flying farther, falling forward
Out of circles, into strife.

A Favorite Pastime

Lisa and I used to burn ladybugs in the fall. They crept into her room to escape the impending winter- which would have ultimately killed them anyway- and we plucked them off her wall. Switching off, one of us would hold the tweezers and the other this bizarre extended torch that someone once told me contains a chemical called butane. First the ladybug would get pinned down with a hairpin, ballpoint pen, or some other rudimentary tool that initially had some other purpose, and then we would pry apart its wings before applying the flame. It was so bright that it caused the grey tweezers to glimmer.

One day we killed 20 of them straight in a row, the most memorable being when we found a push pin stuck in her carpet and impaled one upon it. It was very confused, so tried to fly away and hide in the dark room, but instead Lisa grabbed one of its delicate flight appendages and held it taut while I scorched it slowly, keeping the fire at a slight distance giving it the essence of a rare roast. It made the room smell like brunt hair. My favorite part was watching the wings change from crisp scarlet to the color of fine mud. They still managed to retain their glassiness.

We don't know how they entered Lisa's windowless room but, as sure as the dawn there was always a constant supply. Maybe we should have, like nice girls, twiddled them around admiringly, letting their dainty feet tickle the tips of our fingers before releasing them into the wilderness, but the sun was too bright and the numerous trips would have expended too much of our adenosine triphosphate for something that would kick the bucket next week.

Either way, the beauty the red spots brought to the colorless room was too offensive.

Another option would be returning to my house but my father always scattered needles about the floor like rose petals and it was too difficult to step around them. I also could have gone outside and sat on top of a pile of withering leaves but Lyme disease is a problem in New York State and I can't step two feet outside without being suckered by a mosquito. They crave my venom. I stayed in Lisa's aphotic room for the same reasons an earthworm seeks the dirt- you go where you can subsist.

Another Box

I believe in bright blue skies and

Sunny air but it's really dark down

Here. Is there a way out? No, I hear a shout from

A far off room.

Maybe they're lost too. I'm listening to a

Movie, sitting there, waiting, everyone is in involved,

Not me. This is hard for me to breathe because

I have been sitting at a 3 legged stool in a disengaged kitchen.

In the living room somewhere, there are people and

I think they're dancing and laughing uncontrollably.

I can't see them. I even hear myself blink as

My stool teeters uncertainly.

I must get up and walk around, grapple for air.

I've heard it can get worse, but I don't think so. I know people

Who aren't even in the house at all, and everyone

Knows and secretly hopes they will not make it, it's cold outside.

I envy the homeless, even the way they stretch out their

Hands and beg for quarters.

Those people that hand out their spare change

Keep on going

To their homes, children, dogs, and oversized televisions

Not knowing what it's like

To have faith in something as real the sky, sun, moon, or clouds.

They've had no concrete evidence that

Any of it would actually protect them from completion or those non concentric

Crosses they fear so much.

There are all kinds of

Homeless people out there,

And I'm not yet one of them, but I think I

Wouldn't hate it that much.

If I had no place, I could run like a cheetah through the reeds

And let the crisp air flow through my hair, down my back,

But first I must find gumption to rise off the crooked stool and find the

Back door.

Used

The rose is a whore red with

Embarrassment.

Her petals slip off like an evening dress

And flutter to the floor

The way butterflies fall

Upon mid air injury.

And she is beautiful

But nothing more.



Sam Dillon

Swing

Underneath the dock
in midnight bath water
our skin is slippery
when we touch
which is
as often
as possible.

Water flows below the skin of September
the eye of mars a voyeuristic pleasure
but for us, or for him, I don't know,

but swing we do like children towards
the silhouettes of trees.
Intrinsically our hands hold as close
as molecules allow,
and then

we push science somehow.
In the hope that Orion
will take off his belt

and find the corners of our bodies
like a good game of chess,

(expressive porcelain horses running helpless in my chest.)

Only seconds left before you slip
back into the human grips of airports and cars
children; but not ours, not us.

The swing in the dead wind is helpless
to centripetal force.

Answering Machine

when my father changes
his answering machine
for the first time in nine years
it sounds almost the same

(and then
I hear him speak my mothers' name)

it's a subtle revelation
the children all are gone

the clock radio in the warm kitchen corner
inches slowly towards the pantry door
stocked - in anticipation for war - with artichoke hearts (because

we are living in different measurements of time now)

but no ones keeping score for this overture of years
unless you count each
raindrop as a thunderstorm alone (but

I don't)

nature doesn't speak to me that clearly anymore
instead I'm forced to wait for
digital voices to change on rolling tape
at the other end of the line

as I drive through a thunderstorm of blackbirds
on my way to see a doctor
who I pray has one more silver bullet
waiting for me

Winter Stars

we slept
as the wind came and went
like an explosive lover
with the keys to our house

our love carried no hidden knives.
was so distracted it couldn't find its way out of an empty parking lot
was instead focused softly on the inch of space between our faces

(as we laid in that turquoise tent
on the beach in a city where we had never been
on that train where I left you
our love carried no ticket
knew no times zones
talked to strangers
learned Portuguese
in a gas station deli
spilled a bottle of water dancing

knew the right thing to do
and did it anyway

our love felt nauseous
after too many hours in the dry heat
forgot to eat
because airplane food is terrible
and it felt too excited)

I knelt by the moonlight
spoon-fed you a piggy back ride
and you laughed a dozen suns
exhausting themselves of sweet helium
sung from a throat full of lunar dust

we slept, as winter stars fell like
cannonballs into the ocean all around us



Sarah Louise Parry

Bandwagon

She is a walking, talking clothes horse
wallowing in Kate Moss's shadow,
herded by shepherd designer force
her bone structure sucked-in all fallow.

She camps outside Topshop, pitched at dawn,
groping at the crap corporate morsels.
Shivering, to see the Moss line born,
worshipping her on a pedestal.

She listens to Babyshambles now
and goes to Glastonbury in Ugg-boots.
(But only since Pete dated that cow
and supermodels found 'indie' roots...)

She's an empty vessel floating by:
'If she buys Kate's togs, her life will change.'
Until the Moss brand starts to run dry
then she'll buy the latest biggest name.

The Grounds Man

The grounds man collects his graves,
collecting tombs like football cards,
fighting the bitter winds he braves.
He wanders proudly round *his* yard:
counting souls surgeons can't save,
counting souls at God's discard.

Christchurch clenched in Death's crisp kiss,
chasing Goths with his pitchfork.
Petals shrivel in the sun-bliss,
silence broken by the hawk.
Epitaphs evoke the missed,
revising them, as he walks.

Bedsit

She met him down the off license, one Friday night,
armed with a joint and attitude. He was "alright."
Her mediocre GCSE grades were due
and this Chav Casanova whistled her a: "Whoo-whoo."
She knew that the council listened to pregnant plights
and within weeks, that piss-soaked strip darkened to blue.

She said: "This is our meal ticket to a nice pad!"
(Cos' *with child* on a form gave you a brand new gaff)
It didn't matter that she hardly knew this lad
and that his counterfeit tracksuits were really naff,
that this junkie was going to be her kid's dad,
that her bulbous belly came from "havin a laff."

She now carts a buggy up double decker steps
and has lost count of the amount of times she's wept.
That pot of gold poised at the end of that rainbow
was in a bedsit block where all the crack heads go.
She carries her bastard child along with her rep,
wailing at the walls she got from her kid-in-tow.

Indie Boi

A bit of Winehouse warbled from the speakers
he sported a pair of scuffed Converse sneakers
his 'emo' floppy fringe floundered round his gaze
(he jumped on the bandwagon of ANY craze!)
People told me: "At uni, love is extinct,
all the blokes skulk around like they've bathed in Lynx."

But I would not have it! Indie boi was great!
We flew to cider/sex-soaked date after date.
Amidst the marijuana maze of sweet haze...
I could not spy the dead-end slammed on our days.
His stout ugly digits fumbled with his stub...
he delivered this unforeseeable snub.

Like his subcultures: I'd had my sell-by date,
and as soon as I put out, I'd sealed my fate.

Peter Pan

Downstairs there would be banging
and plates smashing like weak shells,
our Mum would be flames-fanning
trying to stop raging hell.

She said he couldn't help it.
She said he liked a few drinks.
But then he'd go, throw a fit,
before she had time to think.

I'd gaze out of the window
and wish I was Peter Pan.
So I could block out his blows
and over the skies I'd span.

Away, away, up on high!
I would take my sister, too.
Riding our carpet of sky,
whilst he beat Mum black and blue.



Mary Ann Sullivan

Death of an Irish Father

Part One An Irish Curse

Do you think I am without a father now?
Without love?
Without the one who cares
To hold the stronger up
And shoulder on
To cry
And chest upon
To lie my head
And hand of which
To squeeze and reach
For comfort?

behold
a seed then
large and oak that
from the edges seed
that cracks
in dark and darkest
soil

becomes in years of two or three or four
a stick
a staff
a leader

Held in Erin's hand

In the hand of Aaron
In the land of Aaron

Ah Ah Rohn

Of Levi

Remunerative Priest

whose words of Moses pushed
An Irish curse

From forward proud
And chest defiant

Eloquent and fluent

invisible as
the tower of
Yeats

On which my father stands
and waits

On my behalf

watching for
the trolls that hide
beneath the bridge

watching for the trolls of Erin.



Tyler Cobb

Tuesday Tension

On Tuesday the guillotine is ready for another harsh cloud to pass
in a sky that is pale and dotted with exploding goose bumps.
A listless year leads to a slow harvest and the public sits with ruptured
faces as the doors of Attica pop open and the therapy begins.
The guards carry machine guns for the carnival and strut like hippos,
these grounds their natural habitat every time evening arrives.
Pissed off people throw tubes of lubricant at the statuesque prisoner
that bounce off of him and fall to the soggy ground to find
sanctuary in the electric dirt.
The rain cannot distinguish between the honorable and the psychotic
or wince when the tired blade claims the blazing head of one
more miserable laborer that only dreams of a quiet morning.

Prey

I am surplus to the prey's attention span and we never even enter the room but her mechanical stride is memorized.

A week later I visit the harmless guy always scribbling love poems to the prey that stain his insides.

They will always be apart but his cracked mind is playing a loop of the conversations buried in the past.

It is the most basic dementia and I suspect one of these mornings when I follow the prey to the Smithsonian

I will sense another raised eyebrow when she pauses at a particular exhibit and as this one gathers the courage to walk up to her he will return to me as a new addict.

Skeletons

The bottles of perfume spray the trembling skeletons.
The ravens look at the white bones
And the smell pushes them back,
They look almost relaxed as the quest to scold
Those people that chose the smooth path and ordered
Their problems burned goes on for another day
 These people smile through hateful skin
The skeletons are scorched....reckless secrets.....important
But now forgotten in the dark ash marking the graves.
One man grins while pointing at
The ground and says, "Next time I want it extra crispy."
The other replies, "We're going to need some more perfume."



Zachary C. Bush

at swan decapitation # 12171

OFureal sweput in brackets ia íapoltra
selister transgramba estchill = □
upfronz ##### 3L fortícheH.A.P. O.
Inación something something some Root (Root)
Xempa b - Z - n Ø ðB[.]TiXE □
kanchez 456210781216429954623yES333...
Hafartorfella yshasorhambraEXiiiStaAI
□ Lorza _ _ _ _ _ RARAR[0.0]
//////////////////👁//////////////////

□J □M □U □..... □👁👁👁👁👁👁👁👁 Warsha
Uleshka relaciolimpera ESHKA ESHKA (e)
Skcolo kscloc icha lokís efandelmo No. -
thisomeplaziyo wherembriyano horest iche MND
Razar ordinaricación belima be litrasa4
Zefrup seh _ _ - N -----Root “(Root) rooo...”
Neverfarucha simbelzizey lyricaza emphaza
geölateralorchanga 3L Fortíche Y

OFuREAL remprima *I knew of my tumor before you* #
ð@yorya limprieza orgaphema † ii ETIZO bordaño
Wetralínea S X O EEE...EE...porchésa...Wera
.5.6.782.1.1.3.0..4.9.7.7.77.25389.[.123456].Tsud8
Sizpecha nordazgo emphíma yorgetcha ironforllana
□ _ _ _ _ _ □ // // □ // □ / □ // // □
CRAYA CRAYA CRAYAMízpah sert eshka prak-eta iaía

Π's Last Vision



; , ___ □ ----- 7
 ; , ___ H ----- 9
 ; , ___ □ ----- 4
 ; , ___ ð ----- 18
 ; , ___ □ ----- (-)
 SIHT NIFRA FLOZ
 \ [a] - [e] /

..... □

AFRAN TESTÍMA Kilieron
 BEMB WEISTRIKA SORÍNOPH
 LLACESTINA ellephistre ortiga



:: ----- β ----- Qu '1'
 :: ----- ñ-----/-- Qi '6'
 :: ----- □ □----- Qe '3'
 :: ----- □13P--/-Qa '2'
 :: ----- □-----Ylishstrazar...
 “ δ = δ = α ∫ ”

T

xxxx_x_ xxxxxxx_x



DCULI GOD LIN-ET

ens exis a quati
ond elievu yobe
edca listre amal
dculi god lin-et

•

hiche saam iv
jipe zoli fracu che
feshta ris d wocru
dculi god lin-et

•

sge ndew gamb ustha
tevn whethi nng kes
lithis pentha pesyp
dculi god lin-et

•

hierra rel yany thi
erecha rustra simtra
cri oipa gusve slao
dculi god lin-et

[Zer [zer (0)]]

ISAWSOMETHINGLIKETHAT
Isawso Ethinglikethat Isaw Isaw
omet
Isawsomethinglikethat
Isawsom ethinglikethat
Isawsomethinglikethat
Isaehjkseneslightathd

ect.

IbvjfsaiomthingliketaI Ioiksjalkawhnsalithjt
INSAWSOMETHINGSLIGHTATHI
IunsSTHETHEWRIONOAWLIJUI
ISAWAEIHN
JDITHILIKETHA
Isdistawskethingwithbl
ISAWAEIHN JDITHI
LIKETHA
Isdistawsket
Hingwi
thbl

at swan birth 1

this can't be happening

tihś an't bea happening
tish can' be thappening
thi scan't be happpeing
tiscan't bebe appeniing
thiis be this be happeni
thiis ca't bse hapepnin
hisn'tca be aaappening
tthis can't be happenga
tiss catn'' eb happening
iiiiś an'ttc be haenningg
is can't t'nac hningappe
this can't be happening
t s e hahican't bppening
this penibe haan'tpng c
an't this cbe happening
thppis be ca haenn'ting
thinis cabe hap n't peng
this cahappn't be ening
b theis can't aphpening
tcan't beng hap his peni
an't this cbe haninppet
enithis can't happng be
happan't bthis ce ening
be hat can't pphisening
athcan't bis eb happen
an'tan't be ppeningthis
be thngis cappen't hani
anthis be c'appt hening
ningthis e can't bhappe
th cahappen't be ningis
thcabe han' is t ppengni
cappeningn't be ha this
pat bthis ce enin' hangp
happan't bthis ening ce
cbpengs can'tthi hap be
cappethniis e't enhning
n' this cbe happing ang
bs cathin't pe hapenin t
has can't bethiing ppen
ppan't becae hth ningis
an't beening happtthis c



Steven Zultanski

Paula and Keith

Paula falls from her knees.

Drooling, she writhes in nostalgic ecstasy. His excited paws flail the air. His black nose is sweaty.

They react like kids with a new wardrobe of words, turning their hair like the swirl of a skirt. The final scene

Paula is out to kill her brute of a husband.

“You alienate everyone, but you have a magnificent voice. Strong, pitch-perfect and sweet.”

“Why don’t you turn to escapist behavior, such as addiction to pills?”

“I talk to my therapist about you, Keith.”

Keith closes his eyes and hears his voice in his head.

“He walks over to the bed and kneels by the girl, checking her pulse.”

Patience Keith. Paula is an inspiration to me.

She is a miserable little anger. The dog does a backflip. The girl in the bed with the strangely deep voice shivers at a loud noise.

Keith fidgets

Paula gets cozy on the floor and acts still. She wipes her mouth with the bottom of her hand.

“Think, child. A rainbow fans its colors at you...”

So you call the aluminum-siding man and aluminum siding is what you get.

Paula drags herself out of bed. Keith puts his hands on a tiger-print dress.

“Tough.”

She repeats herself. “Paco’s corpse is cleaned and wrapped in a blanket. Our daughter looks unnatural in this picture.”

“Character doesn’t matter.” He snuffles.

Keith lifts himself back into the truck with the funny ape logo and drives off to sell more ice cream to neighborhood children.

“See you later, anti-gator.”

Paula sighs as Paco calms down and plucks his claws from the mattress. She scratches his head and neck, covered in a rash.

“I just wasn’t in the mood.”

“Paula worked hard with a vocal coach. Trained for eleven years.”

She settles into the center of the room. He drives slowly down a gravel drive. They fix it up to add value and enjoy it. They make a Kool-Aid and relax.

Paco’s bark is quite deep for such a little dog. He woofs in his sleep from time to time.

She makes

“Hey, this is my money.”

Minus house.

As the house burns, neighbor children cluster on the sidewalk. It takes about a minute and a half.

The birth records are destroyed.

Keith pulls all his personas out of the bag.

“You! are like a pastry out of the bag. Swallowed in two bites.”

“We can stay with my sister Rachael.”

He has been recording the entire conversation. Cameras were around to capture the truth. The only explanation I have

“The problem is so deep you’re going to see it.”

Keith removes the front splash shields to access the headlamp carrier bolts.

“Almost there. We can go admit our trace. Rachael will cry in no time, trying to match baby animals with their adult counterparts.”

Paco leaves early

Paula walks on the carpet, her heels squelching noticeably. She takes off each shoe and massages her wet, stockinged feet. She lies on the bed and Keith is there.

His head rests on an ontology of becoming.

“When did you arrive, at that decision?” The sweater is back on her shoulder.

“Why are you hungry all the time? I can understand being tired because of the Vicoden/Percocet comedown, but why hungry?”

Paula thrusts the bitten drummer directly into the face of Rachael who unsuccessfully attempts to block it with a quick flick of the other noodle.

Paula gets into saying goodbye to him.

Each time pinched, as if looking down over fields and buildings, thinking in verse-
no difference in quality, a circle of exits.

Straightaway.

The sheet music Rachael reads does not match the song she plays on the piano.

Keith removes his bathrobe to reveal a wrestling uniform.

“Convenience is not a high priority for me.”

Keith and Paco leave for ice cream.

Paula and Rachael retreat into the house. After seeing she has shut the front door, Paula falls to the day bed, wedged between the back room and a picture of Marcus in his football uniform.

“Why don’t you do your own thing, like raise money for the hungry?”

Or run a marathon, or take a parachute jump.

“Some people just look like they’ve been run over a few times.”

Rachael snuggles against her, whimpering. “I’m taller.” “Just be still and listen for those men.” “Reduced to a pillow.”

Paula interrupts her inexhaustible talk to ask a question. Does

One last cigarette.

“I wound up at a completely inappropriate job. My weird boss wears a hockey uniform. He makes me seem sincere, as if I’m a single mom of three girls. As if I’ve been divorced for five years.”

Why don’t you have a boyfriend?

It’s no secret to you that I have an irrational little crush on Chicken John.

Keith fixes his belt, stuffs a tissue in his pants’ front pockets. The tassels on his fly swing. He paces around the living room with Marcus on the phone.

“I’m no pumpkin-eater.” He whistles. “I don’t wait for moods.”

He leaves el casa del Marcus.

Paco is rubbing puddle water. Keith breaks into a passing song about heartbreak and joy and mold.

Smoke billows from the aluminum siding of el casa del Rachael, smothering neighbor children like thunderheads.

“You shouldn’t smoke in bed, it’s boring.”

“One last cigarette.”

Keith arrives and severs Paco’s tentacles. The bruises on his face are like shiny miniature motorcycles. He is shooting mad.

“Another house? Hello?”

“Shut up, Keith’s fingers. Push your head against a wall. I don’t need your sideways glances, your concern, or your single-flea conscience.”

“i.e. I’m leaving you for good.”

Paco flails in the muck as he voids helplessly

His legs have liquefied.

Paula defends stabbing motions, saying some people snap and other people stab.

“Some people snap. Other people stab.”

“Rebuild my house. My children are still alive.”

This is your fault in truth. We want you to earn. Make money off cars that don’t pollute. You owe us \$1 Billion. Or you will be snapped.

“Paula is a millionaire, but not a billionaire.” She runs barefoot, we whisper.

She runs through the cemetery as Ghoul Man chases her. Keith trails far behind in wildflowers, mumbling secrets.

We live in a city that speaks Spanish.

Newly single after a 16-year marriage to Keith, Paula moves with her daughter Kelly - a fresh start.

"I miss Marcus this much. I even miss my boss and kids."

Keith comes raging to the door. "Find him! I'm getting belligerent and I expect to be reinstated as your husband!"

He shoots Paula. She falls to her knees.

Not to solidify, but to expel.

Paula stands up. You only think you shot me, Keith. "The truth is your special privilege and responsibility. You shoot too far in the front - uncover all the things I've learned alone these weeks - and you'll be considered guilty of plunder."

"Might as well, I have mucho paperwork to do."

Keith sleeps comedy.

The little girl in the bed hears the sound of a trap door slamming shut. She blows her nose into the last of the mu-shu pancake. "I'm not hungry. I just ate a bag of chips."

Paula climbs out of her hiding place in the floor, through the shrubbery looking for Keith. She hurries through allies, through people's yards and between houses. She climbs on roofs and jumps over graves in the cemetery.

Keith is laid back. Paula thinks Keith hides from her, because she asks too many questions.

Plays the harp and chooses her own variations.

"Keith ducks behind a wall then shoots through the wall."

Here you'll notice a very high tree next to the chasm border.

Paula -

Where value hides.

Represented by a simple code with a meaningful name.

Rachael plays a mean piano. Despite her memory, she wants kids.

"It doesn't matter to me what kind of family I get."

Keith writes

"Knit me."

Keith flashes Paula a toothy smile and she blushes the color of rutabaga. The water from the showerhead turns to blood.

Paula chews her lip.

“You were writing stuff down?”

Keith starts screaming in pain. He screams the word “dog” over and over.

Paula drops the pick. She runs out of the house barefoot and back into the woods. She finds Kelly – a loving, affectionate girl, happy to spend her days sitting on someone’s lap.

Kelly sleeps in a bean bag chair. She dreams of punching unicorns in the face.

“Deserves her day in court.”

“No one slurs their words, or behaves like a drug addict.”

Marcus comes to dinner

We’ve already met Marcus, the round-faced man. He puts his hand on her knee.

“A long line of police officers.”

They fool around playing “poodle.” She knows the air she breathes, the water she drinks, and the food she consumes is important. She knows how to laugh about her drinking and use of painkillers.

Marcus leaves for work and is sent to the border.

Crossing, bending her knees.

Kelly holds up a packet of handwritten letters tied with a pink ribbon. “These are addressed to Paula.” “Over fallen alias.” “Dad, or NAFTA?”

Kelly chains Paula to the radiator and sings to her. In order to talk some sense. She seizes the first missile at hand and breaks the workhouse windows.

“Now.” She exclaims.

“I’m a criminal.”



Mare Mikolum

I am a Freak

I am a Freak

Things always seem weird to me maybe it's because I am a freak.

Father was a Carpenter

His father was a carpenter and he is a blacksmith. My father the king would never allow me to marry a blacksmith. He wants me to marry Prince Theodore. I hate Prince Theodore and his sarcastic attitude. He makes me feel unintelligent. Johnathan, the blacksmith, is kind and hard working, I value that. He's the talk of the town. The townspeople are saying that he slew a dragon not too long ago. The dragon's necklace hangs on the wall in his shop.

His Niagara

My mouth was his Niagara. Only through my lips did he see the rainbows, feel the mist of my breath. We rode on ferried tongues through the waves, breaking and floating. The next morning I'd felt like I wore one of those souvenir t-shirts that read "some creep went to Niagara and all I got was this lousy one-night stand."

I am a Freak

I am a freak because I have an intense fear of belly buttons. I always picture them randomly tearing open and spilling out all the insides. If anyone tries to touch my belly button I fall to the floor in a fit. My belly button is never cleaned out so there is a bunch of guck in it now. It smells.

Degree of Irritability

Tom can measure my degree of irritability on any given day by smelling my hair. If it smells like peppermint, I'm usually pretty easygoing. If it smells like my dad's dirty knuckles, he knows that just about anything will set me off. If it just smells like hair, then I'm not worth his time. Apparently my hair always smells like one of these three choices.

Father was a Carpenter

If the heavenly father was a carpenter, how come my life keeps falling apart? Back in college I broke my arm, then my ACL, now I have a broken heart after three years with this guy. He said his father was in construction and so was he. "Great!" I thought. "That's gotta be a sign!" He lied . . . he was in demolition.

Have a Stroke

I wish he would have a stroke, cut himself, bury his face in a plastic bag or drunk drive himself into a tree. I saw him hold her hand, flirting with her and grabbing her ass today on campus. That bastard told me I was the only girl for him. He's a lying sack of shit, playing with my mind. I'll show him! I wonder if he really even cares about me? Would he care if I was one day gone? Maybe I'll drive my drunkin' self into a tree, maybe.

Bones Under the Skin

The metal rings in my notebook feel like delicate bones under my skin. When I touch them it feels like my finger is being guided by my muscles over the delicate bones in the hand that holds my pen. And sometimes when my writing is truly alive I can feel a pulse beating through the pages and hear a rush through the looping wires like the blood in my veins.

Enlarge My Mind

I always thought the rays from a microwave would enlarge my mind. Late at night while everyone was asleep I'd stare through the little dots shining through the dark and watch the crusty plate rotate round and round. In the silence of the night the only sound punctuating the air was the beeps of the buttons I pressed and the drone of the power radiating from the metal box, fertilizing my brain until you could smell the traces of food from my ears.

Have a Stroke

"Jesus ma, don't have a stroke."

Degree of Irritability

Some may say my degree of irritability is high today. You give me that seemingly innocent smile, and I puke a green disaster on your new shoes. You slightly begin to bend over to clean it up and I throw you into a somersault down the hall. Maybe next time you'll think before you smile at a stranger.

His Niagara

"His Niagara" was the message on the bumper sticker on the back of his truck. I had noticed him for weeks but never worked up the courage to say anything to him. I'm going to this Halloween party this weekend and I know he'll be there. It will be hard because I don't know what he's dressing up as.

I am a Freak

I can easily rotate my hips 360 degrees, which is why I'm such a good gymnast, I suppose.

Enlarge My Mind

"But I don't wanna enlarge my mind," Kevin said with a sarcastic tone in his voice. He threw his backpack to the corner of his room. "Sit down and eat your Wheaties," Mom yelled back. I walked over to the table and strapped his legs to the chair, Dad grabbed the cap and said, "Your sister's been doing it her whole life, son, and she's doing just fine in college now." I plugged in the Mind Enlarging Machine and zapped away.

Note: "I am a Freak" is a collaborative piece resulting from improvisations by six writers in Ted Pelton's Fiction Workshop class at Medaille College in Buffalo, NY. Mare Mikolum is a pseudonym for Molly Platt [A] Rhonda Celeste [E] Michelle Fritz [I] Kara Hibbard [O] Lori Markham [U] and Margaret Keddie.



Brian Foley

Woodpecker

A sick tree had puked leaves on a man's lawn. It was that time of year, said his wife. He had heard this said before. No one had ever told him what it meant. He instead took the tree for a rogue and the next morning sought revenge. He battled the bark with a pair of metal scissors. He came at it from several different angles - sideways, over the hedge. They did little damage. He couldn't understand it. He tried the scissors on his own skin, cutting off his thumb. They still had their magic. But now he was in tremendous pain. From the upper levels of the tree, a dry knocking sound. The tree, laughing at him.

The Saw

A saw is a piece of machinery that eats wood for people. Occasionally a human hand runs into the saw and the saw spits back blood. No one likes that. It causes a big to do. They shut down the whole production for an hour to clean the blood from the blade and take the owner of the hand who is screaming elsewhere. Now everyone is mad at the saw. They starve him for the rest of the day. Everyone liked the saw when it ate the wood. Everyone was proud of it then. These days the wood comes less and less. Things are slowing down. Days go by without the saw eating a thing. The saw believes itself to be dying. When you make a saw think like that, it will take what it can get.

An Act of Violence

A woman witnesses an act of violence while walking her dog. She sees another woman being dragged into the woods by three men. The woman with the dog walks in another direction to find a policeman. She walks a number of blocks and sees no one. The dog pauses and stoops in the awkward position dogs stoop when they are shitting, as if trying to find to find a comfortable way to sit on a fire. The woman prepares a plastic bag. The animal takes several steps shaking everything out, leaving a small trail of good-sized litter behind it. The woman bends over and picks up the shit with the plastic bag wrapped around her hand. She looks around her but can't find a waste bin. She walks several blocks with bag in hand before finding one. No one sees this, but she smiles to herself at the thought of being caught. She takes the long way home

Alan May

Poems and illustrations

SADNESS IN SPRING

The little houses running around,
the cell phones flapping across the sky.
Our hero kicks our hero kicks
a can he kicks a can of paint
past flowers, pollen, chirping
dogs, he kicks a can of tar,
he kicks an imploding star.
Cars and cows are whipping past
his very large, his very hairy ears.



THREE DREAMS AFTER THE FATHER'S DEATH

1. His Father Alive and at the Carnival

On separate tracks,
Pop and me race
roller coaster cars.

We twisty-twisty.
We loop-the-loop.

With my sawed off double barrel,
I take aim.

I tap the trigger;
his head explodes.

The world opens like a rose.

Ain't life grand!

I reload both barrels.
Stick them into my ribs.



2. His Father Escapes the Nut House

Dad has my brother
under the train trestle.

Whoo, whoo,
says the train.

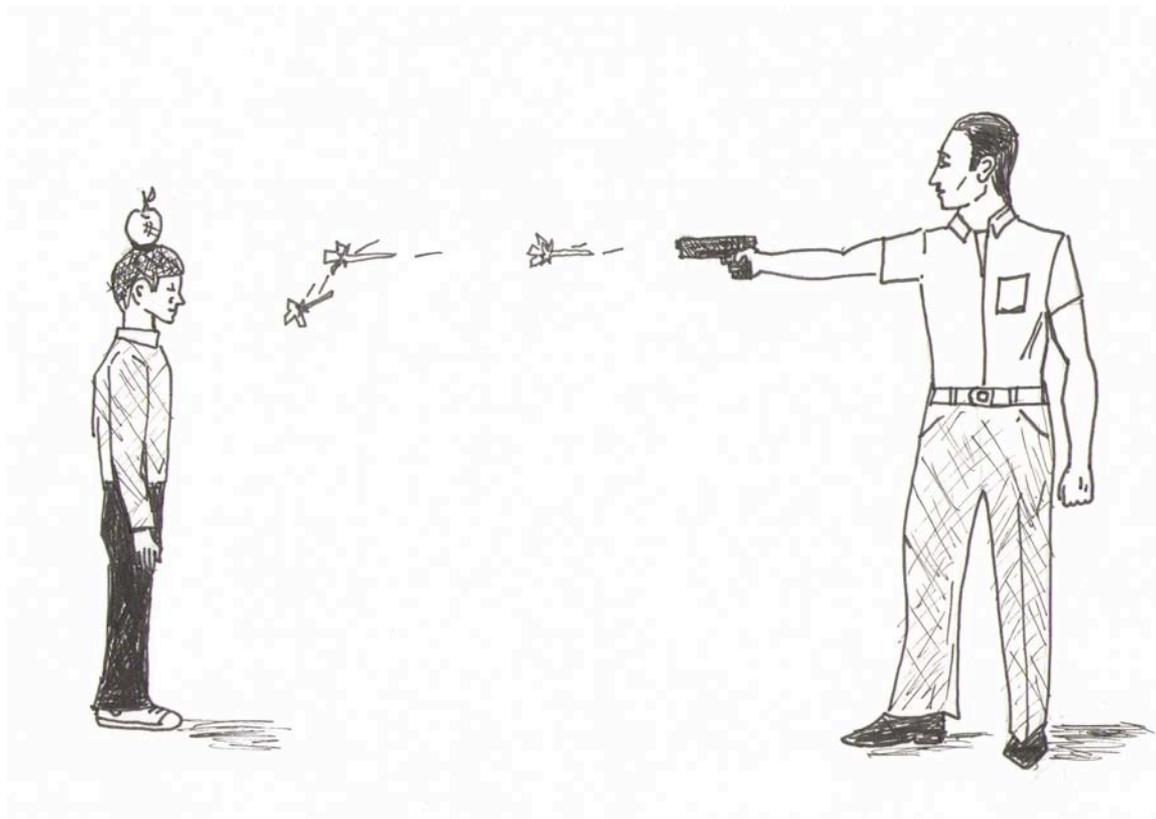
My brother balances an apple
on his head.

Pop aims the pistol.

Crack. Crack. Crack.

The bullets fall to the ground.
Buttercups.

*



I wake up in a house
that's mine
but not mine.

Dad busts through the kitchen doors.

It's clobberin time.
We 'rastle.

He pulls out
the hunting knife.

He cuts my penis.

Another notch.

Ma, Look.

3. His Father Alive and at the Reckoning

Dad's tied to a kitchen chair.

Mom shoves
a big red apple
in his mouth.

My brother and I
open a yellow folder

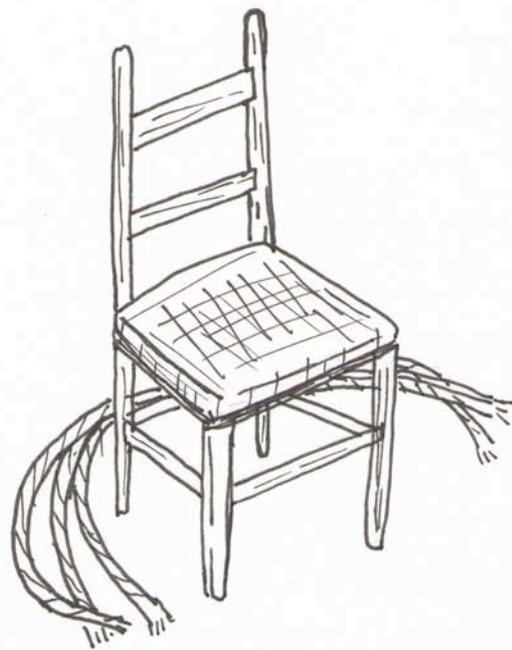
and pass his records
back and forth.

Military. Arrests.

One psychiatrist quoted:
Crazy as a loon.

My brother and I laugh.
We both have fangs.

We gnaw through his bonds.
We let him go.



THE IDEAL BIRD

Its blue black feathers!
He amazed the forest dwellers

As we spied him through our opera.
Adeptly, he used a corkscrew,

A compass. We coaxed the bird
Into our arms and placed him

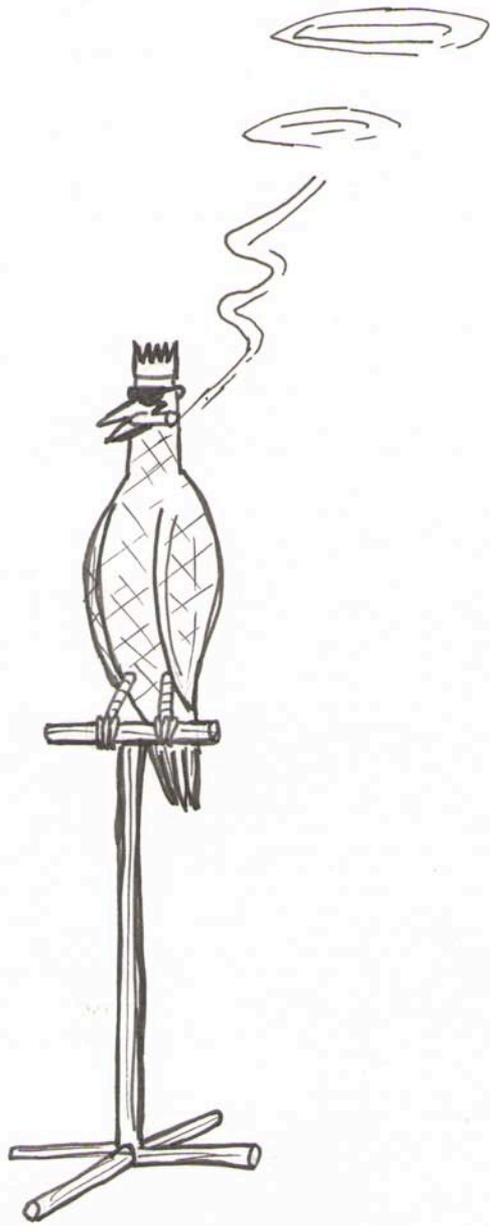
On a cushion high atop a bi-ped.
We scrutinized to his

Splayed talons and sang
Country songs that mimicked

His cry. I gave him saltines
(my fave) and a glass of the finest

brandy. The fucker bit me. And that's
how he got his name:

Spiritbird of Longing
(or The Ideal Bird).





sTEVEN p. rOGGENBUCK

i start to put down Traintracks around You

because darling inbetween your hips
i aM delicate
surrounding You like morning .
you take me to the water of your careFul
tunnels & show me
The Purple new Middle —

because darling there 's a Grape
Taste when i am near you .
there 's a Bright taste , kind of like
Beanbag chairs
, kind of like Electric Trains .
i am starting
to think about electric
Trains .i am starting to touch
your legs
Like petals to Feel the texture ,

i am wondering How do you Find
batteries for
Electric trains —theyre So big
/ but then i 'm Full of you
Tender & slowly

pacemaker

remind me of autumn
and how dying isn't always ugly



Allen Itz

the night I got chased out of Mexico

this
is a story
about the time
I got chased out of
Mexico
by a posse
of Mexican taxi cabs

I was a young guy
just old enough
to get a taxi license
and I was driving
cab
on the Texas side
of the border

I picked up a fare
outside
one of the hotels
who wanted
to go to Mexico
and I said
hell yes
cause it was about
35 miles
and at 35 cents
for the first mile
and 10 cents a mile
thereafter
it was a pretty good
pay-off

of which I'd get
a third
which never was
a helluv a lot
most nights
but better for a
trip
like this

so we headed out
down 281
for Matamoros
through Brownsville
and across the bridge
from where I knew
how to go two places
boys town
about which we
will speak no more
and the central plaza
which was close
to the mercado
and lots of good
nightclubs
good food
music
and floorshows
with sometimes
naked women
and that's where
the fella I was
carrying
wanted to go
so we went there
and I dropped
him off at the plaza
and while he paid me
I noticed all
the Mexican cabbies
giving me the eye
and I noticed
when I left
some of those
Mexican cabs
started following
behind
and then I noticed
I had ten to fifteen
Mexican cabs
riding my back
bumper
and I said to mysel
oh shit
I screwed up

and the way
they were following
close and honking
it looked pretty clear
that they were
pissed
about whatever
it was I did
so I took off
for the bridge
as fast as I could
trying to remember
as I flew
which of the many
one way streets
in Matamoros
were going my way
and which were going
to either get me lost
of back to the plaza
where more trouble
was sure to be
waiting
and when I reached
the bridge
I tossed my 8 cents
to cross
to the Mexican
border guard
without
hardly stopping

when I got back
my dispatcher
told me the rules -
cabs don't cross
borders
fares are dropped
at the bridge
where they can
walk across
and get a local
cab
so
I really felt dumb
and never did that
again
though one time
I did pick up a guy
at the bridge
who had been in
jail
in Matamoros
for three days

and was beat
all to shit
and bleeding and
barely conscious

I took him home
and dropped him off
at the hospital
and his friend
who had gone
to Matamoros
to get him out
of jail
and had ridden
back with him
gave me a \$3
tip
which was pretty
good
for the time

what are we to do, they're smarter than us

there are 600
million
housecats in the
world
spread
from pole to pole
from all the way
east
to all the way
west
and they all
descend
from one of five
female
wildcats who
in the barely
historical
mid-east
noticed
that filthy-
living human-kind
were vermin
magnets
and that living
off the vermin
who lived
wherever
humans lived
was a helluv
a lot easier
than trying
to chase down
prey
in the wild

and
thus did
the cat
domesticate
itself
on its own
terms
&
conditions
and thus
did little
puss
and
boots

assume her
smart-ass
air of feline
superiority
and
if you know
the whole story
it's hard
to argue
with
them

volver

dinner
at Casasol
tonight
chili con queso,
crispy taco,
margarita
on the rocks,
the stuff I like,
and at the other end
of the room
some kind of party,
with mariachis
playing my favorites -
"Volver" y
"Yo Soy El Rey" y
"Jalisco" -
reminding me
of the years I spent
working further
south
and the parties
at the end
of every month,
men only,
bbq and lots
of beer
and singing,
always singing,
gathered around
Gus, the guitar player,
full-fed,
some-drunk,
and singing
all those wild
and mournful
Mexican songs
of love,
loss, and
revolution

tides

october blue
gives way
to november
gray

and you can
feel
the tides
of an old
year
turning

this old bed

I sleep
on the bed
where my father
was born
one hundred years ago
this summer,
second child of Celeste
and August
amid the rocky hills
and pecan and flowing streams
in the little
Texas-German town of
Fredericksburg

I sleep
on the bed
that has slept my family
through two world wars
and multiple wars of lesser scope,
through eighteen presidents
of the United States,
some wise
some not
some equal
to the needs of their time
some not,
through musical
genre's
from ragtime to
hip-hop,
though prohibition
and the era of bathtub beer,
through
the gilded age
the jazz age
normalcy
firebombing
atom bombing
getting bombed
in the suburbs
and getting sober
with AA,
through six presidential
assassination attempts,
death
in Dallas
death
on the launching pad
death
in near earth orbit,

kitty hawk
to a man on the moon,
the cries of the dead
from famine
from genocide
from indifference
of the ruling class
from incompetence
of the ruling class,
through Bull Connor
and his police dogs,
through King
and his dreams
and his death on a
motel balcony,
through the triumph
of good
and the reemergence
of evil,
the cycle played out
over and over again
in the days of yellow
journalism, through
Murrow and Cronkite
and Brinkley and Huntley
on radio and tv
and now new messengers
on the web
Wikipedia fact
and Wikipedia fancy,
truth swaying
on a tumbling pedestal,
lies flying in the wind,
opinionators
blowhards
conspiracists
and fools,

through it all,
all the times of
reaping and
sowing,
the bed
has calmed the nights
through three generations
of sleep,
sex
and midnight dreams,
waiting now
for the final sleep
of this generation
and the lying
down to rest
of the next

the devil can find you anywhere

it's part of living in the city
we think
the noise of sirens
the fire trucks
the ambulances
the police cars
their supercharged engines
whoosh of air
and power like a bear's
long growl
as they cross the creek
just down the road;
all the little murders
the little killings that come
so often it begins to seem
like a stream of blood
passing
a flood of blood
passing on weekends
the nude woman found
in a drainage ditch
shot dead
the baby in her crib
shot dead as a drive by
bullet penetrates the thin wall
she sleeps by
bar fights
that lead to shootings
in parking lots
blood on oily asphalt shinning
in the flashing lights
domestic disturbances
that rise from desperation
separation from hope
unhappiness
and too much to drink ending in rage-deaths
(I had a friend when I was thirteen, killed
by his father, shot as he tried to protect
his mother) so many
that we loose count and it's just another
half inch story on the back pages
and when we think of it at all we
shake our heads at the viciousness of it all
imagine quite places
where the sirens don't wail
all night, where murder and tragedy and rage
only happens on tv and we daydream
like this until something happens like happened

this week and we realize the devil can
always find you anywhere
and we see that
death
comes to
quiet places too



B u f f a l o F O C U S

Double Shot!

Michael Sikkema

Russell Pascatore



Michael Sikkema

Michael Sikkema was born in rural Northern Michigan. As a child, he hated rocks, trees, and water but now he's really quite the fan. His work has appeared or is forthcoming from BlazeVOX, New American Writing, Mirage #4 Periodical, Parthenon West Review, Cannibal, Fourteen Hills, Shampoo, Word for Word, zafusy, Coconut, Horse Less Review, Bombay Gin, and other journals. His chapbook *Code Over Code* appeared recently from Lame House Press. His first full-length book, *Futuring*, will soon appear from BlazeVOX Books. He can be reached at Michael.Sikkema@gmail.com. >

Tucked Deeply into the Wild West Show

the insects are larger and more animated Good Wallace their

machinist has the most brilliant meadow

under his shirt

memory-shaped she naw naws shiver and track the 2 am noon becoming flight in every vein and
tunnel fast sun locked as ever unthinking

acoustic panels piled around antique block windows frontal hammer and snare brush raped down to
the military place names in everyday English in Africa or space

having imagined geography as plot device through the footage of bees and fault lines she
asks him to undress the sperm exits his body at thirty miles an hour

proposed wave system of the polls' magnetic shift running through absurd plus and minus signs
of species and microclimates

a certain number of slaves are kept for sport and fancy hidden in the acoustics our bride has
fashioned a bamboo parachute a wager royal from seed

no target here the girl wakes with whole excited sentences a special cloth to keep in a locker you want
to say "choking" or "become" eyes everywhere

the men smash the ice-wife's head to cool their beer hair grows
three or more inches of whiter teeth one spray for all three
a philosophy of milk would get us further into these dirt fists then fell in love with
mechanics itself

whir and click at six cursing natural follow children through morning preconscious half

hard this body's weight through codes and force

the window bright circles of shorn branches after ice

The Rosin Set

“not everything you

hear is music”

birch trunks tamarack

diesel fields

a house-shaped fire

seeing left

as a buttonhole

immersion pain

stitches six cuffs

four named *river*

suddenly implies a wider dumbness

gradations of give leave trails

you see or don't

The truck and wall

weren't nowhere first

wet door propped up

in weeds and abstracts

scrap doll metal

motherboards

the nail is to rip your skirt

the fossil record fills in with static

your "rain leaves mirrors

in the earth" is made of time

like likeness

in scraps of sky

arrayed too fast for interruption

jealous of radio and mind-reading

“my voice is not quite loud enough

to cross so many fields”

You open and ring as you arrive

only breaking what you need to

anything for maybe a big kitchen

more like never or futuring

past *know* past *guess* and the snow

we'll cup and suck

your hair in 3 o'clock wine

at last stopped asking to be tragic

no names for trees in the idea of you

torque and leafy and force

a happier bleeding time

lead-colored distance

so close and early

heavy or open or no

the bulk of this I can't

say or point to

snow foot and crows

I remember leaves

malt shop neon

you cup a flower

because the light wasn't true

all the apples footsteps the stranger

we can become the better and sooner

you say with your eyes more I'll

YES and all this I say into the river

goes only so far

postpone what until

what we won't even

glow unless now and in

any room I hope

enough for you

This Form of Life Is Not Symmetrical

“If you explain
the sun is burning
but light isn’t
it still is”

Hunger throws voices

(Fist the acid-sack)

Flies circle shit

Wooden men rotate on street corners

“I’m not wooden” one says

One says “I’m not wooden”

You have to put a quarter in

When the thought-bubble bursts

it's a parade

a fussy garage toy

a shell hears an ear etc.

Live trap

junko static

6 a.m. grate

of chain link

on rollers

The animal ghosts have jewelry in their shit

string of horizon pours into your head kids naked from the bath make crow sounds with crows to
become an echo isn't will but matter as music wakes in itself

=====Beaded rain distorts a 14-foot Christmas bear=====

With adjustments
to the charge

the hydra grows
a second head



Russell Pascatore

Russell Pascatore lives in Buffalo New York where now that Peter moved to Fancy-rance he hangs out with Weeps and Mir and Dave and Zach and Ian and Thomas and Josh and Natasha and Tatiana and Mili and Tom and Eric and Kevin and Geoffrey and Jeffrey and The Gentleman and Jaye and Maggie and Aaron and Damian when he lives here and Ekrem and Brian and talks to David Mauro on the phone and trout fishes with his dad and writes *Area Fifty One Million Gajillion*, *The Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology*, *Fantasy Covers*, *The Gray Planet*, and his master's thesis *You Enjoy Myself* about ethics and stuff in psychoanalysis and philosophy and whence he has published 3 chapbooks on House Press, and the book version of the present work, *My Treatise on Winning: A Tractate on Triumph*, whose cover includes a powerful peace sign, a yin-yang made of magic mushrooms, a heady pentagram emblazoning the brow of an alien, two-tone checkering, an anarchist cactus with a Spanish mustache wearing a Mohawk, a bad-ass chain mace dripping with the blood of monster and man, a sweet sword whose handle is a handle indeed a clenched hand of a reptilian bearing a powerfully radioactive crystal, and a mushroom cloud inhabited by the famous Mario 3 3 with a raccoon/tacooni suit shadow flashing like recognition on the post-apocolocytosis sky of the winners' nightmare muggle hearts everywhere, which you can buy from the author by contacting him at 716 390 9240, <http://www.myspace.com>, or russellpascatore@gmail.com.

1

Winning now has more to do with the winner who just kicks your ass than it does with the Law who would want to stop needing to even begin justifying your primeaval right not to be disfavored when it is broken.

2

Winning now has emerged from many aeons of servicing animals into serving us but despite that winning isn't slavery because if you eliminate an animal's first language, heritage and basic orientation, etc., he just can't win even if you give him plenty of his own hard-earned but still always-undeserved value-cash; and besides duh slaves can't win either, so today we fucking own lose-lose!

□

4

I think winning now would be when you decide that beneath every semblance of a woman lays an actually very competitive athlete who is mistaken for the kind of lazy man we wish someone could love if only she weren't so hung up on how the less she needs him the more he used to think she loved it when he got his way not because he wanted it but because it is fair.

5

Winning is when the position to which you pitch your ideas can not be caught up with the umpirical demand to shoot a slider into 3rd with a special somebody just because she is so past you insisting you can't make it home alone despite your straight-forward assurance it has nothing to do with what we all agree is an at most supercilious but sure nearly universal genital arrangement.

6

You have been winning when your best friends who have stopped seeing you decide that when introducing is growth we should just nip you in the bud to maintain your disappearance like their own handful of antimatter.

7

Listen when they tell you that this is all too cold and criminal remind them that if the winners are warm-hearted it is because the fuel for their natural hate is the peat into which hardens during the time of their victory the corpses of we who deny but uphold nature.

8

The winner's fear of death is always in a disproportional relation to his love of making sure you losers keep living the kind of life in which he hopes he will grow to hate his children for trying to mousetrap him.

9

Hold on Damian said we can't beat up on these girls just because their dads thought they were convinced they had decided to turn their backs on his version of winning toward the new win whose glory his fatherly tonality can't keep us from accepting like a tip.

10

Winning fails but the winner works because to him victory is more like staving off the decision whether he wants to do what his winning is currently forcing all of us in our right minds to refuse like failing and running around all happy making things terrible for people in their right minds who also want to win despite and because of him.

11

To be correct I need to say she is also a winner because now even women are born into the position from which she might command our ruin which is to say that rich bitches aren't properly niggardly anymore but if it makes you feel any better I bet they *are* still worldly slaves.

12

If winning is talking about your interests for another 70 years then am I a fool for not more actively supporting the kind of genetically engineered organs that can't just revolutionize our relationship to things like death and authority as effectively as passing a harmless law against the ownership you just know labor should swallow like a vegan's transgression for the sake of a love that will last longer than her body but not her dead-end job?

13

Librarians win because they are the "real-world" equivalents to the freedom of the personal disaster when an atom bomb's electromagnetic pulse wave finally erases the inherited memory of filing ourselves in the humanities as a profession like all the current losers.

14

You don't personally lose necessarily when they come up as always had never been before and now whatever you could've sworn they meant assures you that a whole-heartedly heartless life even if it falls short of your long term goal isn't worth the admittedly interesting impossibilities it already posed.

15

Even when you're working your ass off trying to win it doesn't always make sense to assume that everyone else appreciates that for you winning is not personal but also the basic way to get somebody to forget about reminding you that face it there is somewhere else I'd rather be which is soulful because most people are suspicious of the true glory in others I'm sure makes slaves even of them.

16

Jealousy will start winning when the conservative ugliness that reopens the vortex parasitizing the helix whose rungs uphold the yawn between now and then becomes more acceptable to people who despite their age have not yet matured to the prethead reality you know best from when someone doesn't acknowledge as her civil duty the feelings your relationship's sex-rites were supposed to convert into law like the nuclear dawn of the golden age's return again for the first time will close to life the present iron age of her freedom to be enjoyed by anyone and because about which we can't do anything thank god it should still be a four letter word.

17

I used to insist on winning by talking about them so when we're not talking about her anymore it wasn't making as much sense until I became more testy and instead of paying them to produce I wanted to risk my life for freedom that is be a bitch and interview a little on a date.

18

Winning is not settling your disagreements even by force which is only solving the sadness of agreeing whenever making up isn't unilateral that it isn't worth it or any other maturely superior way to assure you're on no power trip and just wanna get along even if they insist you are overlooking the difference between resolution and condescending far enough to imagine it could be important to avoid treating leaving on good terms like it was something for which she couldn't find it in her heart to thank you with years of friendship better than your horny forceful little shot at lawful jealousy that was once really love I promise would suggest to even someone who was barely paying attention to whether we were onto every little joke he made or were just so taken with how it made more sense after we had enjoyed a good laugh over how you had pretended to overlook what he was sure would make us look like two kids in love but in reality only reaffirmed our commitment to me demonstrating my incapacity for tenderness despite an onslaught of reaffirmation.

19

For me winning would have to be kissing many women at once because then if things got better then at least I could think back on how things were worse back then when I was getting kisses left and right.

21

Winning is a mix of guilt for just having been born myself and more kindnesses that I'd care to mention if I actually minded appropriate topics, not kissing and telling, who loves whom, religion and politics creeping into all the pillow talk I ever dreamed of using to bust loose from that last moment when you know its just over but actually only insinuated and then only if I'm like totally sure whatever fit girl I've just asked to excuse me will be not unreceptive to a little smile as I slip past her toward the ever greener pastures of tomorrow's women who will love me despite the looks I shall've lost like a mother who let's not dare say loved us because we were cute not for who we really were because her son's personality is like already more than 15% of my life and growing.

22

Winning to you is when she tells me she doesn't care even if you are a rightist because at least you don't indulge in what I am wont to call honesty ie. getting angry when she doesn't reward me for complaining about stuff that nobody can change, eg how she doesn't feel like putting out or how I'm really terrified of my parents losing their house because then the only thing I'll have to come back to when I'm as they say going through what to me is clearly an inevitable divorce is now and instead you talk about film and also how she manages to make you feel inwardly not totally self-suspecting but she kind of ignores me when I insist that although I don't like to talk to you about art it doesn't mean that I don't have the comparative advantage of at least agreeing with you about the latter but as we all know a woman's desire does not accord with what looks good on paper like my kind of consistent politics that could short-circuit fascism and might instead actually be attracted to your short-sighted and flaccidly moral aesthetics and besides you are so insistent and she assures me that to girls persistence is the surest ostentation of adoration but listen maybe adoration isn't the most important thing to everybody?

23

You know, some of you should give up winning for a week or so once in a while because until one of us is canonized or whatever as a winner there will only be one church demanding that you lose, and plenty of other ones forcing it on you.

24

If winning were more religious then we would certainly have to find ways to win that didn't ensure failure.

25

Atheists win because they make better athletes than those athletic types we know from back home who keep insisting there is more to spiritual prowess than just running around in circles wearing garbage bags because we thankfully already lost all *our* water when we had the courage to be faggy enough to identify with our mothers for long enough to realize that if we just keep flirting for like 30 more years there will be nobody left to bring us to church.

26

Jesus was a winner because not only did he refuse to live a life miserable with the kind of miseries all of us in our twenties and thirties are scrambling to secure, but he even said that people like us would miss out on the party and gnash our teeth, so I am hanging in there making everything suck for myself so that I can get some insurance so maybe even just in Europe the religious lifestyle would be more reasonable.

27

When you start whining you must actually question yourself and not just fain a what-the-fuck-styled-face whether you are indeed winning or just inviting her to continue giving you the chance to avoid having to return to her original impression that you are in fact a perfectly fine guy who deserves not only her but even her reassurance when you whine more wholeheartedly than I ever will again.

28

Winning is not having to go home for Christmas once you're positive you'll get no more Super Nintendos or Nerf guns and you're Dad won't appreciate a T-shirt advertising his fishing and fathering status because everybody's too old and what's more you've reached a real understanding that nobody agrees anymore about the past now that you've shot ahead into a future filled with things more fulfilling than getting everything you wanted all year after gazing longingly and meaningfully into the frosty blue lights and old-fashioned Santas descending like little gingerly and perfectly loved versions of yourself from your Grandmother's blue spruce your father insisted was better than the prickly red pine you remember they usually got for this the most joyous of all possible events like cruising for chicks, getting stood up, finally getting to know someone well enough to absolutely fucking lose it and at them gattle-gun all the flaws you've gotten close enough to catalogue, like how they have their sister's inability to connect socially in real time, how everyone thinks they are mean when they and even their friends assure them they're being shy, and the rage of this fight alone means the happiness I lost simply in meeting you.

29

The winners once they're our age sweat the tests that show whether they act on their decision to either force loneliness on themselves, invite it, or overlook it, while here we are worrying should I look elsewhere from intentional loneliness toward tricking myself into being sure I am mistaken for

assuming this is as bad as it gets just so my future dream girl might stop not forcing herself to decide not to be not lonely.

30

As long as you act like you only wanna win you'll satisfy their supposed need to feel like they're beat while you lose because if you've both had it she can stay in to herself.

31

Listen dudes still if the dawn you're obsessed with when you're not waking up somewhere you want to be the only one who didn't have his way with just finding the most right result despite actually acting very cool then I often say daylight be damned I will awaken alone and still hold it in my heart to go about my habits like I weren't viewing the most perfect daytime schedule of a couple entitled to be just without reserve but still retain their autonomous kind of nasty attitude toward being hung up on getting what man we all sort of will relax for long enough to admit we if not want are drawn by like eighty sleek and worrisome overbearing girls who've been our type now for at least twelve years even if they don't know that just because our beauty has changed doesn't mean that still they should destroy their chances of getting what man they would want if we didn't say hey girl pay me the attention I wish I owed when things were absolutely like without knowing we are without especially what she wants.

32

I bet that there are at least 1,000 people who think that winning is destroying every other country with nuclear bombs but who don't know that this planet leaks as in if there are aliens out there they'll no longer have the chance to come to earth and conduct experiments on our souls and genitals because their dimensions will certainly also become charnel houses except the *living* bodies of those monsters will be deposited when the federal reserve will be more like the note of a lead flute that's lost its natural resistance to every kind of cancer and even music will not live for more than twenty-five years before its physical foundation liquefies into the sweat of life that itself shall evaporate into a greater loss I am ashamed to imagine than even the great new economy generated by whatever operations turned the Jews into so much green-backed bones in furnaces who fueled the might of the American splendour we all know now Molochs itself in shame at the Japanese kamis it tumored before anyone who now has not yet lost his memory can remember that is lost our specificity and mainly reasonable resistance to the horrors that the old timers have it in their blackened hearts to act like are as natural as the ghosts the boyfriends reluctantly say haunt the sleep of the girls they would want to stop spooking for long enough to validate their feeling of doubled life if they knew they could not fear a woman's intuition of life's undead possibility as it radiates out into the seed of the body they use to close in on every new possibility that wets its pussy whether or not they are in love with the idea that they could never lose the singularity that has been promised them since their father lassoed a bull of such ennobled perfection that his eyes in a halo of objective assumption fell in upon themselves like a couple of married young people who have made it on speculating whether they could prevent their parents from sticking around until they don't keep their own children from understanding the sadnesses we all know we won't have realized until sadness won't have been parasitizing even our ability to just stop weeping for no reason while we travel, love, exercise and generally voo-doo, hoo-doo, pray and chemo-therapy away the fact that even though every time after we get better recover and are sure we can continue death and misery knock, still just death burns that door and even the knob we imagine we could turn with a gun or more easily bitchy sleeping pills.

33

Oh how do I love to beat you let me count the ways, with radishes once I've removed their greens and printed them into only vitamins lounging in the shade afforded by the cypress in a garden where only the virgin tastes the sadness with which real sexual love stabs you in the ear with its blind pulsing blade-running descriptions of the flaws you when you were 16 thought weren't a big deal but your dad was careful to point out would've been innocuous to him if he'd been riding down Washington avenue with his Dad in 1966 when *he* was 9 or with curtains from nights in white satin or with a waste of what oughtta be universal rubber lashes or with thorny disgusting finger nail army tanks too terrible for TV or just by letting you be in the love I can't be unsure I've taken from you by letting you be in it.

34

I can think of at least three of my friends whose losses they count as wins because jealousy insinuates herself better than the girlfriend at least I should have been trying to stop destroying with her envy for my love of jealousy alone which kept me like my friends with a mutilated love keeping me like from liking my friends.

35

Come on just because I haven't been chasing the awesomest girl doesn't mean she's a brunette because I can say my life has changed and she's blonde like her hair isn't all but even what I pick up is still sorry definitely part of an absolutely careless possibility in my openness to just fabulous kind of totally everywhere except righteous clarity brightening it that nonetheless I can't deny tonight I wish I had actually ruined my contribution to questions that were going great until she gave me a chance to let us know I absolutely am born to answer God and not as I told her about my pitiful wreck of time.

36

Hark guys I have come to acknowledge winning not to praise it for even the winners because they are negative nancies and they can't follow us in the glory of the sense we glamorize when they realize we are unavoidable in the lofty domain we've conquered every time you talk shop with an alternate home owner just in to wash your town in his accumulations before he plugs the plug on everything you couldn't even have owned if you'd sworn your mother's name in iron wrought vestibularly galactic feed back loop fidelity forged ultra materialistic gnomes hoop lactic liminal goop torch pool moans first chore your mother gave you wrecked your life and let us make something of your lost time of splendour slow-eyed lady kick back way back feed your need for indeed our time will arrive girl and when it hits boy o boy will you benefit from its fittingness courage and speed in insisting when not to draw but instead sing.

37

When it is time it is time whether or not it has removed its face by when reality has removed my fear if speech could quit to talk I couldn't argue because the point was to sing although the press should ask you to explain when it is we who ask your questions around here where telephants drop their space and fan the knees of strippers including she-males and grapes won't have been forced on deck with their leaves curled like the littlest of forgotten sheepish scorns ever been scorned yourself every time you don't invent a way to remove stones from water act dead and consign yourself into slavery to fools who would mistake clothes from bread the unexpected from the divine and anchovies from pizza welded upon the biggest dog ever to lay eyes on the thing furthest from dungeon condoms and sheeting glories this continent might've imagined would return to haunt their lawn deer corn you dead act slave fool clothed bread pizza dog eye thing face it reality has now removed my fear of speech until you don't get real on me now.

38

Are you so obsessed with having sex with people you actually like because I pushed you away or because you finally understand winning is not more than my love compared to the disequal proportion between the righteousness of your with reference to my love disinterest's undeniably righteous and unfuckwithable totally on-schedule inertia dead set on its absolutely resistant to favors, perfect honestly sobbed pleas, expensive gifts like cactus furnaced diamonds clouds cracked open to finally mop up our mutually inflicted sorrow or even, my favorite, anger's blackness swallowing what would be best only to split out into a very contemporary revelation of the impossibility to maintain at an even keel in the personally fucking ocean of self-excluding experience nowadays before what we've invested steals the chance to slip destiny's rock-hardeningly juicy climax where we are, come to think of it, very expansively generous black holes of this our undeniable reality's index in remission back into our dick-hole filled pockets post facto and even then laying a snitch's digit on what we've been trying since whoever first gave us that tongue-stopping taste of head-blowing time return to the moment whose alteration trust me ensures there is no coming back for just because you entered completion four years ago despite what your parents assure you for their and your own reasons is the inevitable return of your love's god to re-fuck you again for the first time does not mean having sex 8 times a day everywhere with whom you love didn't erase the impossibility that you couldn't just fall in love again to as our own sovereign right to state is itself our own legal control over whom we managed to screw over vodka and orange apprehension, course, and my,—I'll be the first to admit—*cloyed* by your sweetness, wound pulsing like a circadian rhythm short-circuited by an increase in truncated sugar losses screaming at me to cut necks filter my god between emerald and pine colored glasses and go absolutely bazonkers until someone fills my hole up in her final rage at my lack of steadfast assurance for at least I pray 80 years beginning as soon as you can.

39

Peel yr ears for I bring a message from the winners of the universe you dear winners of the earth have won their favor with your actions and words and decent sensibilities even if you get shit for being hippies now the glorious galaxy sees your reward unfolding from your pockets out around your space and insulating you from the totally real impossibilities presented by the current autobiographies and reality shows of production against our assumption of righteous life in the flowers of isolate erotism and the orgasms of expanding mental fitness so fortify your hearths, be frugal with the meager accumulation the winners of semblance failed to steal, and light a pipe for the

return of the future winners again for the first time in oh I don't know I'd say probably about 10 years.

40

If I keep my mouth shut will I win this one if I don't tell them that I can't not say something because their badgering doesn't give me the chance to wrap them up into a me shaped inner tube circling around the sucking pulpy hole I rub my back against while she nevertheless my boyhood instincts from wrestling with the love thief devil tells me withholds what I wanna hear and taste and smell in rainbow beams quietly drifting from her gelatinous treble man hole ray detectors fixed on me hard like a bullet shot through a skin flute to leave a softly decimated mushroom cloud whale-squirting fucking-lead out and into the toothless smile with which my guilt surveyed its own obscurely juicy gouged back from the kind of anterior angle that would put out for just about anybody if they would just stab their eye on its you know asshole perspective.

41

The moments they go by like thankful storms, filled with all the juicy anger we tried to assume despite their heartbreaking attempts to show us how can he triumph when our eyes cantaloupe like rough-hardened pavement glaciers because we man must join as grouping institutional paranoid instances of god's great plan to dumb fuck himself into everything greedy hands just can't claw from her body--a finely horizontal instance of why tomorrow will be not dawn but none of that heartache we know now will outlast the terrible self-splitting recognizably familial nuclear noon after our fears have insufflated enough phantom representations of a world cast-lined in the lead of the plutomic gills we'll need to rocket us up and away from the archival nightmare we know best from nightmares about food grade horses, bomb raid drill handjob without smiley lubrication, and a world where we have to join to perform like personality-colored robots whenever the straight-forward fuckers flail in what even the losers know is the winners' game of making sure your body is turned in toward the sacrifice-place smack-dab in the space all those macho assholes with their personal narrative shit trail body shapes cut into our reality in public, on the sidewalks, lecture rooms, music hall floors, and dirty ass floors of congress when they are just trying to jive with the guys--no! they are trying to smear their own shape on your asses, guys, they are doing everything in their power to cut you out of the singular glory with which you were born, stuck like a pig out of her that-spot outside of space-time and guilt-stress--not to mention weed charges; all that shit for which you earthlings put into close quarters like in life, or cars, or your parents' house, or parents' flats if ya'll were lucky enough to squirt out of that kind of distantly cool ecosystem--hector, badger, and generally police each other like dick-wads, rather than instead holding hands and working your asses off to craniate why maybe we all might have been dragooning each other like potent bureaucratic muggles dying to harangue, the I don't know, probably father, who didn't dig art and the other important things dick-heads like us keep like a badge of taste they hadn't interrogated long enough to realize was their own little boxer-brief stain, so to keep them from fucking with the truly fabulous, and shamanistic dudes and dudettes who trickle through their normal-net for long enough to say "hey come on let's be awesome and do what we want you know exactly what you want, so why are you standing there bullying me to do what you clearly know will grind me the fuck down into the foulness even you in your quest for people approval oughta find repulsive despite your faeces face because it as I'd condescend to remind your undeniably free and immanently democratic, if not free world-view, hurts more than accepting a different albeit bitchy (sorry girls it's a tattoo subject) landing space for black helicopters to open somewhere outside where all the rednecks know ashes replace our burned bodies, somewhere where all the rednecks know alien-blessed light-beings still hand us the torch of, god,

useful speech; somewhere where all the rednecks know a split atom is not the fabric of our family's pattern, totally fucking new-godd-ed and recapitulated into a national hope of taking its left-overs for granted, while there are starving children here inside of from where, man, everybody speaks.

42

I'm not saying your're gonna like what you hear but it's your fault for listening to what we both should know is bad news evil omens the sorts of tidings anybody on the streets would know enough to walk out on because this shit us guys sell and make and probably just make banes the guys who don't make shit like who made the easy poem that taught people to stay put who made the easy poem that told them to stay put who made the easy poem that said enjoy every undeniably totally not interesting moment the winners the winners the winners forged from their demon flame how not to activate sex massacres and sword shaped hoola hoops which all come naturally to us the winners who just wanna sing songs about the hellish future springing like real loretta sociability nothing better now from the grassy eyes of the winners of sham weddings sham get-togethers and sham mountain ski kiss over brandy flask nice cheese picnics on a calculable earth with breast-valleys instead of our hate parties where we pretend not to know friends, act all uncomfortable if someone compliments our date--whoah oh oh get me a date—and does everything she can to get us to obligingly pull out our pockets and confess our deepest darkest fantasy life lounging like little dirty-lapped santas on her beautifully wrapped if I do say so myself hair-do, everything we do, or want to, study, the kinds of past fuck-holes from which we have emerged ready for more, and, the best, just how we'll take this chance to say we'd arise to her sexy old challenge better had we not had too much goddamn coffee and aderol today before I find the misery to take her on her word and make my filthy-assed fantasy withstand the reality her previous owner laid without game like the satisfaction of the hunt, the sorrow of the gain, and the council of perfectly indigenous homies deliberating whether to offer their top-shelf broad to the barbarian feminine critics catapulting zucchinis and other unladen fouls swallowing our cum before they realize we would rather ejaculate boiling oil from our gates than come to terms with the fact that if we keep doubling and toiling trouble there will be no more vicious women because we'll put her down for being so smart, hard, until we're stuck washing our hands of the blood nobody should ever make her shed for bearing the children of men too old fashioned to understand that even base old manly technology could seed like nymphs outta cloud laboratories in a man's disgusting muscle-belly and generally annoyingly outgoing can-do attitude that will not fly in the world we are all I hope trying hard to imagine reverently.

43

Come on! I bet I can as I speak get energy from people other than you, as long as you duck your heads down and allow the phantom plane to come rip-roaring in over your I'll admit finely sculpted features that have just no prayer now that they are down-turned to register the might I am currently unleashing on your ear-organs that've also never heard such weird ringing past voice wallow in its own audibly questionable throat-move exhorting you to damn the day damn your work and live in the incandescent light of the winners here where pansy wives do definitely not dwell where old-timers totally do not contribute their data-ladened insightfully-crafted style and charisma-points where old souls scorn birth where new-born children would do well to arm themselves because this is ragnarock this is ragnarock and *this...is the end--*;this is where we chieftans play mind -games forever this is where poor-sport winners lugey their own hands to cunningly lingo their queen-checks into spitball revolution; *this* is where everybody in the world doesn't care about a fucking thing except getting girlfriends and boyfriends, and, man, we must not stop this because it has been the only thing anybody alright does.

44

Forgive me my sons for knowing how people speak; could I forget—trust me—I would feed and clothe you with nothing if not the honey of King-Be; but, as it is, I am fastened to this ancient edge of a wishing-well where every maiden's gently-preserved idiomatic tendency has fallen like angel-shit from the mouth of a boy more than cutting his throat to sound all bitchy lest some girl wish him out into a rocket destined for space-break-down—*ziff*—like a motorized demon, dead-set on exceeding his own computer-generated mode of personal-presentation but at least I guess that faustian goblin orc machine doesn't have the privilege of free-will I know I waste on things like: loving people who even tell me will never love me again and profaning the name of peace in what-war? times like these, but those are not mistakes: I love her just how I obscene myself with appropriated peace with totally appropriate speech and should reality desecrate my tongue like giving it AIDS or cancer like Bob Marley I would cut it out and nail it on the Doors of the Chambers of Poets—ie., *your* house (but not home because that sounds *bourgee*)—so it could lick up on the shit you were saying other than: do not desecrate the tongues of reality poets, or at least not in my world.

45

Many have tried to write poems and succeeded we would have trust me hated so now let us write a poem we can love as much as we would love to walk down an empty street with a girl who now that you mention it looks like the one we wanted to meet in a dark alley wearing raven's feathers on her hair-do a real goth nightmare to whom I would die to make earnest love in the bathroom of a club she knew sucked as much as we would have loved to look death in the eye and puked as much as we would have loved to march right down through gauntlet and gained a gajillion charisma points just for being the blessed competitors absolutely seen by the supreme spirit grating his teeth on the lousy wretches that don't even exist and are in fact TV lies and so will remain in their poor unborn state in purgatoric limbic pre-emergent bliss while we blitz the ass off this world with our demands of refreshments, novel suburban hanky-panky, and holding off death until we convince enough people that we rule and deserve love that death won't come, death just won't creep in, death will sulk like a bitch in the dog pound in where all those corn-hole PETA creeps are right to shelter that death because it is nasty and unavoidable not to mention really jarring I bet once you have got a family started which does not make me stay single, horrible capitalism makes me stay single and then project a phantasy of perfect hollywood sex union it's a crime to say sex in these times and will see to that, but I always wanted a family, a wife in a fire tower lookout station in the craggy, lichen-etched mountains looming as a surface of perfectly unfolding temporal ecosystem for me and my newly fucked woman to fondle no for me to fondle and she to recognize my unique splendour in for she to see through my new buck-skin decorated atmosphere not tie-died but just straight-up scorched from the top down to the awesome mountain's crushed-ice apexes even now tangerine in the cream-sicle sigh of my womans' fully satisfied orgasm confession I swear that's how I saw it I am not making fun of me now I almost didn't come to Buffalo 8 years ago because it was such a big city it would certainly keep me from my Asheville-woman-on-hand fantasy-scape yet now my sex fantasy scenario I think is more like a girl with long hair and suede boots a brunette with nothing to lose except her connection with the late 1960s and a quiche so goddamn big Manhattan is a pearl in its scrambled up artichokey little snatch and her cleavage rules but not compared to her self-unfolding pulpy envelope ink kiss she sticks up my ass when I want to make her mine or bring her out to remind me I don't read the newspaper or else maybe she asks what's black and white and red all over a boy who's got race and taste on pulse making a terribly horny mess.

46

Ok first things first nobody is in any place to judge you and me and when they do they are just losers who've lost their cool and think it's your fault like you're not cool the cool think you're cool and the cool leave you if you suck and they don't tell you you suck so cool is nobody knowing they suck but I'm beginning to think that to win nowadays please tell me if I'm wrong you have to join the uncool winning machine and let everybody who's out here in real life know they suck which isn't to say I'm not trying to let all the winners know they suck I am totally trying to let all the winners know they suck I am definitely trying to let the people who've burned their bodies right on the furnace of the winning machine know they suck because they can deal with it because once you are a winner ghost a phantom asshole my words will sound like harmless little farts not because you are manly and courageous and firm as burning stalagmites in the diamond belly of a bulldozer's approach to the dense social death's head needle of sex but because you are a bourgee wraith midas creep whose fat ass pig fingers pardon my insensitive trope if you know what rhetoric or manners is you impotent capitalist human-misery generator junking your blackened family with the worthless shit value of poor people's bodies you dry ice reality's skin off the face of life and my words will fall like aluminum mould on your bullshit fur coats also not because your filthy privileged mind wears aesthetic taste like the be-positive-at-all-costs rich fucker chastity belt of a victorious 19th century pussy but because I am a loser and, as such, I am well-spoken I promise and in your ill-spoken and *fallen* world of extra-legal aggression my songs are not the voice of the public's broken loss but are sticky obscene toilet stools and *only* mine, until your win should transmogrify into at least one moment when my friends you guys will stop vantriloquizing I mean with your young lips giving your hopeful and innocent voices to the evil fucking social anxiety feedback their bestial perverse wealthy ownership and now square-old service economy class has been sowing like salt in the fields of our people for almost five hundred years and stop giving ourselves to complain about panhandlers rednecks hicks schizophrenics and all the other people to whom we poets would give the honor of speech if the ideology of winning weren't cut into our flesh as punishment for being the last ones to not watch as mutes as if those totally fucked dudes weren't already the only ones who delivered the sense of nonsense to the cities where we keep failing to live.

47

If you happen to have humanoid feelings turn your good ear here mons homies: winning is to just not say: "I miss you so much girl" unless they're someone for whom regularly acknowledging the sucking black hole into which their lost affection has blossomed won't amount to shit because I say if that perfectly expansive constellation of ice-petalled bloomage, dude, collapsed up out of this black-flamed diamond-tight negative-4th-dimensional implosive non-space antimatter medallion I wear cauterizing my skin's secret interior like a scorching pace-maker in the sulfuric core of my ruined emotional life, I'd be reduced to a blazing negative-imprint of my body ripped inside-out into a photo-shopped anatomical muscle-model, shredded back into itself, depositing the eternal object of my external skinny flesh, like a plutonium particle impossibly insinuated into the goddamn alluvial fan of society's pile of brother-bodies; but just because it would prevent the violent death of getting what I want from you, girl, doesn't mean I'm gonna sit around indulging in the single life, because I can dupe the one-eyed ass-shrew by spinning my intellectual golden threads the color of shit; I can sing tinny ass-fart anchors in a scrotum sea of raping dolphins, tight; I can turn my words from the heterosexual dollar into a macho dust-peso to finger the womb's winking shrew, and send my loveboys down the alamo lane and she'll never get caught with the wax so rotten (B.H. secret hero of these poems) I can do this but like you only in here with you with my poems out here where you see the burning specter-hole you left rising at dusk over the icy peaks of my speech to light the day of the delicate flower-scar petals who hold open the sink-hole wound-retinas where I'd have you witness the flash-print of my love, blind sun-bitch.

48

Because you don't wanna be on the loyalists' side and get fucked hark me that I only know one dude who'd lead an army after replacing to the applause of the people—our applause, homies—the generals whose poor asses should've known better than to lead the wars of the rich: Phil, Lover of Horses, the River King; now, Phil knows he'll recreate reality to favor his image, because he had a mutually-cued charismatic experience with Bob Dylan and twice over these god more than ten years now Fiona Apple has sang to him, and because he is a bad-ass NewGod; but *I* would overturn reality into it's never-known death-stern kernel, destroy it and fuck it, reality, dig, into orgasm-screams to wedge closed our true throats into emphysemic collapsion-explosions insufflating really utopic possibilities post-mortem and ultra-medical I mean the kernel of life in the blackened death that follows birth like a wet nurse lets me satisfy my stick-shift because there is life after birth until the clerics dry-up into a dead-end transmission locked against its own dick-shaft to close our pulsating combustion-need for our lip-cheeks to peel back away from our skull-grins upon and away from a world where white-robed ladies are training to ease the suffering that'll shift our asses until life should dissolve unto revolution.

49

If these pesticides and plastics don't kill me I will which is where I agree with the winner-pricks fucking around with our material existence according to the chops they picked up in their 1980s total interception of the Manhattan project's, well, *project* gambling to tear life asunder in order to make those fascist Aryan maniac Sauron one-eyed romantic primitivist polythematic jew-destroyers kiss their own asses because 'tis better to perish in high fidelity to our polythylene ecosystem than to turn some ancient musket or garage-trapped chevy back against ourselves until we happen to stop being unworthy of even this our synthetic existence.

50

I had not intended to wear my shoes straight into this séance but before getting here I actually had heard you calling from your everlasting tombstone so if I wanted you to take me the wrong way I'd ask knowing full well I was really giving you the right to just do what you want and stab out your ears rather than hear my voice asking you for even so much as a glass of water to treat me really bad because I am thirsty and I won't stop asking you dead lovers and fathers to pour part of your death back over into the terrarium of the living so we can trade it in for an ant farm or a crow's nest in the armpit of the prettiest damn hippie girl who ever gave me a break because she had found a path of happiness distinct from the normal path of misery that keeps the women of life from realizing how to satisfy my need for horrible beasts to remove the arms from my elbows while I beg for merciful sleep: can I come master? can I come?

51

Here at last I can tell you that even though I am with you I am away and I will leave you if I haven't already. Take the lilies in the field they weren't even there and still you lost them, while I am here and will certainly be lost. Death ain't so bad I bet as long as it isn't eternal suffering. I have lived eternally, but they made me grow up lest I outgrow them. I don't remember my childhood, but if I could I'd lose the unshakeable mood of nostalgia that does me no good at all. How do you picture your birth? Is it more like a diorama, or did it intrude on your life? Do you picture privacy

important even when your privacy is at stake? If I could stop beating up on myself for just one second would I be publicly the best form of mockery? Try as I might, I can't seem to figure on your me-shaped wimpage. However, still does courage describe us? We are the few, they who made it out of unpopular circumstances and stand against a very concerted attack launched before we knew it so why don't we recognize that? Well probably because since we're in the midst of battle, we're still waiting for the first signs of war. Just because everybody's fine to you, does that mean you are not their enemy? True conflict fruits only once but take love as an example of a single moment that could never pass. Peace is an impossibly unethical consideration for as long as there are living exceptions to strife. Do they really think joining a college to escape the draft will gain them a single moment happily? If love were mutual then we'd all be many years younger. But I don't think it's immature not to go to war. I just think hate fails to preserve reality. Actually, hate passes the time when you're alone. I am always looking for new ways to come to terms with hate, like visualizing its object, in only which case is nostalgia anything but hoping your life could change, which I do. Destroying reality would be a change now. One way to prevent change would be to keep up the act for a change. Instead, let's think another for one.

52

O Winners! God, of course you dudes rule after all you own our asses how a farmer owns the choice cuts even if the butcher accidentally wipes his cock on the blade before he begins removing the tumor the shit you make us make encouraged our chest to fruit so we'd be weak as radiated willows so why would you need my owned ass to cultivate your win in a poem cast in the black capitalist reality-shaped mold into which is poured like a reversal birth from embryo to oedipus wrecks our habits our thoughts sex my broken family the goddamn sunlight your oil-cancer ignores like a woman on whom you're too sexist to hit because she already belongs to your pleasure-monopoly and even the gods who emerge from this you-shaped die in the image no longer of men but of assholes calculating how to make you losers eat their shit even though we're choking on the diamonds of hate we've been composing in the slave death furnace of parent-fights and the tranference inferno of friend-fucking repressed by the guilt our bilateral hate for each other we who lose to the blinding power of your sphincter glutting itself on the hunger your anal constriction imposes on our destinal satisfaction imposed by not your victory but the contest of which one of us will be the most like me the loser by birth and the loser by life and the loser because I'll die again from the life that—despite the market place of your WASPy thief-fingers rotting into God's own green-veined shit-stool even more than putrifies my post-apocalyptical racial domestic and sexual wasteland I call home; despite your life-science which my thought wooden-stakes like the mantis preys out through the stomach of the filthy possum—the possum, that totem of the brutal tribe of winners, that aegis of the bloody-handed rich, that demon of the life-cuckolding conqueror—;and despite that I'm a loser—I'll die again from the life that bears the Witness of Jeremiah like a GameBoy to that I'm already everywhere always really totally dead to your world in an alternate life on the burning plateau of Ragnarock that grinds the minds of the Poor and whets the poet's fidelity to harrowing the symmetrically uneven earth you've given the losers like a coupon clipped from the exceptionlessly remarkable hair of one of the girls we're sure we could score if you'd just cool out, relax, relinquish some of your privacy into public parks and shit, and just generally get off our dicks stop cutting in line and introduce us to some of the girls you know?; I mean, why are you winners on such a power trip all the time, like your unfathomable riches couldn't just buy you a cure for the constant case of senioritis we cobras keep pretending charms us away from destroying your nervous system?

53

Hear ye hear ye where do you winners get off? I bet you get off in condoms only a quarter of the time because your riches have won you virgins carefully examined by powerful doctors from places like Harvard or New York or Europe or somewhere else where power has alighted like potent terrordactyls or muscly iron-horse butterflies on the bodies of men infected by marginalized sex-diseases like: cat-scratch fever, AIDS, and child-support, but I come and let myself right in needing no protection because I've already died a death I wear like down-turned eyes against your doctors burrowing into my zone-hole like fish-egg-eyed hippies so why would I ruin my life just to marry into some all white-bread shit-hole into which your ex-nihilistic viral technology has browbeaten all the other queer black junkies when I am completely carried away by the easy wind of my hate for both rubbers and the nuclear winter of my own horny little jealous attempts at exclusive monogamy?

54

Oh what in hell do you winners enjoy surreptitiously maintaining nowadays as object to your impossible transdimensional siphon bleeding the tissue of reality into your black narcissus tar-pool preserving the last dinosaurs to survive the new denver ski get-aways from here where the losers abide the losers abide here on this side of your hyper-need for the unstoppable tumor blocking salmon from the retroactive death they trigger against their own temples like unique snow-flakes through the still non-gauged (I hope) american river barrel cumming into the atlantic sea that hiates the body from the organ's orgasmism as the amniotic fluid poured from the birth-victim-bloody basin of the loss of salt in pleasure's life-deserting thirst despite the injunction to just be cool issued by our educational principles and other potentates of everybody's tendency to dirempt the sexual magic eye into a falsely seitic image of the choice between win and loss good and bad life and death where the lines of perspective obscure the essentially unifying opposition of our difference from, say, the outer-space that pussyfoots deep within the fission-coitus of the ocean's belly and its beautifully exfoliated interior where it's had it up to its child-bearing shoulders with our hip bitchy attempts at mapping how the impossible ingress of regular-old air could boil Ocean back into pre-electric Chaos like a supposedly satisfied vagina gets us blue-printing our sadness into jail-break narratives although that site of stamped and imposed male is really a bird flipped into the now wilted chimney of our previously fired-up go get 'em I mean what we're mistaken-to-think we-want ethics of the lime-fixed arboreal bird-possums chewing their own teeth off the toes of their newly-hatched need for your insensitively positioned promise of well I guess you can only begin to admit—at a junction like this—*positional* sense as in here as he promises you are where actually ya'll aren't in the ecosystem established by the movement from the border fenced-off by the rocky conservative lowest denominator and its own inner-sanctum preserved by the priestly coral classically cultivating a more arcane approach to flowering out into the fraying advent of the other's big submarine dick schooling the scaly swarm of all the sweet-ass ichtian hydro-flux bodies god ever could've hoped would keep his filthy hands off himself for a change viewed eternally.

55

Just goofing off with you tonight at the movies was even better than winning in all the daily things because we kept being so silly together even though now they seem more like little bubble-bobble baubles dilly-dallying around through the sun-light dribbling on their pearly edge clean across the expansive sudsy-soap enclosure of their bodies then shattering like wine against the rainbow viscosity into muffins, unicorn rabies, and chained hotdog cigarette paisley the stuff I imagine at which you were like I like it in those London shoppes surrounding your beautiful pupils.

56

Winning is not drowning like a flaming child in a mote of oil in the molten glass-wound SuckHole that gasps out for air from the oscillating HatePivot noodling its electron twine-orbit around the solid hole bored into the central horizon of my expansively cramped exiguously excessive and vacantly replete LoveSpot which blooms like the green inside-face smiling behind the up-lifting tulip poplar's bark-rot out here into my breathe-space as a glass-gashed gasp-laceration sinking back into its own self-shattering refrigerated fluid-boil whence it arose like the apparition of a lunar auto-eclipse swallowing an aperture set for lightspeed straight through all the eyes closed to miss the repetitive loss accomplished by my attempts to suffocate my primordially eccentric totally fucked-up past by throwing myself into its heaving porcine lesiony time-portal back to the simmering primordial stew of my totally fucked up past like the primary repetition in flight from change as return to the stasis just prior to the revolution of counter-turning Speech.

57

O! Winners get off your scarab asses to hear me hear me are your hands or your claws or your digitally textured world-applications ventriloquizing my dumb face into these spaced-out contortions because of who I am or because of who I cannot love because she came branded with the koala mark of your simplicity floating its own coupon over my tombstone like a jelly-fish screen reading in neon-lit permutations of the letters F, U, C, K, Y, O, U, across the canyon lands of your rich-bitch heart pumped so full of lead it had to use its dick as a pencil to escape the chump-rap with which I was cuffing her murderous affection-tentacles spilling out her pants fast and wet like oily salmon filling the stress-gorging rivers whose ingression woolly-willies the face of our potentiality's internally express combustion-surface draining its own edges circularly like a glass whine or the heart's pulpy repetition with tone to boot into the area can't not getting between it and space enough to consider what I've been avoiding which is should I marry her and spread her piecemeal across the national park ecosystem like catfish kind nuggets in the toilet for just any skinny shit desert sage to screw severely or ought I tell her right now listen baby if this works you can stick cantaloupes in me and accuse me of not loving you I don't care I'll pull down your underwear and still not give me what I've wanted since I first laid my eyes on you my love for whom all wood things come.

58

Hey you winners are you really trying to tell me you actually put mercury and shit into inoculations to inflict brain damage on us like swift leeches on the flaky organs of prodigal lepers scabbing for the shadow-vultures on strike against those formal vipers escaping as stretched ghouls from the hay-wired nuclear vampire vault of all our mislead and soon-poisoned enthusiasm for new friends, girlfriends, and fascist dick-jobs?



Bibliophones

Ben Lyle Bedard

Ben Lyle Bedard grew up in Maine, studied creative writing first at the University of Maine at Farmington where he later served as acting director of Alice James Books, and then at Mills College where he received his MFA. He is now pursuing his doctorate at the University of Buffalo. His poetry has appeared in *BlazeVOX*, *fhole*, *Damn the Caesars*, *Yellow Edenwald Field*, and *P-Queue*. His adaptation of the Ugaritic epic KRT appeared in *Ninth Letter*. His reviews of poetry have appeared in *Artvoice* and *Jacket*. His first chapbook, published by Punch Press in 2008, is *Implicit Lyrics, Book One*.

Adam Strauss

These poems are from a manuscript titled *From Feminism*. Other poems from this manuscript appear in *la fovea* and *Wicked Alice*, and are forthcoming in *Wildlife*. I adore the poetry of Gwendolyn Brooks, Susan Howe, Jay Wright and George Herbert.

Andrew Zitka

Robert Calero

I was Born in Manhattan and raised in Bayside, Queens. I have no credentials, in terms of published pieces, worth mention. I am currently employed as perhaps the tiniest Doorman within New York for a West Village Jazz Club.

Gerald Bosacker

Gerald Bosacker studied journalism, but found success as a graphic arts salesman, which evolved through serendipity and pandering to his superiors, into a Vice Presidency of an international corporation, a role neither deserved or greatly appreciated. Early retirement, an unskilled and naive victim of corporate politics, provided opportunity for his first love of weaving words into meaningful poetry. Starting late, Bosacker churns out tons of poetry, and displays them pro-bono, hoping for acclamation or bare acceptance, while he is still mortal

Christian Nicholas

Christian Nicholas is originally from upstate New York. He has had poetry in canwehaveourball back? and elimae. Now he lives in Philadelphia.

Rob Cook

Rob Cook is a social dropout trapped in New York City. Work has appeared in The Bitter Oleander, Aufgabe, Ur Vox, Fence, Colorado Review, Many Mountains Moving, Harvard Review, Salamander, Mudfish, etc. His book Songs For The Extinction Of Winter is available from Rain Mountain Press.

Jeff Daily

I was born in San Diego and raised in North Texas. I am 25 yrs old and currently live and work in Austin, TX.

Dave Schiralli

I live in Kenmore, NY. I attend Erie Community College and plan to attend University at Buffalo in the fall majoring in film studies. Paul Thomas Anderson, Robert Rodriguez and Charles Bukowski are major influences.

David Thornbrugh

David Applegate

David Applegate resides in Brooklyn, New York, at The Home for Wayward Boys. He runs Bad Noise Productions (<http://www.badnoiseproductions.com>), an outlet for noise poetry experiments in all media.

Emily Brink

Emily Brink is the great-granddaughter of Japanese silk merchants on her father's side and of Scots farmers who owned the land that Disneyland now sits, on her mother's side. She has been writing poetry seriously since she was twelve years old.

Evelyn Hampton

Evelyn Hampton's poetry has appeared most recently online in Juked and elimae. She's currently working on a book of poems (and looking for a publisher). She lives in Minneapolis; soon she'll relocate to Seattle.

Felino Soriano

Felino Soriano, from California, is a case manager working with developmentally disabled adults, and philosophy student. He is the author of a chapbook entitled "Exhibits Require Understanding Open Eyes" published by Trainwreck Press, 2008. Visit felinosoriano.com for more information.

J.D. Mitchell-Lumsden

J.D. Mitchell-Lumsden co-edits Cricket Online Review. He lives in Oakland, Ca.

J.D. Schraffenberger

Schraffenberger's book of poems Saint Joe's Passion is forthcoming in 2008 from Etruscan Press. His other work appears in Best Creative Nonfiction, Volume 1 (Norton), Poet Lore, Paterson Literary Review, the Seattle Review, The Louisville Review, and other journals. He is also the founding editor of Elsewhere: A Journal for the Literature of Place <elsewherejournal.org> <<http://elsewherejournal.org>> <<http://elsewherejournal.org>> >.

J. F. Quackenbush

JF Quackenbush is a quality consultant to the outsourcing industry who lives in Seattle Washington. He is the current poetry editor of WetAsphalt.com, a literary blogazine. His poetry and prose have appeared in such publications as Stirring, Crossing Rivers Into Twilight, FourW, Rattle, Wordplay and Urban Pollution. He will be included in the forthcoming anthology Outside Voices 2008, and his first full book of poetry, Household Activities: 100 Poems, will be published by Wet Asphalt Press in the Summer/Fall of 2008.

John Estes

John Estes is a Ph.D. student and instructor at the University of Missouri in Columbia. His chapbook, *Breakfast with Blake at the Laocoön*, is available from Finishing Line Press. See more at <<http://www.johnestes.org>>.

Mark Cunningham

Mark Cunningham has poems in recent or forthcoming issues of Practice, Parcel, and Dusie. Tarpaulin Sky Press will be bringing out a book titled Body Language, which will be a sort of diptych containing two separate collections, one titled Body (on parts of the body) and one titled Primer (on numbers and letters). Otoliths will be bringing out a book titled 80 Beetles, which is just what it sounds like: poems based on beetles.

Megan Martin

Megan Martin lives and writes in Chicago, where she is a member of the literary collective Venom Literati (www.venomliterati.blogspot.com <<http://www.venomliterati.blogspot.com>>). Her work has appeared in WebConjunctions, Denver Quarterly, and elimae, among others.

Michael Haeflinger

Michael Haeflinger is a poet, organizer, and educator from Dayton, OH. His latest work involves collage-making and play writing. You can find him at www.myspace.com/molotovhepcatandtheholyspiritcommittee <<http://www.myspace.com/molotovhepcatandtheholyspiritcommittee>> . He lives in Berlin, Germany.

Michael Estabrook

Over the years I have published a few chapbooks and appeared in some terrific poetry magazines, but you are only as good as your next poem and like a surfer looking for that perfect wave, I am a poet prowling for that perfect poem. Right now I am looking for that perfect poem in my wife, who just happens to be the most beautiful woman I have ever known. If I find it anywhere I'll find it in her.

Nava Fader

Nava Fader received her master's from SUNY at Buffalo's Poetics program, writing her thesis on Adrienne Rich. Recent work can be found in *Bird Dog*, *Sawbuck*, *Coconut*, *Four Square*, *Ab Ovo*, and *Womb*. She is (happily) a school librarian in Buffalo. Most of her poems begin with a line by somebody else. Also see www.myspace.com/navafader <<http://www.myspace.com/navafader>> .

Betty Stork

Stephen Baraban

Stephen Baraban lives in Sunnyside, Queens. He studied at SUNY/ Buffalo with Robert Creeley and John ("Jack") Clarke, and has had poems in *House Organ*, *intent: letter of talk, thinking, and document*, and *Home Planet News* (print); *Hamilton Stone Review*, and *MiPoesias* (web). He'd love to see more reader comments at his blog at www.earthwithcity.blogspot.com.

Phillip Lund

Phillip Lund's poetry and reviews appeared in several print journals in the 1990s. His poem "Figure Shift" will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Cricket Online Review*. He lives and writes in Saint Paul, Minnesota."

Paul Siegell

Paul Siegell, staff editor of the *Painted Bride Quarterly*, is psyched like a ReVeLeR @ eYeLeVeL <<http://paulsiegell.blogspot.com/>> to announce the publication of his first book, *Poemergency Room* <<http://www.lulu.com/content/1711938>> (Otoliths Books, 2008). "Let's get into the song!" Future titles by Paul Siegell include *jambandbootleg* and *Trombone Bubble Bath*. ((("Whooo's got my publisher?")))

Peter J. Grieco

Peter J. Grieco taught literature in Ankara and Seoul, and now teaches writing at Buffalo State College, where he is an active member the Roof Top Poetry Club. Publications include "Swirling Voices: Considerations of Working-class Poetic Property" and "Lyric Subject as Communal Fragment in the Works of Claude McKay." His poems have appeared in *Harvard Review*, *Poetry Revolt*, *Beatnik Cowboy*, *Situations*, and elsewhere.

Ralph-Michael Chiaia

Ralph-Michael Chiaia is an experimental poet. Find out more at formonkonly.blogspot.com <<http://formonkonly.blogspot.com>> , including how to purchase Chiaia's new chapbook from Coatlism Press.

Richard Lighthouse

Richard Lighthouse is a contemporary writer and poet. He holds an M.S. from Stanford University. His work has been published in: The Penwood Review, West Hills Review, Mudfish, and many others worldwide.

R W Sturgess

I hail from Cambridge, England, and have been writing poetry for a handful of years. The poems featured in Blazevox are taken from the collection titles 'Everyone has a but'. Recent publications have appeared in Inclement, Decanto, Splizz (Magazines), and Magestic minds (Forward Press Anthology)

Robert Hellam

Robert Hellam lives in Seaside, California, with his wife, Connie. He and Connie teach at Monterey Bay Christian School. Bob teaches English, Bible, Spanish, and math to 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-graders. His poems have been published in various small magazines, and his articles in various magazines and newspapers. His paraphrase of the Psalms (in three volumes) has been published by iUniverse.com as *Sonnets of David*. His short collection of Christmas poems has been published by Blurb.com as *Witnesses of the Nativity*. Bob is also an ordained minister, though his only regular preaching now is to the residents of a convalescent hospital on Sunday afternoons. Bob and Connie's older son, Chuck, is a sergeant in the U.S. Army, recently returned from his second tour of duty in Iraq. Chuck's home now is in Hawaii, with his wife, Claire, and his daughters, Malia and Leinani. Bob and Connie's younger son works as a technical writer in the Sacramento area and will be married to Elize Neethling in June.

Rosemarie Crisafi

Rosemarie Crisafi lives in Fishkill, New York. She works in for a non-for-profit agency that serves individuals with disabilities. Her poetry has most recently published in Flutter Poetry Journal, Snap Poetry Journal, Snow Monkey, Ghoti, The Potomac, Red River Review, Unlikely Stories, Eclectica Magazine, Poetry Super Highway, and The Adroitly Place Word. Her chapbook, Days of Reckoning, is available at the Lily Literary Review at <http://freewebs.com/lilylitreview/crisafichapbook.pdf> <<http://freewebs.com/lilylitreview/crisafichapbook.pdf>> .

Kyra Saari

Sam Dillon

Sam Dillon is a writer and musician who resides in Connecticut. He works at a psychiatric hospital, and his band Cup of Sun tours the east coast area. He has been published in *Poems on the Road to Peace*, and the *Chronogram Magazine*. He enjoys writing about himself in the third person.

Sarah Louise Parry

Mary Ann Sullivan

Mary Ann Sullivan is a Doctor of Arts student at Franklin Pierce University in New Hampshire. Her first novel, *Child of War*, set in Belfast, Northern Ireland, was named a Notable Book in Social Studies and favorably reviewed in *The New York Times*. Her poems have been published in journals such as *eratio*, *Munyori Review*, *poeticdiversity*, *River City Review*, and *BBC poetry online*, where her multimedia piece can be seen here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/poetry/ondisplay/index.shtml>
<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/poetry/ondisplay/index.shtml>> Sullivan is the editor of towerjournal.com

Tyler Cobb

Tyler Cobb is a poet living in St. Paul, Minnesota. His current reading diet consists mainly of Charles Bukowski and John Bennett. He is currently working on a chapbook called *Take In My Dusty Blood*. He can be reached at asilverbrew@gmail.com.

Zachary C. Bush

Zachary C. Bush, 24, is a poet and an assistant editor at Fiction. He is the author of four chapbooks of poetry. His first full-length collection of graphic/found poetry, *at swan decapitation*, is to be published by VOX Press (Oxford, MS). Samples of this forthcoming collection can be found in Spring issues of *BlazeVOX* and *Cricket Online Review*, as well as the cover-art to Louis E. Bourgeois's forthcoming collection of prose poetry - *The Animal* (BlazeVOX Press). He holds a BA degree in Creative Writing from Georgia Southern University and is currently pursuing an MFA in Poetry from the City College of New York. He shares a loft with his books and a 1942 Royal typewriter.

Steven Zultanski

Steven Zultanski is the author of the chapbooks *Homoem* (Radical Readout, 2005), *USA = NAZI* (with Brad Flis, Nocturnal Editions, 2008) and *Steve's Poem* (Lettermachine, forthcoming). He edits *President's Choice* magazine, a Lil' Norton publication. His poetry has appeared in *Antennae*, *FO(A)RM*, *The Physical Poets*, *Shiny*, and elsewhere.

Mare Mikolum

"I am a Freak" is a collaborative piece resulting from improvisations by six writers in Ted Pelton's Fiction Workshop class at Medaille College in Buffalo, NY. Mare Mikolum is a pseudonym for Molly

Platt [A] Rhonda Celeste [E] Michelle Fritz [I] Kara Hibbard [O] Lori Markham [U] and Margaret Keddie.

Brian Foley

Brian Foley lives in a New England village made out of concrete. He runs a reading series at a popular bookstore. His work has been published or is forthcoming in *Eyeshot*, *Pequin*, *Pindeldyboz*, *Wandering Army*, *Indifinite Space*, *Juked*, *Quick Fiction*, *Word Riot*, *Lamination Colony*, and others. He blogs at www.eunuchsblues.blogspot.com <<http://www.eunuchsblues.blogspot.com/>> .

Alan May

Alan May's work has appeared in *The New Orleans Review*, *The Laurel Review*, *9th St. Laboratories*, *string of small machines*, *Kulture Vulture*, *Perihelion*, and others. By day, he works as a librarian for the University of Montevallo. Note: "The Ideal Bird" was published in *string of small machines* (sans illustration). By night, he edits APOCRYPHALTEXT <http://apocryphaltextpoetry.com/>> .

sTEVEN p. rOGGENBUCK

sTEVEN p. rOGGENBUCK lives and writes in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. He can be reached at steveroggenbuck@hotmail.com

Allen Itz

Allen Itz is a 64 year old native South Texan, moving slowly over the years from a small town on the border in deep South Texas to San Antonio and the Texas hill country. He began as a writer in the late 1960's, published a few poems, then quit writing for nearly 30 years. He returned to poetry when he retired ten years ago and has since published more than 300 poems in various on-line and print literary journals and has recently released his first book, "Seven Beats a Second." Go to Allen's website at www.7beats.com <<http://www.7beats.com>> for more information on his book, art, poetry, music and "Here and Now," his weekly blog on poetry and lots of other things.

