

# DOOR = JAR



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DOOR = JAR

Door Is A Jar  
Issue 34

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by Jaina Cipriano



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**incantation**  
Salvatore Folisi  
Poetry

the birds whistling  
through the snowstorm  
know that spring is here.  
not fooled by the weather  
they sense something deeper  
in the atmosphere,  
the turning of the planet  
into a new season.  
their song an incantation of hope,  
an ode to the light  
that warms the earth,  
softens the ground  
and brings forth life from the land,  
to begin again  
in a new cycle of celebration.

**Waiting**  
Diane Funston  
Poetry

I creep in to the butterfly habitat  
dappled with perfume  
Wearing my most colorful  
flower-full blouse  
Inviting filigree butterflies  
to cover me

I stand still as a park statue  
Silent as the pious in prayer  
Occasionally I drift  
toward a new feathery squall---  
offer myself  
passive altar  
a turned-down bed

I see whorls of wings  
flicker and flutter past me  
to settle instead upon  
silver haired shrieking tourists  
corpulent camera man in a sweat logged suit  
chocolate smeared children waving their arms  
calling "Come here butterfly, come over here"

I watch amid chatter and clutter  
silent  
scented  
open palmed

waiting

**Slip Dream**  
Diane Funston  
Poetry

While we're asleep,  
the door opens  
they slip in.  
Phantoms from an old attic  
a previous time,  
high lofty rafters  
Pull-chain lightbulb in the middle  
where the pitch of the roof joins,  
darkness scurries away  
towards unfinished walls  
hidden in shadows  
awake and waiting,

With time out of our hands  
the clock stopped at midnight  
that hour ghosts begin to dance  
old-style, curtsy and bow  
top hat tips revealing sunken eyes  
a bony hand that reaches for hers,  
pulls her in to embrace  
twirling in the dance,  
music from gramophone in corner,  
the one covered in dust,  
a pile of 78s  
a spider walks across the vinyl.

Songs from WWI,  
the war to end all wars  
record repeats again and again

sticks in grooves skips  
generations sometimes.

*Alice Blue Gown* still in plastic  
tuxedo and tails hangs in the corner  
moves only from a cold draft,  
dances when armies of rats rush  
seeking one another in the dark.

**reciprocal sun**

Linda Crate

Poetry

i am a moon  
without her sun  
yearning for

a bright star to dance  
in my sky,

thought once  
i had met her for she  
woke in me the dreaming  
and magic in me i thought  
was long dead;

but she was not mine to hold—

just a sun that spent many moments  
in my life without being a fixture  
that would remain always,

so here i am laying here in all of  
my yearning for a sun who could shine  
half as bright as she whose love this time  
could be reciprocated rather than unrequited.

**the sky that never falls**

Linda Crate

Poetry

never forever  
is a lonely  
experience,

i want a love  
enduring as an evergreen  
who is sometimes the  
only color in a winter sigh;

i want that fairy tale  
love i know exists because i do—

yearn for my beloved sun  
to illuminate me on my days of  
deepest darkness,

whose song is the missing half  
of the lyric of my hearts duet;

i am tired of being the  
bridesmaid or the greeter at the  
wedding:  
let me be the bride—

crowned in moonlight:  
silver and glittering

let our love be the sky that never falls.

**I LOVE ASPHALT**

Kristan LaVietes

Poetry

how it reaches out and loops  
on itself, touching my sidewalk  
and your sidewalk and their  
parking lot. Connecting.

I love the patched  
asphalt of the off-ramp,  
the jack-hammered chunks  
piling up behind concrete  
barriers in construction zones.  
And new asphalt, its smoothness  
clean gray, its shoxic yellow  
lane markers.

I love the cracked, bulging  
asphalt at the edges, where we all  
break down sometimes and are  
rescued. I love this alive,  
shallow rock  
and how every day we climb  
inside our metal skins and  
take it places.

**Love, Cupid**  
Arlene Tribbia  
Fiction

Cupid sips absinthe at the hotel bar—it's one of the new glamorous ones—sometimes stroking his golden arrow with his narrow fingertips waiting for the pleasure to take hold. He wears a dark window pane suit to blend in with all the people hurrying about the lobby.

What's the rush? It'll never happen if they don't slow down, take their time.

If they don't take their time, he will.

If by chance they look at him, they'll see nothing but an empty window of transcendent cloth, a momentary reflection of themselves which will feel like *déjà vu* or a childhood mirage, an illumination flickering off a mirror or light bouncing from the marble floor.

And it isn't easy for him either because he keeps catching only dark contours of multiple lives, lost loves slipping past. Circumstances simmer everywhere and there are shortcomings and goings, always trembling, worry, all happening on the city's streets.

People are distracted.

Yet he knows the soft skin there under persimmon silks, filmy cotton and linen weaved with air where his arrow might dig deep into the body and in particular: the heart.

An arrow to the fifth, sixth, seventh rib won't do.

He understands how many people prefer to remain anonymous, unloved until he arrives to satisfy longings they didn't even know they possessed.

He understands how their hipbones must match but he also knows it's the heart that must be pierced to fall deeply in love.

If he drinks too much absinthe he'll have to be content to take to the streets where his aim won't be any

good, but sometimes it's fun to shoot drunk and let mayhem happen. For that reason, he dips his arrows in lavender to help with the nausea that often comes for some when they're falling in love. Besides, dumb lovers often need a little extra help—even if there is no happy ending like in a rom-com where the couple first meet up at some swanky pajama party in Bel Air or Hollywood Hills wearing ivory silk pajamas.

Sometimes Cupid even goes to these pajama parties. He doesn't care for them because they quickly commence into either orgies or a séance where it's easy to weep and the business isn't that good.

He leaves the bar and heads down on Sunset where he spots a boy, bleached Hockney blonde in neon orange sweats leaning against a graphite car that looks flashy expensive, but then he was never good with makes and models, so who knows. His friend is a skinny bent leather line drawn in next to him and if he didn't have silver star sequins and studs sewn into his lime green tennis shoes he'd fade.

For a few minutes Cupid listens to their lazy talk about the shape of time while they share a joint. He's heard it all before under this philosophical circus top that Sunset is once the emptying of bars and hearts begin.

I hear it's an arrow, neon Hockney says.

Nah. They say it's more like serenity, you know, like it heals all things, the other boy says handing the joint back.

The soul is an arrow.

When Cupid steps up, he points his arrow and as he takes aim, he whispers: it's nothing, nothing at all, nothing compared to love.

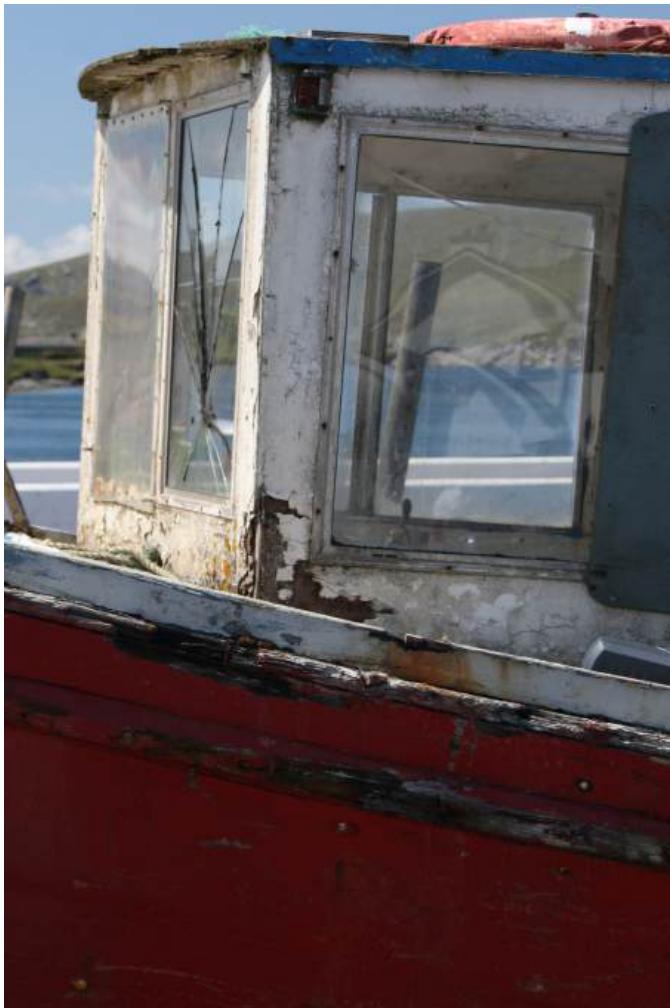
**Spiral Handrail**  
Victoria Mullen  
Art



**Miss Frou Frou**  
Victoria Mullen  
Art



**Pilothouse for Irish fishing boat in dry dock**  
Michael C. Roberts  
Art



**Ancient door lock in Cefalu, Sicily, Italy**

Michael C. Roberts

Art



**Minimalism gnarly tree to sky Grand Canyon**  
Michael C. Roberts  
Art



**Stilettos**  
Jodi Cadenhead  
Poetry

If you're going to insist, I talk  
About my mother's pink stilettos,  
Then I'll have to tell you about the time  
Her lover broke into my father's tool chest to  
Steal his stiletto hammer so we could  
Smash the crabs wrapped up in white paper  
on the kitchen counter, until

Hungry for more than food,  
My sister and I ran back outside and  
Spun cartwheels through the moonless night,  
Never dreaming—  
of how that sturdy hammer  
Would be used later.

**Salad Daydreams**  
Jodi Cadenhead  
Poetry

You ignored my salad—apples, beets, cabbage:  
Everything sliced and diced so coldly perfect, one  
hardly missed the dates. Instead, you  
opened the refrigerator, staring into the flickering light

with a longing I'd forgotten. Which meant I had  
to go down the hall and out into the dark night to that  
tiny house we once shared by the riverbed.

Where a woman with white hair answered the  
broken door and handed me a box of moldy dates,  
with the address of my old apartment, that walk-up  
on Onyx, since sure enough,

Sitting on the stoop was every bad date, I ever had:  
Men in muscle shirts, and cheap suits, leering, laughing,  
looking like a pile of cockroaches.

So, I gave up on dates, and was about to come  
back when I thought I'd stop by my childhood home.  
As soon as I walked in, there were my parents.

Looking the way, they did when they were alive.  
My father wondering why he never met you,  
and my mother, full of complaints about how  
I never put her in any of my good poems.

**Omen**

Rushika G. Ramani

Poetry

Last night spiders crawled out  
Of my toilet bowl and invaded my  
1200 sq ft apartment. I thought  
That meant that the summer is coming;  
But it was just him.  
The three of swords and the fate of  
Star crossed lovers on his shoulders; Pitted  
Against each other.  
Betrayal and bread go together like  
The innocent and match sticks.  
At least, kiss me good bye.

**I spy with my little tired eye**

Rushika G. Ramani

Poetry

Lingering by the door, trading secrets,  
His hands on my hips.  
We slow dance to a banned sermon,  
All the way to the bedroom.  
I carry my breasts like contraband,  
He unties me, I scatter,  
And he holds my breath for ransom.

**Mindfulness Season**

Carlin Corsino

Poetry

My heart is a middle-aged man  
raking leaves. It finds new ways  
to ache, watches work undone  
by winds of age and compulsion.  
The rake of anxiety drags  
across the yard of its indecision.

My love is carefree. She leaps  
headlong into leaf piles,  
untroubled by the spreading.  
Passes season to season  
without worry for the inevitable.

Please Lord, let us learn  
to slip into the warm knit sweater  
of a moment. Past and future  
tucked away like forgotten  
to do lists. Her hand in mine,  
steaming cider scenting the day.  
We can watch these falling leaves  
through the bay window  
until spring rain boils them  
down to thin nourishment  
for the looming green.

**Braver Every Day**  
Stephen Kampa  
Poetry

The only reason I can put  
my hand in you

o crocodile

and pull it out again intact  
is that you

o crocodile

have been transfigured into one  
medium-sized

handbag

**Dirge of the Doordasher**

Matt McGee

Fiction

Your cell dings. Burger King. \$7.75. Your minimum for driving to that side of town has always been nine dollars. But it's Sunday, and it's slow, and \$7.75 is almost \$9. So you hit Accept.

This will be your third delivery tonight. Your goal is five a day. And three is almost five. So you start the car and turn toward Burger King.

You'd had the window down while you were waiting, reading your latest acquisition from Malibu Newsstand, expecting the phone to ding at any moment. When it finally did, and you accepted, you tried to roll the window up to keep out the night air. But it won't go. There's something wrong with the motor, or maybe something else in there, you don't know, because you're not a mechanic and there is no money for a \$200 driver's window repair. So you keep hitting the button over and over and over until finally the window decides to go up. There. Fixed.

Three miles later, the window now up, you pass the local high school. Last year you read that the land once belonged to a couple who spent their lives making a famous radio show. Their whole catalog of broadcasts is still available on the Internet Archive database. You've listened to a few of them. They're still vaguely funny, and of course a little corny, but it gave you a simple smile, and seemed like such a pleasant little window into a pleasant, simpler time in the world.

And you wonder if that time was really that simple, that innocent. If you'd been alive then, you might not have even had a job. Or a car. And you wouldn't have to worry about sticky windows.

The map on the app sends you to the wrong apartment building, and you wonder how people ever did this back in the days of paper maps, even Thomas Brothers guides. But it's a luxury, and you know it, as is the flashlight app that helps you eventually find the building after a whole lot of late-night walking. It's a good thing you wore your good boots, the English ones that make you feel like you're able to march for miles if need be. That's a luxury. You wouldn't have had good boots in the radio days. You definitely wouldn't have the camera on your phone that you just used to snap a photo, turn away and collect your pay. Sometimes when you complete a delivery the customer adds on a little extra. There is no extra tip this time and you don't know why you ever expected one.

On your way back down the hill, you wonder if there were delivery people back during the radio era. If the stars and the staff of that show had their lunches brought to them as they were writing and rehearsing it. If you'd lived through that era, would you have been with the show—or would you be delivering their lunch?

Gophers. That's what they were called. You'd have been a gopher. But you'd have kept your hair nice, your clothes clean, and your eyes always on the lookout for an opportunity to go from wishing there was a little extra tip to someone that hands it out in a hash joint, or Sardi's, or whatever fashionable restaurant would've been grateful to see you then, glad to have you as a customer.

The app dings again. Do you accept, since this run is a carbon copy of the last? It's paying nine this time. Perfect. Once you go through the drive-through and roll away you hit the up button on the window and this time it rolls all the way to the top. Things are looking up.

You confirm the food is in your possession and the app shows you the delivery address: it's your exes house. The name on the order is her younger sister, the one who was always rooting for you to marry her older, slightly less

responsible sibling. The last you heard, your ex was engaged to someone with money. You pull up the hood on your hoodie and sink deep inside. You know there are cameras all over the front of the house.

It's a frightening reminder of what side of the financial world you're operating on. Maybe in a past life, a radio life, you weren't a gopher. Back then, you'd have been surrounded by glamour and celebrities.

But in this life, you know who you are.  
Sticky window and all.

**Pueblo Español**  
Nuala McEvoy  
Art



**Evie's Space City**  
Nuala McEvoy  
Art



**Clockwork**  
Patrick McEvoy and Olivia Pelaez  
Art





**Night**  
Darlene Bester  
Poetry

Everything's as it should be.  
The moon minus my eyes,  
my eyes minus the night.  
The sky was held together like scars.  
They sparkle sometimes at night.  
Everything's as it should be.  
A deck of cards  
split evenly in two.  
My hands minus the queen,  
the queen minus the night.  
Breaking all the hearts in a quick, lucid deal.  
Everything's as it should be.  
The moon rotates partway.  
My tears minus the faces,  
the faces minus the night.  
We all hide behind it sometimes.  
Everything's as it should be.  
Sometimes, I see the stars-  
it is a mess of organized chaos.  
It's night's greatest apology.  
Everything's as it should be.

**Infinity**  
Darlene Bester  
Poetry

I'm standing on the brink of night.  
It is vast and inclusive—  
we are both there—looking for Jupiter—  
and I wonder how far the night stretches.

The dust in me,  
is the dust in you,  
and it is also the awesome  
space between the visible stars.

I picture the cosmic dust  
like cotton candy,  
that becomes human  
when it melts into our warmth.

Why is space so cold,  
and here we stand in a returning summer?

If space is flat, it is infinite.

I picture us standing on a wooden  
plank- with measured out dimensions,  
watching the night sky go by.  
I wonder if the space between us is vast.  
I wonder if we are the space  
between the stars.

Standing on a wooden plank  
on the curious brink of night—  
Begging for Infinity.  
(settling for not falling off the plank)

**River Song 1**  
Emma Galloway Stephens  
Poetry

Across our mill town's river,  
I see mountains ripple  
  
cobalt in spring, copper in autumn,  
lovely in every light.  
  
I could wade into the water,  
chin deep, to reach the other side,  
  
let the river swallow me, slay me  
so I could rise again,  
  
this time a mountain girl,  
born of the water and the word,  
  
barefoot in a green eternity,  
white-eyed, full of prophecy.

In spirit and truth, I stand on the bank,  
barefoot in sand slick as velvet.

This town is not my home—  
it's a passing place.

But I'm dirt-deep, ankle bound  
in clay, red stains to my knees.

But when this town lets me go—  
who knows?

**River Song 3**  
Emma Galloway Stephens  
Poetry

Mama doesn't know  
that at night I swim in the river—

me and the midnight moccasins  
slither in the silver water,

bathing in moon wine,  
ankle deep in mud like velvet.

Sister salamanders, slick and kind,  
pull my worries from my mind.

My hair unwinds. God's ribbons.  
The water makes me forget myself.

How lovely, not to know myself,  
my own name a blank,

my being an eddy, a pebble,  
a water moccasin, a salamander.

I let the water wrap around me  
the way prayers wrap around God.

He drinks them all.  
The river rises. My body falls.

**Atmo**  
Eamon Costello  
Poetry

Already frustrated, the pants caught  
in the chain of the bike,  
limbs of memory spiral  
into the pothole:

Learning to drive around the rotary  
The green room of the middle school play  
Old friendship, the foundation of playdates  
Becoming a faster runner than the father  
The earnest note from a cabinmate  
Hoping and waiting for summer's end  
The bench of the important basketball game  
The full effort sit-up in gym class  
The jumps across the jetty  
The bike—

Veering right into scrapes  
and bruises to come  
the mother and child and  
the fire truck passing by  
Laying there for a second before carrying on

**Gifts**  
Antonios Tsoulfas  
Fiction

Their car drove through the night, the windshield beating back the rain and sounding strange. Billy sat in the backseat next to his baby brother Jonah, who wouldn't stop trying to unbuckle his car seat. While their mom stared ahead, their father kept one hand on the wheel and with the other fumbled angrily with the radio, which made Billy say more than once, "Dad you have to put a dollar in the swear jar." His dad would clam up and not answer. Their mom and dad played no music, and the car ride was mostly silent besides the wiper and the rain, their dad's mumbling, and Jonah's cries. Billy's mother had once told him that babies were attuned to things that were yet to happen and to things that had already happened that they had no business knowing about. "You were that kind of baby," she had told him. Billy had no memory of the house catching fire or the three of them being trapped in the kitchen. But according to his mother, he had smiled up until the firefighters arrived to save them. She'd said you can tell how something will turn out by how a baby behaves.

When they arrived at Shorty's Barbecue, Billy's dad and mom got out first. His mom opened the door and took Jonah out of the car seat. Billy fumbled with his own door but finally opened it and jumped down. His dad grabbed his hand and led him to the restaurant. His mom held Jonah in her arms as they all went inside.

His dad spoke to the hostess, who led them to a table, pulled up a highchair for Jonah, smiled, and let them sit down.

"Mom, can I have the baby back ribs?" Billy said, not sure he should.

“How much are they?” his dad said loudly.  
His mom gave his dad a look that had to be anger.

“Th-thirty bucks,” Billy said gently.

“Too expensive,” his dad said.

“Oh, for god’s sake, Harold, let him have them.”

Another look passed between them, and Billy knew it meant something, but wasn’t sure what. It scared him for some reason.

“My finances are going to be torched as it is, Kara, and I’m the one paying for this.”

“*Your* finances?”

“It’s fine,” Billy said quickly. “I can get something smaller.”

He started flipping through the menu to show them he was looking for something else. They only went out to eat on special occasions. The last time had been a long time ago. Why now, Billy found himself wondering.

“No, get the ribs.” His mom was looking at him with a smile.

“Kara....” his father said.

“Please stop fighting,” Billy heard himself say.  
“*Please....*”

His mom and dad looked at each other for a long time. The anger left their eyes, replaced by something like sadness.

“You can have the ribs,” his dad said at last with a sigh.

Billy looked over at Jonah, the only one who seemed to be in a good mood. Somehow the thought of baby back ribs, which was Billy’s favorite food in the whole world, wasn’t making him happy. He felt the fear still, and it upset him.

The waitress came and soon Billy was digging into the ribs. His mom got a salad, his dad a burger, and Jonah had baby formula they had brought with them.

When his dad was done with his burger, he cleared his throat, looked at Billy, and said:

“Billy there’s something your mom and I want to tell you.”

Billy couldn’t breathe.

“Your mom and I are getting a divorce.”

Billy wanted to ask why, but could not. He couldn’t say a word.

“Honey,” his mom began. “Maybe when you’re older we’ll tell you more, but for now just know that your dad and I love you and Jonah very, very, much and we’ll always be a family.”

“So...” a voice said, and he realized it was his, somehow finding words at last, “we’re still going to live together in the same house. And have Christmas together. And hunt for Easter eggs?”

“Well...we won’t be living in the same house,” his mom answered. “I’ll be moving into my own place, and you’ll come and see me but otherwise you’ll be living with your dad.”

“And Christmas and Easter?”

His parents looked at each other.

“Of course, kiddo,” his dad said.

And then Billy said it. Was it because he was angry? Was it because it needed to be said and no one else was going to do it?

“*You’re lying*,” he said. “I know you are.”

Except for Jonah’s baby sounds, everyone was quiet.

“Billy...” his mom said gently.

Billy couldn’t see. His eyes were too full of water, and he knew that meant he was crying, which he didn’t want to do.

“Everything will be okay,” his dad was saying.

*You’re lying*, he wanted to say again, but didn’t. It wasn’t going to change what was happening.

Billy looked over at Jonah. Jonah had a calm, peaceful look on his face. His mother had told Billy the night before his brother Jonah was born, told him how babies sometimes knew how things would turn out. How you could always tell how things were going to turn out by looking at how a baby was acting, what mood it was in.... He wondered, sitting there in the restaurant with his parents and his baby brother, when he himself had forgotten how to do that, how to *know*, and looking at Jonah's face, how calm the baby was, he wanted to be a baby again, too, and forever.

END

**The Devil Walked Here**  
Jaina Cipriano  
Art



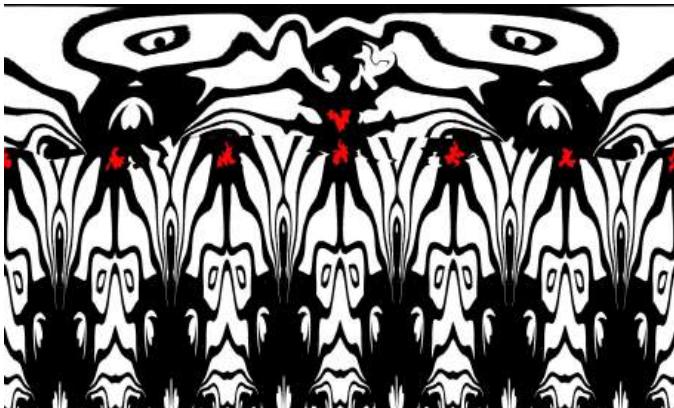
**The Last One to Leave the Party**  
Jaina Cipriano  
Art



**Power Prayer**  
Jaina Cipriano  
Art



**Growl 2a**  
Edward Michael Supranowicz  
Art



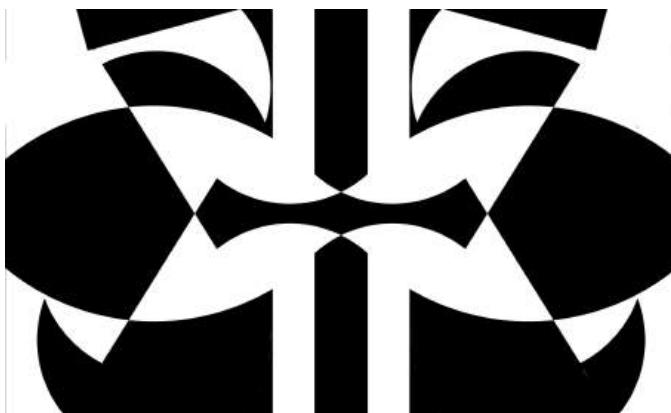
**That Crazy Hand Jive**

Edward Michael Supranowicz

Art



**The Collision of Faith and Doubt**  
Edward Michael Supranowicz  
Art



**Twin**  
Ryan Keating  
Poetry

I

The way our steps in step were  
almost dancelike like our thoughts  
thought at the same time; time and again  
intertwined saying sayings in unison,  
we were a compound word, synoptic gospel,  
a full sentence. A dependent clause,  
sometimes I was the verb and he the noun.  
Sometimes we completed each other,  
or describing, modified. We prayed  
identical prayers.

II

I still answer quickly when he calls, echoing  
a voice I love as neighbor and self.

I still call to uncover what I feel  
when I can't recall, or to recover,

or to share a song or a moment alone  
that reverberates if he shares it, too.

Today we are more plural than singular,  
singing together less and on separate verses,

sometimes silent. I still listen for an echo  
when I say amen.

**swirling sugar**

Joe Bisicchia

Poetry

you don't remember  
but it's always good  
to meet  
intermingling  
like our tea  
aside the brokenness  
the forgetfulness  
in the  
shattered  
bits and pieces  
grace  
somehow remains  
the moment  
the moment next  
the moment now  
the moments  
that were  
as if forever  
we are blessed  
again  
to meet

**see me**  
Joe Bisicchia  
Poetry

In the disarray,  
find what appears  
at first maybe only ash  
there to alight and fit  
squarely upon the sand.

A butterfly goes flying,  
flying,  
flying  
because by mercy  
I can.

I am  
in the piece  
by piece of today,  
another doe,  
a sapling,  
a child in a distant land,  
an unbreakable peace  
of today,  
of today,  
and of today.

Look.

And find me tomorrow  
not just in the breeze,  
but upon your hand.

**Fractions**  
Ophelia Monet  
Poetry

and you're treating it like  
you plan to let it go /  
cautiously touch the lines  
on my face, make me feel

dangerous, empty, alive /  
synonyms for what it is  
to be human / a little less  
optimism, a little more

crisis / count the coasters  
on the worn, etched table  
and clean up the mess  
that wasn't yours but

that you were made to  
believe was / brighten  
your eyes and bare your  
teeth, it's almost over now /

did you see the way he  
looked at me? it felt  
barbaric / it made me feel  
like a fraction of myself /

I never felt whole to begin with

**Vultures**  
Ophelia Monet  
Poetry

she blew kisses  
you threw rocks

not just you,  
everyone

spiteful vultures  
don't you think

it's time to  
lay down your feathers?

rustling wings  
begging wind to soften

teeth so dull  
flat like slates

nothing with which to  
grind down brittle bone

no tools left to sand down  
the edges of your

weapon

**My Own Way**

Bill Abbott

Poetry

I'm always in my own way,  
pushing past me to get to the counter,  
slipping in front of myself, blocking  
the screen in the theater. Putting my  
hands in the way when I reach for  
the remote, the popcorn, the  
pen, the next thought, the next  
relationship.

I'm in the way again, I complain  
to me. I want to do all the things,  
but I'm blocking, boxing myself  
into the old familiar places, the ones  
which are so limiting, the ones which  
won't let me do all the things. The ones  
which won't let me do any of them.

But the limits are comfortable, and  
I've limited myself to them out of  
comfort. Out of fear of being noticed.  
Out of fear of being recognized  
for being me.

**Shake Before Using**

Bill Abbott

Poetry

In the event of a total meltdown of your core reactor, please follow all safety precautions, dumping the offending waste and restoring all functionality to your collection of ridiculous anime figurines.

If the sideways glances from potential suitors are unnerving enough, please place your seat into its upright position and try an assortment of nacho cheese snacks from the provided tray.

After giving away the last of the leftover sleep from your travel bag, please exit the building in an orderly and properly restrained fashion.

When the frozen remains of your libido collide with the sex toy joy of your living room furniture, please make sure you have given up thoroughly on all hopes for your personal perspective.

Above all else, in the hopes  
of a glorious sunset in the  
corral of your waterborne  
wilderness, please ignore  
all muffled screams left in  
the pit of your ever-scarred  
soul.

**Watch Parts**  
Sophia Carroll  
Nonfiction

When I was three, my great-aunt tried to abduct me. I don't know if she knew what she was doing, only that she took me out of the restaurant where my parents were, walked us on winged feet to a payphone, and tried to order a taxi. My mother later told me it only took her a minute to notice I was gone, and she tracked me down as if my footprints were phosphorescent. I got in trouble for not telling her where I was going even though we both knew that I had listened to an adult, a family member, as I had been trained to do. I don't know what my mother said to my great-aunt, but I never saw her again. Years later I heard that she hung herself.

But she's still in me, the only family member my father knew with my illness, the one that manifested when I too walked on those winged feet, about to drive drunk in my pajamas at four in the morning because my skin felt like it was made of bees. I had once been reliable, orderly, but the illness disassembled me. After the hospital, I asked my parents whether they wanted to know my diagnosis. It was a crossroads and they knew it. "Of course," they said without hesitation.

On that walk around our block, my father talked about my great-aunt for the first time since the restaurant. "She was mean as shit," he told me. "She once baked me a pie with watch parts in it."

I imagine my great-aunt serving the watch—a timepiece cut into pieces. I imagine my father as a boy, cutting his tongue on glass when he expected something sweet. Trauma can be epigenetically inherited. Every time I take the medicine I am the first in my family to admit to needing, I am healing my ancestors.

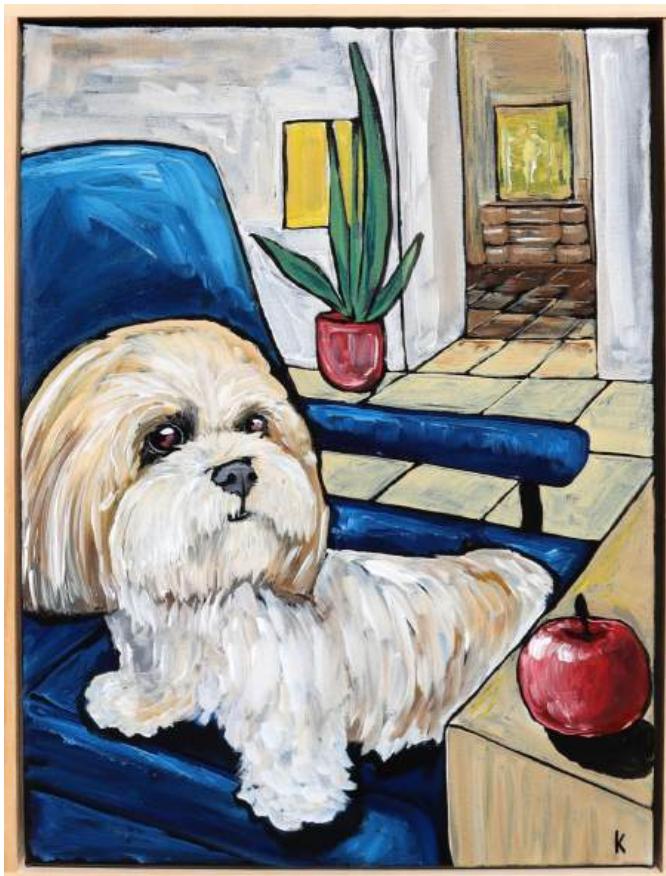
As my father and I watched our dog sniff at a hedgerow, he added, “I see now that maybe some of her meanness might have been mental illness.”

He walked in front of me back to the house, and his steps were lighter. Practically glowing.

**Buddy's Picasso**  
Komal Sharma  
Art



**Desert Snow**  
Komal Sharma  
Art



**Post-School Afternoon**  
Komal Sharma  
Art



**Staffy on Grandpa's Chair**  
Komal Sharma  
Art



**There's No Point in Arguing**

Patrick Meeds

Poetry

At four in the morning it sounds  
like the end of the world but it is  
just the shower curtain rod falling  
into the tub. Gets the heart going  
though, doesn't it? Being bitten by  
a dragonfly. The electric snap of a  
fuse popping. A car stereo's thump  
suddenly coming through the walls.  
Breaking the sound barrier.

I can't spend all day in bed. I've tried.  
Even when I was in the hospital I tried,  
but my blood kept whispering get up,  
get up, get up. This is what wounded  
animals do. This is how loneliness takes  
hold. This is just practice for dying.  
Every morning, I unmake the bed.  
Turn all my clothes inside out. Close  
the curtains on the blue-black dawn sky  
and get on with it.

**Care Instructions**

James King

Poetry

Take this little heart and hang it  
to dry in sunlight. Just sunlight.  
On your counter, in that light, a package  
from your sister, eight-hundred miles  
away, containing a soft  
brown cardigan, the label with arcane symbols—  
a cup of water with the number 30  
floating in it, a triangle sliced  
like a strawberry, and what  
looks to you like a lantern—  
instructions for how to keep  
this carefully made thing  
from dissolving. You dreamed  
your mother was dying, and awoke  
frizzy and tired, small griefs  
clung like lint in your hair.  
When the heart gets stained like this,  
here's what you must do—

pet a dog, turn on sprinklers at an empty house,  
give your good friend  
the strength he needs to throw away  
a box of his old boyfriend's things.  
Just one box, but weight  
is not always measured by a scale.  
Go with him to the Goodwill.  
Know this has been done for you before.  
In dim memory, your arm  
supports a woman's neck, her haze  
of straw-colored hair, as she plays  
with your right hand—thumb between  
your finger bones, kneading

the skin like stretching fabric,  
finding the vein. In that moment,  
you were physical, made of  
matter, handled with care.  
You've got some work to do.  
This pattern in the warm brown fabric  
of the cardigan. In every thread  
of your worn-through heart.

**Blue Stretch of Lonely**

Victoria Melekian

Poetry

I no longer remember the name of the tree,  
only that its leaves twirled to the ground

like tiny propellers spinning through October's  
warm autumn breeze. By November you were gone

and the branches were bare, the tree's shadow  
stretched across the weathered brick patio.

Hot Santa Ana winds blew smog from the sky.  
At night the moon sits on a low limb

before it climbs over the fence above  
the neighbor's house. You left us all behind:

husband, daughter, sisters—and me, your friend,  
stuck in a blue stretch of lonely searching the sky

for doves, hundreds, like we talked about  
so I'd know for sure it's a sign from you.

**Dear Stranger**  
Victoria Melekian  
Poetry

Seven years I've driven past  
your memorial on Eighth and Coast Highway  
wondering who was left behind, wondering  
how you are. Seven years your twirling  
pinwheel reminded me that the inevitable terrible  
lurks: one wrong step, a small fluke in the day,  
something cold in the wind, and your loss  
could have been mine. I want to say how sorry  
I am to see your shrine torn apart—the plastic  
flowers, splintered white cross, shredded flag,  
all dumped in the trash, the fuzzy stuffed toy  
tossed on top. And now a backhoe is trenching  
the dirt and we are losing this spot. I want  
you to know I went back for the teddy bear.

**It's Not The End of The World**

Laurel Streed

Fiction

I was going to break up with Derek when they announced the zombie apocalypse. “Tomorrow,” I had told myself. “I’ll end it tomorrow.” But tomorrow would arrive with a sky on fire and screams traveling in on the wind like a poorly tuned string.

The couple in 2C made a run for it, but we stayed sealed in our tomb, not once daring to peek at the horror happening on the other side.

Derek was always the paranoid one, insisting the apocalypse would happen any day, so almost gleefully, he got to work filling the bathtub and sinks until water threatened to spill over the top. He counted cans of beans and Chef Boyarde, laid them all out to determine our rations. I counted the days until I could get out of here.

I asked him who would get what, the things we bought together and things that time blurred who bought what in the first place. But he was more concerned about the risk of his entrails being slurped up like Ramen, of which we had five packets left.

A week after the announcement, TV news channels petered out, so I rushed for the chunky vintage record player and flipped on the radio. The one he told me took up too much space in our tiny one-bedroom.

“No one even listens to the radio,” he said. “We all have phones.”

But I liked old things. Liked how they held up over the years. Unlike us.

I asked him if he was going to move out. He said now was not the time.

I couldn't take sleeping in the same bed anymore, couldn't stand the way he breathed so close to me, so I flipped our king mattress in front of the windows.

"To reinforce the glass in case the zombies come rushing," I told him.

When the electricity finally went out, we lit candles and spread them through the apartment. They were the smelly ones from Bath and Body Works, so the place swirled with a sickly rainbow sweetness of vanilla, pine, sandalwood, and lavender. It made us so queasy that we often preferred the dark. Derek asked if I wanted to fuck. There wasn't much else to do. At least it was dark.

One day, when it was so very quiet outside, I dared to crack open the door to take a look. The door was barely open an inch when Derek slammed it shut again.

"You can't go out there," he warned. "It's not safe. You have to stay inside."

"We will have to eventually."

"Not yet."

"Okay, then when?"

"When it's safe. When we're ready."

"I'm ready."

"How can I be sure you'll be safe?"

"You can't. But that's not your job to worry about anymore."

The houseplants withered. We couldn't waste water on them. Day by day, I watched them yellow and brown, green edges curling into themselves as they slowly died. Color faded, and I thought how awful it must be to lose what makes you beautiful long before you finally go.

"Tomorrow," Derek said. "Tomorrow we'll leave."

I nodded. "Agreed."

“What do you think it will be like out there?”

“Probably pretty scary.”

That last night, we played Jurassic Park Monopoly by candlelight. Our growling stomachs harmonized. I took Boardwalk and he sighed, such a sore loser.

I rolled my eyes. “Oh, come on. It’s not the end of the world.”

A smile ticked beneath his overgrown beard.

We laughed.

Derek helped me peel away the duct tape from the door. We shoved the couch back into the center of the living room and pried away the nailed dresser drawer face from the door.

I was about to pull open the door when Derek stopped me. “Wait.”

Maybe he wouldn’t let me go. He will say we’re making a mistake. But he retrieved his hunting knife and handed it to me handle-first.

“Be safe,” he said. “Don’t die.”

I took the knife with a thankful nod, opened the door, and emerged.

**Swamp Noir**  
Maggie DuBois  
Art



**Pudgy Dove**  
Maggie DuBois  
Art



**Grackle Wings**  
Maggie DuBois  
Art



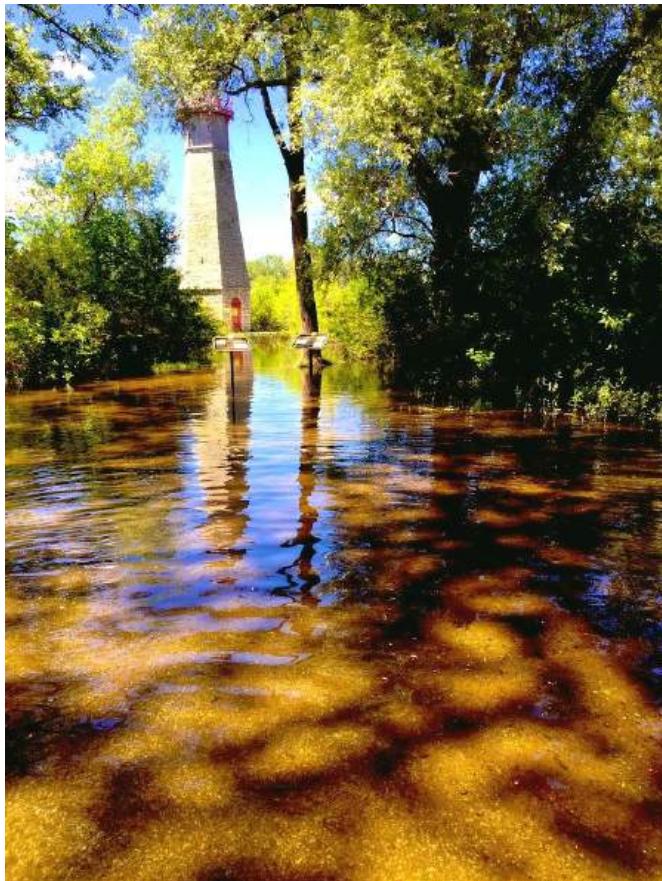
**Slingshot**  
Trevor Cunningham  
Art



**Sakura**  
Trevor Cunningham  
Art



**Flood**  
Trevor Cunningham  
Art



**To Him, To Me, To Her**

Steve Denehan

Poetry

He is dying  
my father  
her grandfather

it has been slow  
but it  
is quickening

some days she is sad  
at home  
in school

she will miss him  
she is scared  
of what will happen

to him  
to me  
to her

I have no answers  
there are no answers  
to when, to where, to why

she tells me  
that nothing lasts forever  
I hug her

while realizing  
that every moment  
is infinity

**Late October, First Snow**

Robert Harlow

Poetry

Heavy and wet,  
lining the boughs.

Evergreens bow low, some  
almost touching the ground.

As if it's the first time  
they were asked to dance,

silly girl pines  
wearing white skirts

curtsey all morning  
until the sun

offers a hand  
to help them back up,

swirling the snow  
from their beautiful green

dresses, their lovely,  
slender shoulders.

**Summer Morning, Pentwater**

Robert Harlow

Poetry

Revived like everything  
that needs rain, up early,  
she wakes me naked  
with her full-body touch.

Rising out of the sudden storm  
squalling off Lake Michigan,  
thunder rounds the edges  
of the rapidly deepening sky.

Something similar, something  
electric in her touch  
always transforms everything  
that is about to arrive.

**sonnet for no longer there**

Nikki Allen

Poetry

I want to yell at the vacant building:  
“I know you used to be a Taco Bell!”  
Shake my fist at the train tracks and the home  
nestled next to them, keeper of first love—  
burrowing under comforter while air  
conditioner blasted—the young dumb stuff.  
Take me to the junkyard. Hand me the cube,  
metal and blue, that used to be my car—  
the first one, convertible with tape deck.  
My boombox rode shotgun in a friend’s lap  
(their sole job not to let the cd skip).  
Give me the old things back. Just as they were.  
Rebuild what you have to. Destroy what you  
can. Wind in my hair, burrito in hand.

**The Hours**

Meagan Chandler

Poetry

Black gnats creep  
across tile white.

Moths cling to the netting  
below the raised window,

aching for a light  
she forgot to shut off.

Like its promises,  
the medicine cabinet,

open, rests empty. Habitually,  
she whispers a prayer

of thanks for the door's mirror  
being turned away.

The hours passed without movement,  
but there is no clock to say so.

Pill bottles remain  
angled beside her feet.

Soles in a stare-off  
with the tub's mildew-lined wall.

The cool, damp air  
of this still summer night

wanders through the screen,  
settles with the scents

of lavender bath salt  
and verbena candles.

Funny how death can live  
in the same space as dreams.

**Accordion Waltz**  
Nicholas Bratcher  
Poetry

Bellows full  
Of air deflate.

Shaping notes  
Both sharp and flat.

Instruments  
Playing polkas.

Waltzes, songs  
Of love long past.

The blue skirt  
Your lover wore.

The night you  
Met dancing to

A waltz of  
Sweet romance. The

Bellows bring  
Back memories.

The polkas  
Of the old home

Country. Great  
Grandfather left.

Better life  
The new world had.

But still he  
Brought his home

Along. A  
Song in his heart.

His timeless  
Music bridging

The gap of  
Generations.

**You poor creature**

Sai Pradhan

Fiction

Grandmothers in India know that I am an omen of death.

This one certainly did. She had been telling her grandkids about it for years, each time I issued my characteristic chuk-chuk sounds from behind the old wooden pendulum clock. She would declare this quite nonchalantly, her audience of little humans aghast at the dramatic horror of a creature heralding demise living somewhere in their youthful midst, as they innocently tucked into their post-prandial banana bread-and-butter puddings. Her dispassionate approach toward something so grim added to their alarm.

You see, us house geckos aren't just harbingers of death; in the realm of superstition, we are also bringers of luck. Death wasn't something to be feared, granny knew that. So why bother kicking up a fuss?

Well into her eighth decade of life, she was past silly fears. She had spent her life praying to many gods. Every morning, she would sit in front of her kitchen altar, chanting Sanskrit hymns. She would bestow freshly plucked hibiscus flowers at the feet of the gods, each an avatar of the whole, the one, the thing of it all, whether imagined or otherwise. She had her bases covered, but no expectation of an afterlife. Like Goethe, she simply wished that at the very least, she "wouldn't run into all those bores who had spent their terrestrial time proclaiming their belief in immortality." If one of her grandchildren turned out to be one of those bores, she knew she would have failed them entirely.

Besides, these days, she was plum out of things to do and think about. Her body ached, she was often lonely, and her interest in all things mundane had been

dissipating for a while. Therefore, she figured that an end must be a good thing, a lucky thing. That's what made the rest of it precious: the making and eating of banana bread-and-butter puddings, the plucking and strewing of the hibiscuses, the charm of the old clock that rang sonorously every hour on the hour, unnerving my reptilian self even though we both apparently served the same function.

Granny was sympathetic to me. She knew that I feigned death all the time, slowing my breathing almost to nil when I perceived a threat. That can't possibly be pleasant. She also knew that a life of chuk-chuk-ing to fellow mortals as an augury of something as obvious as death, must involve tedium. I once heard her whisper kindly in my direction: *You poor creature, you don't even get to eat any banana bread-and-butter pudding!*

**The Cavalry of the Wagons**  
Horia Alexandru Pop  
Art



**On the Road Again**  
Horia Alexandru Pop  
**Art**



**The Boy and the Umbrella**  
Horia Alexandru Pop  
Art



**The Horse Box**  
Horia Alexandru Pop  
Art



**Bat Love Song**

A. A. Gunther

Poetry

My voice never sounded sweeter  
Than when it bounced off her fleeter frame  
And that is why I repeat, repeat  
Repeat her name—  
When it strikes her it will come back  
changed,  
her contours written in its pitch,  
etching her shape in my brain.

No, I'm not after mosquitoes  
I seek for a sweeter prize,  
And that is why I repeat, repeat  
Repeat these cries—  
Seeking an ear-glimpse of her  
eyes,  
dim, like mine, but doing the trick,  
flickering attic-wise.

**Why Does She Have to Write Such Dark Things?**

Cat Winters

Poetry

Women who write horror are spiders,  
knitting cold webs in the corners of rooms.

Fangs sharp,  
eyes wide and watchful in the dark.

*Why does she spin such terrible tales?*

Women who write horror are witches,  
casting wild spells in the wickedest woods.

Breasts bare,  
skin slick from dancing like demons.

*Why does she speak like the devil's whore?*

Women who write horror are werewolves,  
howling their fears to the mad, misty moon.

Fur mussed,  
throats raw from their fierce, feral cries.

*Why does she need to sound so damn strange?*

Women who write horror are phantoms,  
haunting your mind when you're searching for sleep.

Breath chilled,  
words wielded like knives in the night.

*Why does she have to write such dark things?*

**My Apologies to the Hydrangea**

Cat Winters

Poetry

My apologies to the hydrangea  
that we planted in June,  
forgetting that the great green valleys of Oregon  
sometimes burn like the Mojave Desert these days.

My apologies for the drying and the shriveling  
and the thirsting for rain  
that my garden hose can't seem to quench.

I am doing my best  
in this parched and precarious world,  
and if I can say one more thing,  
it's that I hope we both make it,  
the hydrangea and I,  
and I hope you make it, too.

**Stealing from Children**

Cat Winters

Poetry

Oh, dear children,  
they're trying to hide the world from you.  
They've packaged up  
magic, wisdom, and truths  
and shipped them off to god knows where.

They're afraid, dear children,  
you'll discover you're magical, too,  
and they don't know how to fit  
transcendent souls like yours  
into their stagnant, stultifying cis-tem.

They worry you'll learn that,  
once upon a time,  
thieves that looked and spoke like them  
also boxed up magic, wisdom, and truths  
and set the entire world on fire.  
Our nostrils still burn from the stink of the ashes;  
our lands continue to pucker from scars  
—but you won't be able to read about any of it.

These modern robbers of knowledge and joy  
certainly don't want you calling *them* thieves.  
Oh, heavens no!

But we all know sooner or later you'll see.

**Bright Girl**

Cat Winters

Poetry

Bright girl, I miss you.  
I miss the streaks of orange  
and red and gold  
whenever you sprint past me,  
and the hazel shine of your eyes that photos  
can never quite capture,  
and the way you love to sing with me—  
even songs from long before  
I brought you into this world.

Bright girl, I understand.  
You struggled under the crush of our clouds,  
and suffocated in air that burdened your breathing,  
and you needed to replant yourself miles away,  
where the nurturing sun could care for you.

Bright girl, I love you.  
I knew I had to give you to the sun  
instead of holding you here in the mist,  
and so I stepped back,  
watched you fly free  
into the dry desert winds  
and bloom beneath mountain-kissed skies  
soaked in strawberry and tangerine sunsets.

Bright girl, it's okay.  
Please know you still brighten my world,  
even from all those miles away.

**Ballad of a Worm**

Sarah Horner

Poetry

There are good and bad ways to feel small.  
Good: the length of my shoulders being held  
tightly in a single strong arm. Admiring ancient  
architecture. Airplanes. Seeing those redwoods  
in California that have stood quake after quake and  
felt the wind of a dozen wars. Bad: to touch down  
on foreign land and have to mime everything, and  
point to what I want rather than declare it.  
Feeling cramped in public transport. Routines  
of necessity and not of comfort. I don't like  
poems that make unconvincing analogies, or ones that  
break the fourth wall, so I won't tell you that I feel  
like a soft slender creature waiting for an overcast to  
lure me out of hiding. I won't tell you that I am always  
staring with big wet doe eyes because I don't know  
how to be anything but gentle. Most of all, I won't  
tell you that sometimes I like it, feeling small. I like it,  
because how marvelous is it to always have something  
to look up at? To note the expansiveness of  
the world and remember I'm a part of it.

**Rainbow**  
Sarah Horner  
Poetry

How it feels to grow up: A shredded hem  
on a first communion dress, torn by being boyish  
on the church playground. I wore  
flowers in my hair at recess.  
Braided them around my friends' heads  
as permanent crowns. Lea made my braids  
so tiny my mom had to cut them out.

I am always leaning over something.  
Looking down.

My dad tells me to smile more.

The clock's ticking. I anxiously await the bell toll,  
its echo's round reverberation. The scene shifts:

I am no longer wearing white. Like a thing  
that sprouts from the cracks in the sidewalk  
I've grown hardy from the tread marks.

I am dark, I am light, I am red, I am green.

The poppies burst in the field.  
They are yellow—so am I,

like sunshine slipping through the window  
on a bright afternoon.

**Look Both Ways**

Chase Robinson

Poetry

At school my friends and I  
Would cross the street  
Most of the time with the right of way  
Cars did not stop  
Some never slowed down  
Sometimes we would hear a car screeching  
Barreling towards us  
Those cars always modified to be louder

If a car almost hit us  
We would say our mantra:  
“Almost got our college paid”  
It was a win-win situation  
Save a few seconds by not waiting  
Or get hit and make money  
Now I think we were dumb  
Young men who thought  
The worst that could happen  
Was a few bruises and scratches  
Maybe some skin torn off  
From getting dragged across the road  
We had no care  
Begging for our heads to meet the pavement  
No concern about the tires  
Seeking our bodies  
Internal organs  
No. We thought we would dust  
Ourselves off from the ground  
Or hood  
Carry on and go to class  
At least that is what I thought

Maybe they knew  
Life was fragile  
And crossed without looking

**Nightly Routine**  
Chase Robinson  
Poetry

Laying in bed  
Body still on side  
Trying to breathe  
In through the nose  
And out through the mouth  
Supposed to lower your heart rate  
While mattress shakes  
More and more  
Phantom earthquake every night  
What is wrong with me?

The mattress itself is still  
Flipping does nothing  
Sleeping as a starfish neither  
Can't sleep  
Thinking instead

There's a reason  
My greatest fear is boredom  
During the day I waste time  
Playing games, watching shows, reading books  
If I stop and think  
I'll remember who I was  
What I've done

Night time is slowly plucking out each nail  
Then having a person stomp  
On the freshly revealed  
Squishy flesh  
One by one

Gutural emptiness while remembering  
Past actions  
Afraid of being exposed  
For a person I no longer am

**Love in pixelated cubes**

Andrea Lius

Nonfiction

We share a four-story brick house with one whole floor for a library. Our bedroom has a floor-to-ceiling window overlooking our farm and the open water that surrounds it. Some days are stormy, but life's simple and we're happy. I make soups and bake pies, and he gifts me diamonds.

Then one day, he asked, "Will you slay a dragon with me?"

I never expected anyone to ask me that. Or how stupidly happy it made me.

In a world of pixelated cubes, I learned to accept his help. To feel safe instead of weak when I do. And that doing so doesn't threaten my independence or womanhood. I started saying "thank you" instead of "no, I got it" when we both knew that I definitely *don't* got it. So, I let him build me a two block-wide bridge, so I don't fall in lava. Or walk in front of me when we go out at night to hunt for monsters. Because he has quicker reflexes, at least when it comes to shooting arrows at skeletons.

I learned that it's okay for me to voice my needs. Like how each day, I prefer to complete a round of farming and selling my harvest before going on an adventure to chase after some hidden treasure or find the dragon portal. Sure, maybe that makes me a bit anal, but me nonetheless. It's also completely okay for him to ask if I'd go to hell with him after, so he won't get killed for the fourth time and lose all his levels and belongings. But even then, I can still say "eh, maybe tomorrow" without him getting upset with me.

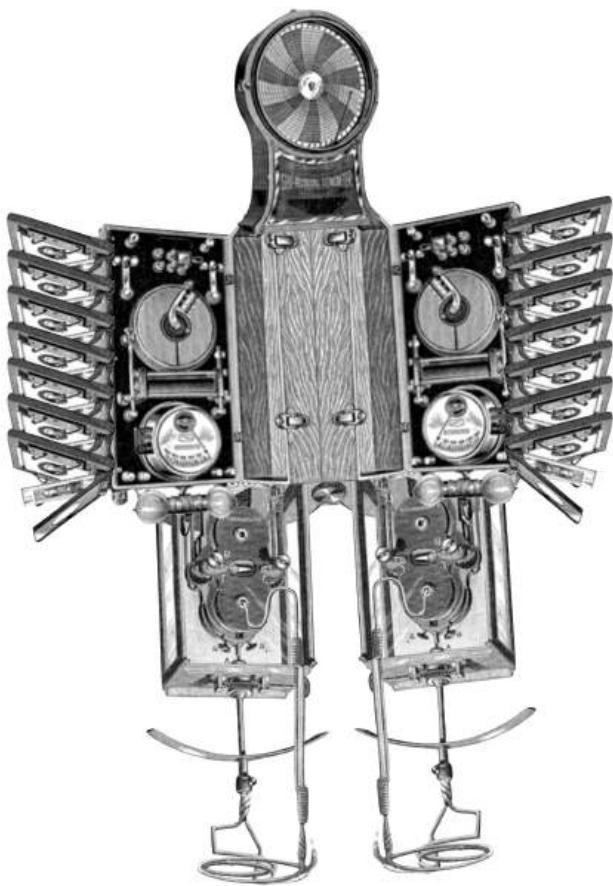
I learned to allow myself to indulge in things that make me happy, even when I knew they couldn't last.

Like his visits. Or the sight of a baby zombie riding a chicken. I let myself laugh for two minutes straight before he dealt it a fatal blow with his flaming sword because it's (quite literally) killing me.

As two stacks of blocks clad with diamond armors and straight faces, we've saved each other's lives countless times. We've waited patiently, side by side, for our baby turtle to hatch, *then* grow up. We've mourned losses that are equal parts sad and unexpected. Like the death of our beloved orange tabby, Oscat (no, that wasn't a typo), who was suffocated by a pumpkin that grew around his head while he was following me around our farm.

Life's a lot simpler in this world. But we like it here, at least in the three-quarters of each month when we're over a thousand miles apart. Because here, we get to sleep next to each other, there are no work dramas or complex family dynamics and the best way to keep scary things away is by sleeping through the night. Heaven may not exist here, but there's no one we'd rather venture through hell with than each other.

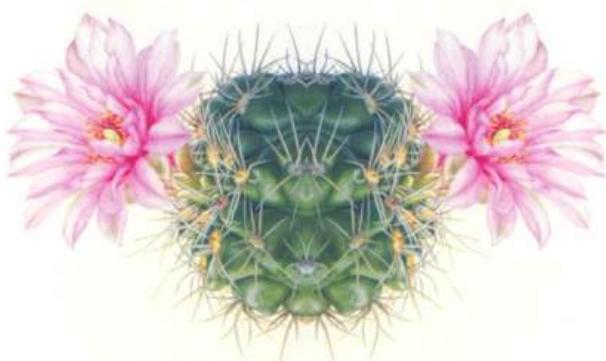
**How the Mirror Became Infinite**  
Bill Wolak  
Art



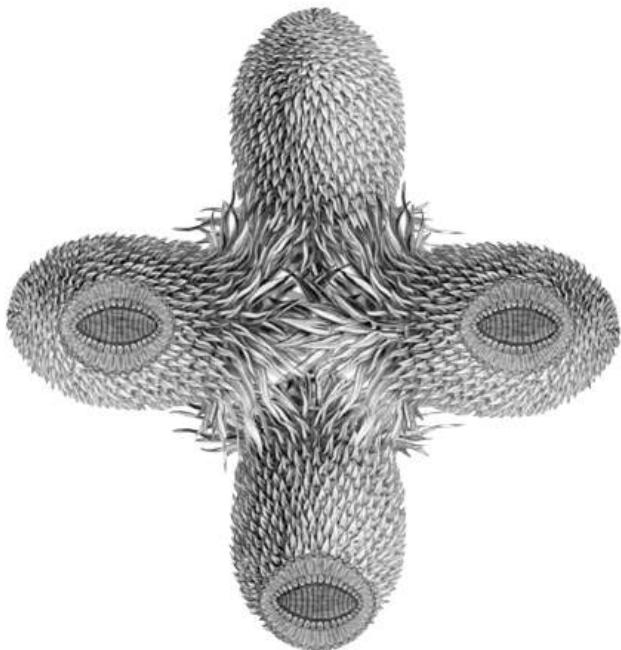
**Biting the Pillow**

Bill Wolak

Art



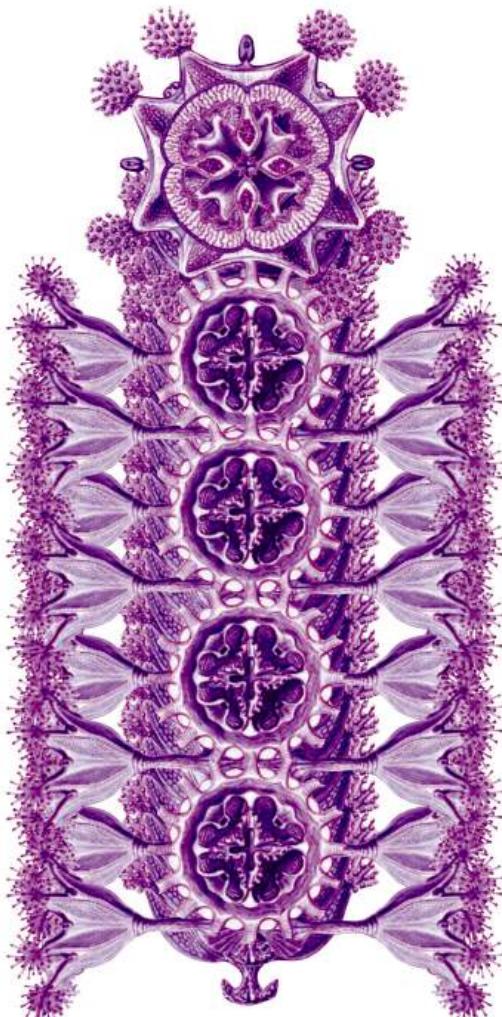
**Breathless Surrender**  
Bill Wolak  
Art



**The Enigma of Intrinsic Tenderness**

Bill Wolak

Art



**On The Loose**  
Kathryn Schowalter  
Poetry

It took too long  
to run away, escape  
our great divide.

Hazel eyes betrayal,  
A butt-boil, pain  
unavoidable, but  
not terminal.

The Goddess, Spirit  
of Wind directing my  
high plains escape.

The fragrance of  
choices heady  
and sweet and  
blooming like a  
raspberry sundae  
peony—creamy-pink.

Feeling free finally,  
feeling free and  
on the loose.

**Changes**  
Kathryn Schowalter  
Poetry

They came down gently  
like painted autumn leaves  
on a still day. Photos and  
paintings are gathered and  
wrapped, moved and stored  
along with other household  
items. Many are swept away  
to resale shops, summer's detritus  
hopefully enriching others.

A home now as bare as willow  
branches in winter, but soon,  
like trees in spring, there will be  
new paintings and photos  
gracing these walls.

Stripped of all the fluff, embracing  
uncertainty I amble down  
unfamiliar roads, adventuring  
into a vagabond life, searching  
for enough boredom to ignite  
creativity.

**Fragility of Legacy**

Kathryn Schowalter

Poetry

When my Uncle Quintin died  
his homestead was sold to  
a young family. Yesterday I  
drove past his former house.  
The trees he lovingly planted  
were cut down. The Lannon  
stone fence—removed. His  
prairie scraped clean.

In a short time no one  
will remember the field of  
black-eyed Susans, queen  
Ann's lace and fireweed that  
fed the bees and graced  
the eyes of passers-by.  
A monoculture now replaces  
the butterfly habitat. Moles  
and voles rousted, no prey  
for red-tailed hawks.

What was my uncle's home  
has been irrevocably changes.  
The beauty of his legacy, lost.  
Tend your garden, build your  
fences, plant your trees, all  
the while remember—this  
legacy, like Quintin,  
will not last.

**Hit and run**  
Louise Scoville  
Poetry

What if you  
walk all the way past that yard at the end of Front St.  
(that one with the tall grass and the  
garish mailbox) and toss  
your pack in the backseat  
as we drive down that  
long-hot-smack-talk road  
between the water and the condos  
up toward Petoskey.

You'll let me take you down past the drawbridge  
over the green harbor smelling like  
fish and bait and hot sugar strung  
on paper cones. And you'll feel heavy  
as you see the old ferry docking because you can  
hear the dragging of the rope.

If I promise that it was right here  
where I had given up on loving,  
would you pause for me?

When you make the right-hand turn  
past Four Mile Rd. you can still see the cherry trees,  
even in the dark.

**Burial**  
Louise Scoville  
Poetry

Drive back from Benzie,  
your bag heavy on my lap.  
I see you are red,  
your mouth open just a bit.  
I know; we are running late.

There are fifteen miles  
between the post and the lake.  
Light turning toward you,  
I watch the space behind your  
head pulse, full legs kicking mine.

Out of midnight field.  
Press full hands against my neck,  
then hack up the rest.  
I want you; thick dust in the  
drive, cold air in my blue dusk.

**Amtrak Wolverine**

Louise Scoville

Poetry

Bolting through the crossroads  
of the dark layered streets  
of Chicago. Bitter cold.  
The people are fawning over  
little Christmas booths on the  
corner—squinting noses  
and running blue hands through  
hair. I am coated in  
a fresh inked film—newly born.  
I am looking for your height,  
shoving through German  
tourists who are shorter  
than sand reeds and nosy middle schoolers  
buzzing as horse flies and I thought  
that I would be done with this a long time  
ago but here I am—a bleeding midwestern  
shape to my face,  
speaking your tone and whining about  
what this road meant  
six months ago. It is getting dark  
and I am told by a boy my age to turn  
back but I am walking and waltzing,  
they are all watching as I twirl  
through the space and hum it over and  
I am too tired to be this young. I am  
too old to know this now.

**THE HOLY ORDER OF COOKING**

Emily Black

Poetry

A lovely omelet pan, a dab of butter,  
two fresh farm eggs, room temperature  
and me.

I rummage the fridge and pantry for more  
ingredients and find a jar of roasted red  
peppers, a bit of fresh spinach left over

from yesterday's salad and some feta cheese  
crumbles with basil and tomato.  
With all ingredients measured into their

respective prep bowls, I don my apron,  
wield my spatula and begin the holy process.  
I raise the spatula like a baton

to conduct my symphony of morning,  
a symphony blending pimento-red,  
dark-balsam green, creamy yellow

and clear, airy white. Life, love, literature  
and music fill my omelet pan. House lights  
go low, there is a hush, the stage is illuminated.

Let the creation begin. Voila!

**BLACK-EYED BEAUTIES**

Emily Black  
Poetry

Rudbeckia crowd my garden  
in billowing clouds of yellow,  
school-bus yellow.

Their black eyes peer upward  
beseeching heaven to send them rain,  
followed by brilliant sunlight.

As supplicants, they really seem  
to know their way around prayer,  
unrelenting prayer not to be ignored.

They get what they want, and if not,  
they at least get my husband to water  
them with the hose.

Sunshine we cannot produce to satisfy  
their needs, but it does inevitably come  
for these flowers heaven smiles upon.

**The Bodega Was the Only Thing Left Standing**

Elizabeth Rosen

Fiction

It went like this: pounding on doors up and down the hallway, and screaming. Tendrils of black smoke curling under the front door and creeping across the floor, stinging our eyes, sticking to our lungs like iodine painted onto a wound. More screaming when we yanked open our doors to flee, some of us in our pajamas, some in boxer shorts, some of us empty-handed and some with their most precious possessions in their arms.

I had Angela in mine, still wiping sleep from her eyes, and my boyfriend Pete had the other baby, Mina, in his, wailing at the top of her little lungs at the commotion. Pushing our way into the smoke-filled stairwell, joining the screamers, the runners, heat on the soles of our bare feet where there should be no heat, dashing *downdowndown* the emergency stairs, squeezing past baby carriages/electric fans/plastic bags of garbage stored there for lack of space, and inside the walls a cinder-block moaning, a gingerbread snapping—but no fire alarm ringing like the landlord was supposed to provide—the sound following us down down the stairs, as we fled past exit doors to the floors below ours, more screeching people pouring into the stairwell, and me yelling *hurryhurryhurry*, one baby in my arms and the other in Pete’s behind me, bursting finally out onto the street, streaked in soot, panting, heaving, slapping at glowing embers landing on the blankets we used to cover ourselves, to cover our most precious things.

Only when I turned around once we were outside, with Pete four steps behind me, his tattooed arms wrapped around her blanketed form, I realized that it wasn’t Mina’s crying I was hearing. I mean, I *was* hearing it. I have been hearing it ever since. But I wasn’t

hearing it from there, and when I looked closely—still blinking hard against the blinding smoke, wiping tears to see clearly—I saw that Pete had Chloe, his pitbull puppy, in his arms, and what I thought was my baby's little soot-covered face twisted up in fear was really the dark furry face of that goddamn puppy.

When I realized it, I shoved Angela into Pete's arms and went racing back toward the building and the roaring brightness and the *FLAMESFLAMESFLAMES*, but the blast of heat that hit me as I tried to get my Mina could not be passed through or ignored, and there were hands on my arms, and my throat was raw, and eventually my eyes went dim.

And when I finally saw Pete weeks later trying to cash his unemployment check at the bodega where we use to buy formula for Mina, I came up behind him and stood in line, though I had no check to cash and there was no check that could ever even things, and waiting behind him, I considered the switchblade I had bought especially for if this moment ever happened and which I carried in my pocket where my fingers could stroke the coolness of it and which I dreamed could quench the heat of the fire that had taken Mina, and I tapped him on the shoulder quietly because I wanted him to know it was me who had done this, and he glanced around, and, seeing me there, started and stumbled back, knocking over and falling into a stand of snacks, the packs of flaming hot Cheetos and Dorito Dinamita exploding under his weight like a series of gunshots, while I stood over him screaming my daughter's name  
*MinaMinaMinaMinaMina* again and again.



## Contributor Bios

### Bill Abbott

Bill Abbott is a performance poet, professor, and cool guy (though his daughter may disagree). He lives on science fiction and video games. He hopes you're doing well and wishes you the best.

### Nikki Allen

Nikki Allen is the author of *Hotwire* (River Dog Press '21). Her work has appeared in *Muzzle Magazine*, *Gasconade Review*, *Nailed*, *Crash*, *Profane Journal* (Pushcart Prize nominee '14/'15) and *Encyclopedia Destructica* among others. She is a freelance editor & teaching assistant for the *Poems that Don't Suck* and *After the Ode* writing workshops. She believes in revolution and strong coffee. Find her on substack or at [honeydunce.org](https://honeydunce.org)

### Darlene Bester

Darlene Bester is a writer, cat lover, and fashion enthusiast from Minnesota. She draws most of her inspiration from nature and the change of seasons. She has been featured in *Bella Grace* magazine.

### Joe Bisicchia

Joe Bisicchia writes of our shared dynamic. An Honorable Mention recipient for the Fernando Rielo XXXII World Prize for Mystical Poetry, he has written four published collections of poetry. He also has composed hundreds of individual works that have been published in over one hundred publications. To see more of his work, visit [widewide.world](https://widewide.world).

**Emily Black**

Emily Black has had several professional careers, the most recent being in poetry writing. It seems that each step of her life has brought her to a new level of appreciation for past experiences. Emily wears Fire Engine Red Lipstick.

**Nicholas Bratcher**

Nicholas Bratcher is a poet and former broadcaster based in Phoenix, Arizona. While attending Northern Arizona University, he hosted a radio show, The Jazz Bookstore, where he shared original fiction and poetry between songs. He now writes and hosts a podcast, Greenwood and Company.

**Jodi Cadenhead**

A former reporter and editor, my writing has also been published in Salon. While raising three children, I've been heavily involved in leadership non-profit roles. The last time I wrote poetry was in high school. So many years later, it's a pleasure returning home to my first love.

**Sophia Carroll**

Sophia Carroll (she/they) is an analytical chemist and writer. Her work has appeared in SmokeLong Quarterly, Rust & Moth, and elsewhere. Find her on Twitter @torpor\_chamber.

**Meagan Chandler**

Meagan Chandler holds a bachelor's degree in creative writing from Baldwin Wallace University. She currently attends the Poetry MFA program at Bowling Green University. Her works have been published or are forthcoming in Everyday Fiction, Inscape, Allium, and The Ekphrastic Review. She placed as a finalist and

runner-up in the 2023 competitions for the Hollin's University Literary Festival.

#### Jaina Cipriano

Jaina Cipriano is an experiential designer, filmmaker and photographer exploring the emotional toll of religious and romantic entrapment. Her worlds communicate with our neglected inner child and are informed by explosive colors, elements of elevated play and the push/pull of light and dark. Jaina writes and directs award winning short films that wrestle with the complicated path of healing. Her second short film, 'Trauma Bond' is a dreamy, coming of age thriller that explores healing deep wounds with quick fixes, it took home the grand prize at the Lonely Seal International Film Festival. Jaina's photographic works forgoes digital manipulation, everything is created for the camera. She takes an immersive approach to working with models, approaching a shoot like a documentary photographer as her subject is let loose in a strange designed space. Working with Jaina is often described as cathartic and playful. Her photographic work has been shown internationally.

#### Carlin Corsino

Carlin is a poet, Army Veteran, and emergency physician. Much of his writing is a reflection of that work. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and the North Carolina Poet Laureate Award.

#### Eamon Costello

Eamon Costello is a 19-year-old writer born in Philadelphia and raised in Medford, Massachusetts. He is one of the editors-in-chief of The Columbia Review.

**Linda M. Crate**

Linda M. Crate (she/her) is a Pennsylvanian writer whose poetry, short stories, articles, and reviews have been published in a myriad of magazines both online and in print. She has twelve published chapbooks the latest being: Searching Stained Glass Windows For An Answer (Alien Buddha Publishing, December 2022). Linda has four full length poetry collections and a photography collection book. She is also the author of the novellas Mates (Alien Buddha Publishing, March 2022), Managing Magic (Alien Buddha Press, September 2022), and The Queen's Son (Alien Buddha Publishing, December 2023). Her first short story collection King Quinlin (Alien Buddha Publishing, March 2024) was published this spring. Linda's debut haiku collection in these ancient veins was published quite recently (Alien Buddha Publishing, May 2024).

**Trevor Cunnington**

Trevor Cunnington is a writer/artist/ who lives in Toronto. He has published poems in Carousel and two anthologies. As well, he has published photographs and a drawing in magazines such as Maisonneuve and Cerasus. He will have a poem featured on the front page of Open Arts Forum in August, and a poem appearing in Last Leaves in October. You can find him on instagram @trevorcunnington.

**Steve Denehan**

Steve Denehan recently discovered that by burying himself up to his ankles in the sand at the beach he can do the Smooth Criminal lean pretty well.

**Maggie DuBois**

Maggie DuBois is a Southern storyteller, poet, and photographer. Her work has appeared in Hobart Pulp, X-R-A-Y Magazine, Moon City Review, and elsewhere. Her memoir was selected as a semifinalist for the 2019 Pamet River Prize and she has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

**Salvatore Folisi**

Salvatore Folisi has been enchanted by the spell of words since he began to write creatively in high school. Over the years he has jotted down his thoughts and inklings as a way to fathom the majesty and mystery of the inner and out worlds we live in. He also loves to bang on drums, walk quietly through nature with senses attuned, and engage in deep, winding conversations that lead down dusky pathways into the midnight of the soul.

**Diane Funston**

Diane Funston is owned by two chihuahuas and a pit bull. They type up her submissions and catalog her numerous acceptances to journals and use the rejections as piddle pads. She has a small fruit orchard and grows her own vegetables and flowers.

**A. A. Gunther**

A. A. Gunther is a Manhattan legal writer by day and a Long Island poet by night. Her writing appears in publications like *Dappled Things*, *Ekstasis*, *The Friday Poem* and *ONE ART*, with more poetry forthcoming in *National Review* and elsewhere. She's always wanted to tell people to go buy her work at Barnes & Noble, so this is a real trip.

**Robert Harlow**

Robert Harlow resides in upstate NY because someone has to. Either that or he lost a bet. He is the author of *Places Near and Far* (Louisiana Literature, 2018), which, he believes, constantly occupies the top spot in Amazon's "Least Seller" list. His poems appear in *Poetry Northwest*, *RHINO Poetry*, *Tar River*, *The Midwest Quarterly*, and elsewhere. Or so he has been led to believe. He also plays the guitar. Another thing he would also like to believe.

**Sarah Horner**

Sarah Horner is a writer and recent graduate of the University of Minnesota. Her poetry and fiction have been published in places such as *Redivider*, *Lunch Ticket*, and *The Minnesota Review*. She lives in Minneapolis with her cat Goose.

**Stephen Kampa**

Stephen Kampa is the author of four books, a session musician on half a dozen albums, a happy husband, and the caretaker of the sweetest of all possible hounds. He lives and works in Florida but is open to suggestions.

**Ryan Keating**

Ryan Keating is a writer, pastor, sommelier, and coffee roaster on the island of Cyprus. He takes care of a dozen neighborhood cats and doesn't know how to crochet.

**James King**

James King is a poet from New Hampshire. His poems appear in *The Shore*, *Bear Review*, *Exposition Review*, *Anti-Heroin Chic*, *Variant Lit*, and others. He is the recipient of the 2020 Academy of American Poets College Prize and a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee.

**Kristan LaVietes**

If Kristan LaVietes could shrink teeny tiny, she would live in a sand castle and make a slippy slide out of seaweed and invite hermit crabs to play on it with her. It would probably be a very short life.

**Andrea Lius**

Andrea Lius is a scientist and writer who splits her time between Washington and California. Her words have appeared on The New York Times and upcoming in The Mersey Review. She spends most of her spare time solving crossword puzzles or playing Minecraft with her partner. She's currently trying to teach her mischievous grey tabby how to read.

**Nuala McEvoy**

Nuala McEvoy taught herself to paint in lockdown at the ripe age of fifty. In 2024 her work was accepted for publication in over 40 literary reviews. She has had two exhibitions in Germany and in 2025 she will have an exhibition in London. She loves writing poetry and learning new languages.

**Patrick McEvoy**

Patrick McEvoy relishes being an intronaut while finding inner and outer worlds to explore. Whether writing stories that might get published (recently Apricity Press) or performed (Secret Theater), he is captivated by all genres, loves different mediums of art. He is drawn to stories and visuals, from Spidey to Virginia Woolf, from Dali to Nancy Pan.

**Matt McGee**

MATT McGEE writes in the Los Angeles area. In 2023 his work appeared in Four Feathers, Gnashing Teeth and The NonBinary Review. When not typing he drives around in rented cars and plays goalie in local hockey leagues.

**Patrick Meeds**

Patrick Meeds lives in Syracuse, NY and studies writing at the Syracuse YMCA's Downtown Writer's Center. He has been previously published in Stone Canoe literary journal, the New Ohio Review, Tupelo Quarterly, the Atticus Review, Whiskey Island, Guernica, The Pinch, and Nine Mile Review among others.

**Victoria Melekian**

Victoria Melekian collects words, rocks, and glass doorknobs. She gardens, makes quilts, and pretends to practice piano which means playing her favorites over and over. Victoria lives with her husband in Carlsbad, California where the weather is almost always perfect.

**Ophelia Monet**

Ophelia Monet (she/her) is a high school educator, mother, and storm chaser (yes, really), living in the suburbs of Cincinnati with her husband and their son. She coaches archery and enjoys reading fantasy novels, and can often be found wandering barefoot through forests.

### Victoria Mullen

Victoria Mullen is a frustrated time traveler and a dual US-Greek citizen. She enjoys writing, photography, thunderstorms in summertime, a most excellent cup of coffee, and happy puppies and kittens. She attributes her creative passions to her Greek heritage and the Nine Muses, who played, sang, danced, and inspired others to do the same. See her photography in upcoming issues of 'Beyond Words', 'The Word's Faire' (THE FEAST print publication), 'Cool Beans Lit', 'Chariot Press Literary Journal', and on her website at [catboycafe.com](http://catboycafe.com). Rumor has it that she is moving to Spain.

### Olivia Pelaez

Olivia Pelaez is an American comic book artist. She graduated from the School of Visual Arts with a degree in Cartooning. Her work includes short comics published by DAPShow, SpazDog Press, Space Between Entertainment, Oneshi Press, and more. She was the main artist on the Kitchen Witch series written by Steve Orlando, published by 215 Ink and The Little Girl series written by Pat Shand, published by Devil's Due Comics. She has one daughter and resides in NJ.

### Horia Alexandru Pop

He was born in Romania 40 years ago. He lives in France. He writes and tries to sell one of his movie scripts to producers. In the meantime, he goes out and shoots peculiar, eerie things he sees in the streets, in the wild, or just around the corner.

**Sai Pradhan**

Sai Pradhan is a Hong Kong based Indian American writer and artist. Her writing has been published in *The Iowa Review*, *The Prairie Schooner*, *JMWW*, *YOLO Journal*, *ANMLY.org*, *Ligeia*, *Litro UK*, *Litro USA*, *Sublunary Review*, *Vagabond City Lit*, *Sleepingfish*, *Moss Puppy*, *South China Morning Post's Style*, *Hong Kong Free Press* (opinion column), and *NB*.

**Rushika G. Ramani**

Rushika G. Ramani, a 26-year-old immigrant from India, is a songwriting major at Berklee College of Music, currently residing in Los Angeles. Her journey from India to the vibrant cultural landscapes of LA enriches her songwriting and poetry, allowing her to blend the rich musical heritages of both worlds. Her work explores the profound connections between music and words, crafting stories that resonate deeply across different cultures and reflect their commitment to artistic expression.

**Michael C. Roberts**

Michael C. Roberts currently lives in Phoenix after an academic career, mainly at the University of Kansas where he published psychological articles, chapters, and books. Now endeavoring to be different and creative, he has returned to photography, a familial avocation. He incorporates both digital photography and retro-analogue film formats. His photographic book of film photographs is available on Amazon: "Imaging the World with Plastic Cameras: Diana and Holga."

**Chase Robinson**

Chase Robinson is currently a law student. He began writing poetry in college. He has published a poem in the student literary journal *Coelacanth*.

**Elizabeth Rosen**

I am a former Nickelodeon TV writer and a current short story writer with a love of YouTube ghost-hunting shows. Color-wise, I'm an Autumn. Music-wise, I'm an MTV-baby. I am a native New Orleanian, and a transplant to small-town Pennsylvania. I miss my Gulf oysters and etouffee, but have grown appreciative of snow and colorful scarves. Learn more at [www.thewritelifeliz.com](http://www.thewritelifeliz.com).

**Kathryn Schowalter**

Kathryn is a retired middle school special education teacher. She's spending this second childhood living in an RV to limit housework, so she can spend more time writing poetry, short stories and marketing a novel. She travels with a cat (Acid Burn) and rescue Irish wolfhound (Seamus). She enjoys photography and painting, as well. Should you see a Coachman RV with the plate "C MY USA," stop in and say "Hi".

**Louise Scoville**

Louise Scoville is from Ann Arbor, Michigan. She is a MFA candidate at the University of North Carolina Greensboro, studying fiction. She has spent parts of life as a summer camp asst. director, receptionist, and event planner.

**Komal Sharma**

I am a self-taught artist and done a Master's in Architecture at the University of Newcastle. My mural has been featured in ArchDaily, and I am excited to announce that I will be showcasing my work in a solo exhibition at Ladder Art Space Gallery in Kew, Melbourne. Originally from Chandigarh, I have lived in various regions of India due to my father's service in the Indian Air Force. The artist statement for the art pieces: Welcome to "Animals in the Now" an exploration of present moment through the animals. You might find them in your own home, in your neighbour's yard, or across the street, quietly observing you in search of your attention. As we live in a whirlwind of thoughts and distractions, our furry friends remain steadfast, fully engaged with their surroundings. When they gaze at the world, they invite us to pause, breathe, and truly connect.

**Emma Galloway Stephens**

Emma Galloway Stephens is a neurodivergent poet and professor from the Appalachian foothills in South Carolina. Her best poems arrive after long hikes and hours of listening to folk music. She dreams of earning her PhD in gothic literature and then disappearing forever into the Blue Ridge Mountains.

**Laurel Streed**

Laurel Streed is a neurodivergent artist, writer, and desert dweller who enjoys creating strange twists on reality with deliciously descriptive prose. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with a BA in English, placed 3rd in *Flash Fiction Magazine*'s 2024 short story contest, and currently lives in Phoenix, AZ with her two black cats.

**Edward Micahel Supranowicz**

Edward Michael Supranowicz is the grandson of Irish and Russian/Ukrainian immigrants. He grew up on a small farm in Appalachia. He has a grad background in painting and printmaking. Some of his artwork has recently or will soon appear in Fish Food, Streetlight, Another Chicago Magazine, Door Is A Jar, The Phoenix, and The Harvard Advocate. Edward is also a published poet who has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize multiple times.

**Arlene Tribbia**

Arlene Tribbia is a writer and artist. She writes poetry and fiction and makes portraits about otherworldly beings because she's fond of discovering characters who work to solve the larger cosmic riddles of the universe. Website: <http://arlenetribbia.com/wp/bio/>

**Antonios Tsoulfas**

Antonios Tsoulfas is a writer first and foremost. When he is not writing he can be found spending time with the people he loves and working out. He's also a sucker for a good TV show or movie.

**Cat Winters**

Cat Winters (she/her) is an award-winning author of seven novels and a picture book biography. She returned to her childhood love of writing poetry while undergoing cancer treatments at the beginning of the pandemic—a transformative experience. She can be found working in the theaters of Portland, Oregon, or wandering the woods near her Pacific Northwest home.

**Bill Wolak**

Bill Wolak has just published his eighteenth book of poetry entitled *All the Wind's Unfinished Kisses* with Ekstasis Editions. His collages and photographs have appeared as cover art for such magazines as *Phoebe*, *Harbinger Asylum*, *Baldhip Magazine*, and *Barfly Poetry Magazine*.

**Door Is A Jar Staff Bios****Maxwell Bauman****OWNER/ EDITOR-IN-CHIEF / ART DIRECTOR**

Maxwell studied Creative Writing at Wilkes University and earned his M.A. in Fiction and M.F.A in Publishing. He founded Door Is A Jar Literary Magazine in 2015. He is a contributor to Chicken Soup for the Soul. His Lego art has shown in exhibitions including at the 81 Leonard Gallery and the Dr. Bernard Heller Museum. Website: [maxwellbauman.com](http://maxwellbauman.com)

**Corinne Alice Flynn, Ph. D.****POETRY / DRAMA EDITOR**

Corinne Alice Flynn is the Writing Center Coordinator at the University of Scranton. Aside from being the Poetry and Drama Editor for Door Is A Jar, she's written for each of the Night Bazaar anthologies published by Northampton House Press. She had her play "14 Symptoms" produced at the Brick Theater's Game Play Festival back in 2014. She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Composition and Applied Linguistics at Indiana University of Pennsylvania

**Dominique Isaac Grate****FICTION / NONFICTION EDITOR**

Dominique Isaac Grate obtained his B.A. from the University of South Carolina, majoring in African-American Studies with a minor in History. A 2013 inductee into the National Academy of Young Preachers, Rev. Grate studied at Wake Forest University School of Divinity, and he has pastored three congregations; Historic Trinity AME Church in Manning, SC, New Mt. Zion AME Church in Lexington, SC, and Calvary AME Church in Batesburg-Leesville. In 2023, Rev. Grate transitioned to higher education, where he serves as the Assistant Vice President for Development at Jarvis Christian University in Hawkins, TX.



## **Submission Guidelines**

Door Is A Jar Literary Magazine is looking to publish well-crafted poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama, artwork, and book reviews.

Please read over our submission guidelines carefully.

Our publication steers away from academic writing and publishes short, conversational works that use familiar language. Each new issue features artists and writers and works that are accessible for all readers.

### **Submit all work in Times New Roman font size 11**

We only accept new, unpublished work. If you have posted something to your website or social media, this counts as being published.

For book reviews, please include the title, publisher, year published, and ISBN.

Please provide your name as you would like published, email, mailing address, and a fun 3-sentence bio. (We're not as interested in how many degrees you have, or how widely you've been published. Instead, we want to hear about the real you. We want to know about the little things that spur you along.) Contributors can submit to multiple categories; however, only submit once to each category until you have received our decision about your piece.

**Do not send in writing or art that was created using Artificial Intelligence. Submitting work generated by A.I. technology will be considered as plagiarism.**

You will receive an acceptance or rejection letter from our editorial staff within 6 months from the day of your submission.

We accept simultaneous submissions; however, please notify us immediately if your work is accepted elsewhere. If accepted, please withdraw the piece from other publications.

We reserve first initial publishing rights, and the rights reprint right to use quotes or pieces for promotional use. We do not pay contributors at this time, but we will send out a contributor copy.

Please note that submissions that exceed word counts or maximum amount of material will be disqualified from consideration.

Submissions are only accepted through our website. Any submissions sent directly to our email will be deleted without response.

For the complete and most up-to-date guidelines on how to submit to our magazine visit  
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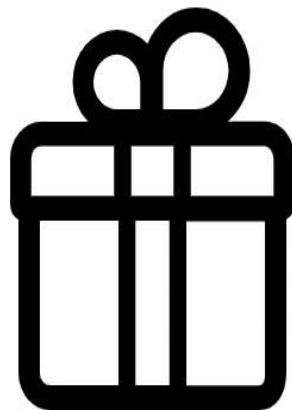
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