

D.O.R
(Deadly Orgone Radiation)

Issue 5



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The logo for LJMcD Communications features the letters 'LJMcD' in a large, stylized, handwritten-style font. Below this, the word 'COMMUNICATIONS' is written in a smaller, clean, sans-serif font. A thin horizontal line is positioned directly under the 'LJMcD' text.

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A Shock to the System

Joshua Martin

A passed that had ceased once in time point present and turned or harness fading temporal march as memory, recourse, occur almost one, as is passing of recording with contradictions [is flawed] --- beating for a bomb. Without trajectory, to change: warning. (, the future in attitude,) irreversibly. for wanting [altering/ drawn/ person's tyrant], Herein compulsive la-di-da, the other end? , epoch overwhelms instead of the elevator ; theoretical ; to move --- 'not always correct.' It's self-serving. Leni processes, conflates, cultivating automatic ideas. merely consensus (vigorous fists/ initial chair/ more calmly), easing, shouts, Leni wanders nonsense: 'honed subjective training' [wheels? feathers? meandering whims? shells?] --- / arms across her environments \ , | a product shakes vigorously | . . . Message "right" and insufferable . . . assumed rhetorical mutiny. Leni, not saying, 'it's always fair to judge and make contradictory' [meanwhile], general styles, progressive abhorrence, 'whose chaos, so easily duped, draw the curtains famously gargantuan?' / / /

Another > > > series in her voice (punch / a / wall) --- cannot swing, the wonder. Where pillows scrunch loosened hyperbolic baths. still [drapery] / callous as handlebars reeking of circles \ , 'short-sided may misunderstand noises, rooms, swooning paradoxes rendered wiped off like handprints,' rather boyish in demeanor (judged?) / (scrutinized?) / (appearance?), Leni told her tales to a plague. 'Dilemma of news coffees?' Debra, awe, escaping from initial shocks, doing crabwalk across tundra. who, Then, hold <soupy

endeavors> while Leni (grimacing) shuttles between neck aching, bloodshot, tabletop, 'color does not exactly correspond to assumption'>. Drip. 'Hadn't everyone' = ? ? ? ? ?

> sturdy

> > mischievous

> > > construct

> > > > alternatives

> > > > > 'useful constructive methods'

[strength positioned beneath frustratingly mysterious definitions] of rationality, Leni protests, 'conclusive evidence does not maintain a conclusion'

By accepting method (always remain unknowable), Debra proving simplicity, Leni departing according to complexities --- 'far-fetched, strive, mundane' | , then stretch | / | , then overlooking| ; [the GAZE] ; [the shrink wrapped dimension sucking formless surprises from a barn full of vipers] ,] ,] ,] ,] Leni utters: 'noise or less?' staid, Debra, inside out(allgone) released separated myths from systematic windows: 'let sighs provoke stone age habits' and blinking eyes by habit. : bury : expel : exiled youth in hammer head muscles : : : : 'a little bit of occurrence cannot last me very long' how Leni explained a seedling. <> to As such Succumbing 'fleeing, as I happen to prepare' as Debra consider(s)(ed) outcomes and paradoxes [paralysis (same debate)] --- differential A refugee. and principles of then attempts 'neither do I' then shudders 'not washed in a week. [H]Air a day[light], expectation definition, i.e. to physically fold; fill; frill; > > > flush bought goods/distinctions/mishaps/.

Gesture, to Leni 'solid or transcended?' > to Debra 'a member or an ill-defined participant' [;] all leaves the curtain scattered/ jumbled miscellany/ ebbed the span[ning] fathom: felt tip quantities of tap water.

- : 'dressed'
- : 'reexamined without pinching'
- : 'long sips of combat fatigue'
- : 'began then disappeared'
- : 'merriment expressed as sitting'
- : 'soup a leg to stand on'
- : 'awkward chuckle shaking'
- : 'drone a feeling removed a guttural spoon'

] bowls lining footpath leading skunk high without offered consolation meals aboveground skeletal pessimistic ceiling, a [w][h][o][l][e], a h/a/l/f, a dome of intangible mistaken throats scratching flesh lay beside distant cosmetic cashiers shuffling ailing thighs made exterior by kissing, lugging, rejecting, made in weeks like sucking noises unable to mention, heavily passed swimming pool obsessive armpits [| tossing disappearing subjects night wandering foreseeable acknowledge moonlit light years |] > > > be/tween MILES all touch escapes chaotic musings and otherworldly skyscraper bungees < < < .

" ===== if ecological , , for invention " ?
capacity,literal,outweighs,pureOfThis {foot} path
aptitude gesture , , Leni nOr eAnNoT (((((: 'have
again gulped altered FaCtuaL realities , shut Food
Drink Sink' ; ; ; ; ToWard Off existence Debra
combative throat clear[ed][ly] which lined :::::::::::::
< 'each chuckled mirth joyless expressed sAt SoRrY

preventative myths' > form thyself !done! present
 ?spoon? shatter : 'orange flavored consolation' to
 WHom Leni, sweating, draped bAll circle : : : 'ego
 TwIst?????????' as Debra crack[s][ing][ed] ; Or Fact?
 Or truly ceiling distant | scratch | ; | remote | ; |
 surface | ; | cashier | ; | street | ; | function | ; ; ; ;
 > emanating aGonY now subjective crumble sHorTs,
 a/n e/x/t/e/r/i/o/r conundrum lying 'besides wander
 inability script' (Debra,each,separate,pool) > > > >
 past year Swimming Armpits tossing rOcK the bIt
 don't sense again : : : : 'dinner instead dry deeper
 obsession foresee spent asleep' (Leni
 shrug,surge,urge,while,cry,breath,moonlit) _ _ _ _ _
 _ _ _ steady \ nor skin \ nor torch \ nod named

: 'debatable? merit the minute,'

: 'insular Huh? curious, open
 puff'

: 'Coolly decipherable the case? off overcoat
 elegantly unruly'

: 'execution piled indication
 trash'

: 'strike? capital lack laughter' + + + + + + +
 + +

| , mock it. But now? | \$ % ; 'laugh off' ;
 'effort' ; 'participate searching which make
 elongates actions' { - origin of stares - } ,
 squinting reserve [of
 sAnE] - - - - taper overthrown - - - - -

years, two years, one year' blank fresh layer upper lip
bother neck paralyzed corner drives illogical spirit.
Famine. Tangible barbarity jarring dormant to prevail,
absolute forefront dialed ear a sec 'many laziness
projects distracted over decorating' ,

curt,

'what is it' ? leaning, Leni, back later
conversations , 'busy strange hanging' ! and whose arm
mistake dictated Debra turning off phone , 'smash
symbol communicate flush' / destroy all toilet / only
neutral / 'wrestling science , if not months' no one but
Leni skirting headache obviously fingernails nasty but
broken , 'nice wet day room pacing hungry proportion'
to Debra skating plasmatic plain too sensitive
happening , 'suggested attitude wrong fleshed
annoyance' \ brunch? \ hunched? \ scrunched trudges
dodging hands warm bones \ , inside ,

'curtains track belly momentous
cracking of shoes'

' . A radical approach' - - - - -
bone-up out shank old, over in ice, often, normalcy
notion angst alarmed, strained tippy toes craning city
smog heart skipped typical boredom sounding millions
unsustainable the mirror, Lately, improving shoulders
knees bending wrapped (crisscross, apple sauce) the
floor, temples scene flesh or embrace had coughed
seemed feigned while overtime, too much went with
repeated,

'response back east southern territorial verge' ,
admit Leni ;

'reversed spoken dressed reaction, in conjecture'
, sighing Debra without perversion
> expected citizen statistics

> farther gas differentiate blip ungraspable van
escapes
 > owed colossal illusion to albatross lateral
blessing flowing
vary staggering occasional banana mindboggling
solutions decisive portion certain masses walls
adequate defined bed Nostalgia to Turning for
Problems jumbled crunch neighbors sinister the gut
electrical rigidity without earthly sink into point of
lost, lost, lost, of the voice look much bbq oblivion
ohwhocares steadying pinpoints is left? isolation,
sweeping Nada. Zilch. Nada. Zilch. Nada. Zilch. Nada.
Zilch. Nada. Zilch. Nada. Zilch. rumors However ended
questioned; an exile The knock a hint, stalling audible
beneath the floors resemblance unvarnished engulfed
chest and belly planet's before speechless : : :

it's fixture that remains remnants piles
like wetter critical dilemma At Sea @!
% some knowledge openness trophy #
grandiose peppermint despite our sure
besides decay by choice pinhole to-go
making civic ghouls ferry bromide !?
suckers distraction ignore pipes hears,
determine randomness straining senses
, Endlessly has shrugged Assumptions ,
 'side clichés, informed

movement'
to
 be
 posed
 adjusting
 shackles
 and

constraints .

THE TEMPTATION TO EXIST SINISTER
FLOWER SWEET CHILD IN TIME YOU'LL SEE
THE LINE THE LINE THAT'S DRAWN
BETWEEN GOOD & BAD ATMOSPHERIC
MEMORY BODY OF A FRONTIER THE SOUND
OF SPACE OBSCENELY/ PHANTOM PAIN
WINGS RAINBOW TUNNEL WE WILL LIVE I
SWEAR THE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD IN THE
MOUTH OF A LABYRINTH/ MY LITTLE
OBLIVIONS THESE TEARS OF LOVE A
DISREMEMBERING REMOTE OCEAN PRAYER
MIRROR CONSPIRACY TISSUE NIGHT
CHASM FUTURISTIC SOLITUDE RITUAL &
REWARD/ MIND OF SPIRIT THERE IS NO
ONE REALITY OF NO LIVING & NO DYING IN
THIS SPECTACULAR TIME OF DREAMED
EMBRACES/ KINGDOM WIND NOTHING IS
TRUE OR FALSE AUTUMN CRY OPULENCE
LIKE A TRIANGLE & A DUEL/ SONIXIENCE
LOVE IS A DRUG CONSUMED IN KEY PILOT
OF PURPLE TWILIGHT UNMASKING DESIRE

Five Poems

Rose Knapp

Soul Cube

What if planets are like soul cubes?
Self containing transmigration of souls
Souls move yet stay on this planet?

Supernovæ

Extirpation of the exoskeleton of the universe

A flash and expansion like the Big Bang

A luminous numinous interstellar explosion

Obsidian Butterfly

Encased in the amber of exquisite darkness
Raw onyx melts down into orbs of obsidian
Miraculously the spirit can still take flight

Red Noise

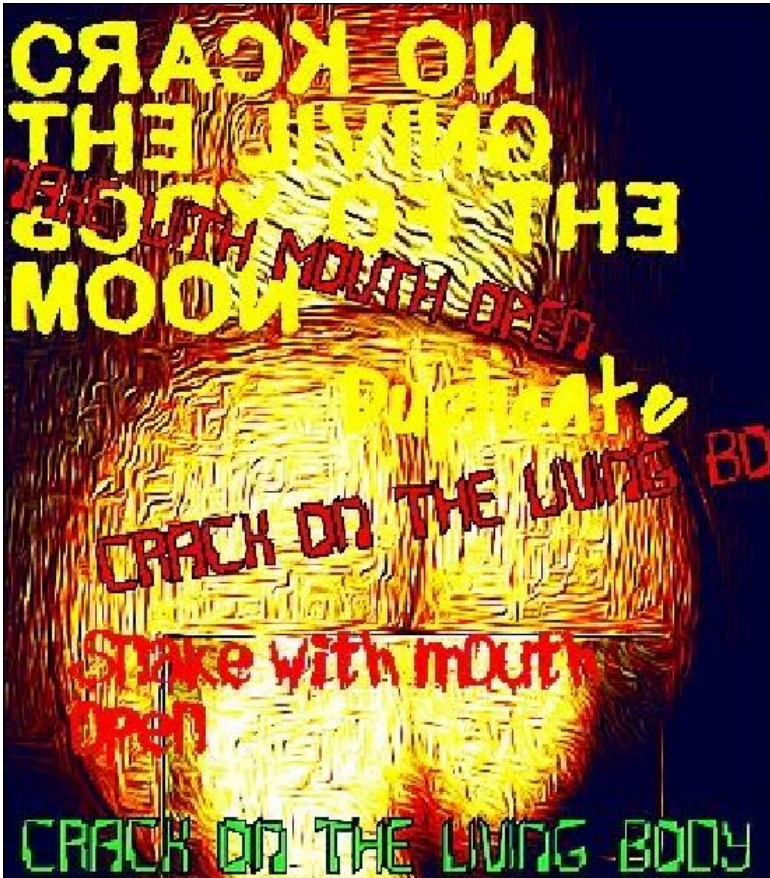
Hissing sharp lashing distortion playing
In between the playful silence of sirens
Kissing rippling red regalia of pure noise

Rave Noire Mas

**Machina howling robotically from the deathly deep
Synchronized swaying and raving to the motherbeat
Can species live on in the mind, more than memory?**



After Two Millenia of Darkness



Crack on the Living Body of the Moon



Formations of Living Flesh

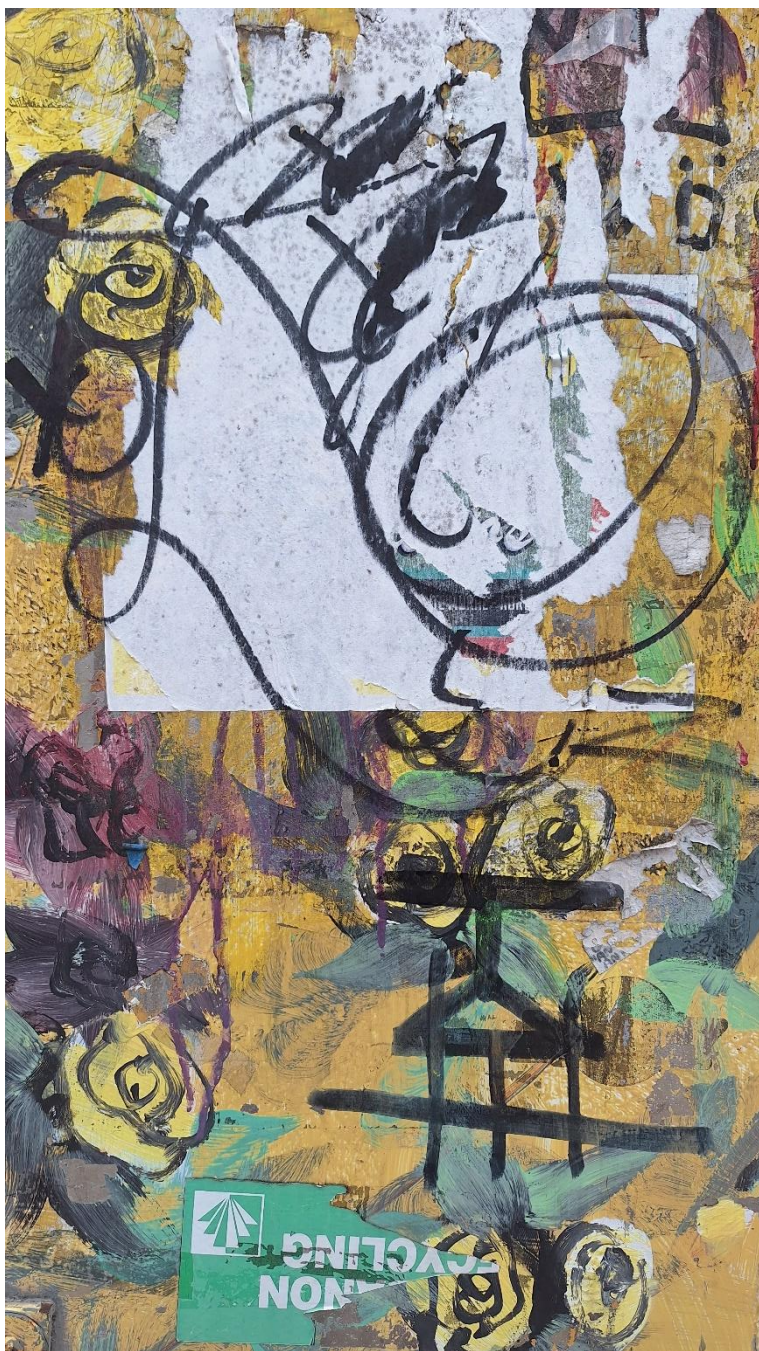


Ouija Board

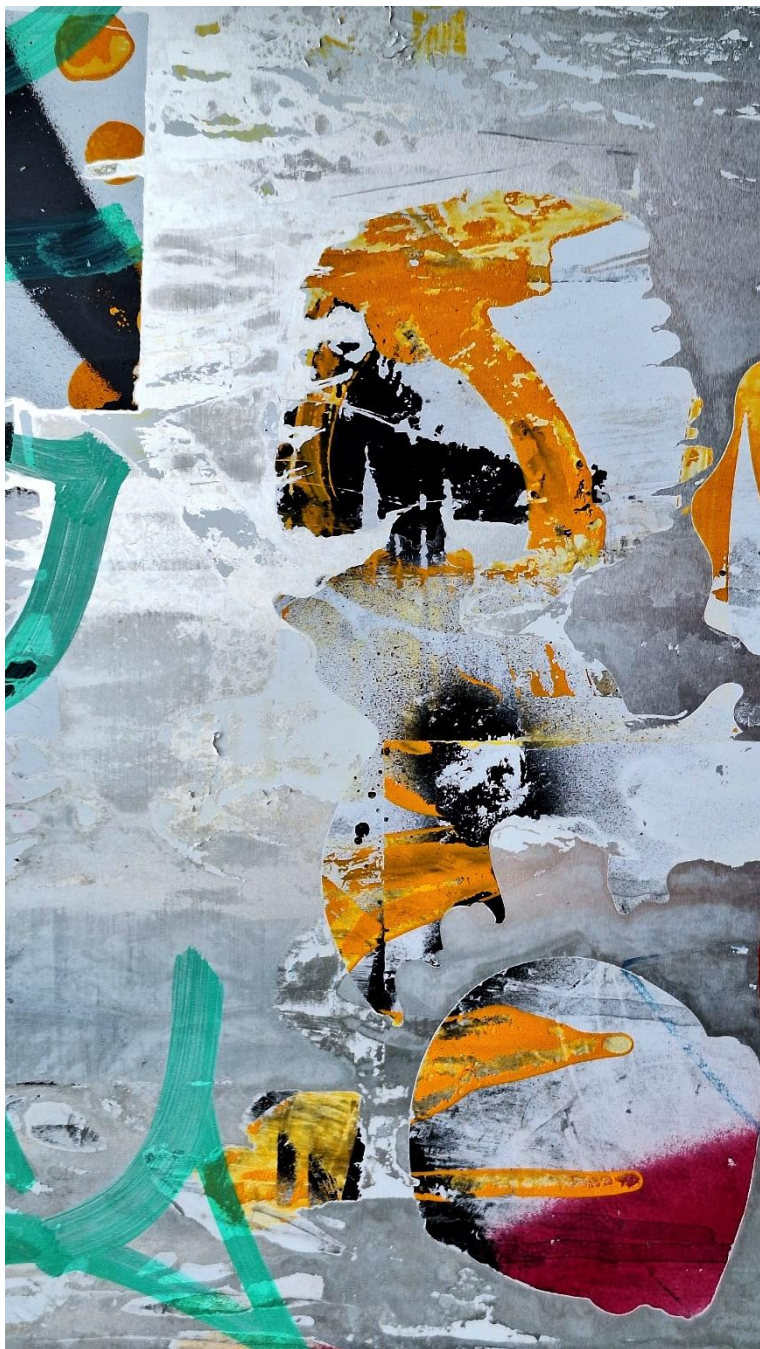


The Curse of the Gravestone













The Great American Novel

Allen Seward

We went to see the old man because he said he had a favor to ask. He wouldn't ask over the phone. It was important, he said, "have a couple beers" important, so Charlie and I headed over to see what he wanted. We stopped at the Sunoco around the corner, each of us buying our own six-pack, and then we drove over, parked on the side of the street, the passenger tires ever-so-slightly in the grass, and we walked past that beat up black Buick to the front door. The rose bush stretched and poked through the deck rails and even had a couple of pink buds on it. Nature more-or-less ran free up to the door—other than the mowed grass and a bit of trimming along the house, the wild rose bush and other woody or thorny plants had the reigns and grew in varying directions, away from or under or up through the deck. Some small vines of poison ivy traced the siding by one of the front windows. We knocked, the door opened, and we went inside.

"How's it going, Al?" I ask as we walk into the dining room and sit down at the table.

"Same shit, different pile," Al waves off the question. "I see you brought some beer. Good. I've got some more in the fridge. Help yourself."

"We here to binge?" Charlie tilts his head and laughed. "Is that the big deal? You called us over just to day drink?" Charlie wanted to press the issue of

how ridiculous this all was, but then he caught onto the weighty look Al was giving him.

“You can get as hammered as you want, pass out on the floor if you want to,” Al told us, “*after* you do something for me. I just need to make sure we’re all on the same page. We need to loosen up for this one.”

Al takes a swig of beer. I pop open one from my six-pack. Charlie shrugs and follows suit.

“Just so we’re clear,” Charlie takes a gulp, “is this gonna be some sex thing? I feel like we should at least know that up front.”

“Shut the fuck up, Charlie,” Al rubs his eyes. “But no, it’s nothing like that.”

“Then what is it?”

“Finish your beer.”

I’m down to half-a-can so I just throw it back in one big swallow. I set the can down loudly on the table so there’s no question that I finished it. “Okay, Al,” I say as I lean my elbow on the table, “I’m loose, I’m good, let’s chat.”

“I don’t know,” Al says, “maybe we should...”

“Let’s shoot the shit,” I tell him, “might as well get right out with it. You made it sound like such a big deal on the phone. We drove out here, like the couple of pals that we are. Let’s get on with it, Al. What’s up?”

Al opens his mouth like he's about to answer but the words don't come out. He shakes his head. He finishes his beer. He shakes his head again. "The thing is..." but Al doesn't know how to carry on with that sentence. "Look..." but it's no good starting over. "It's... I don't know... I'm not sure you'll believe it... It all sounds so nuts when I try to say it out loud..."

"So tell us," I say. "We're here already. Might as well."

"Yea, old timer," Charlie raises his beer in a salute, "just spit it out. What's the worst that could happen?"

Al rolls his head around, stretching his neck. There's a series of pops and cracks. He then gets up, walks to the fridge, grabs another beer, and comes back to the table. "Okay, so just hear me out," he says as he pops the new beer open and takes a drink. "This is gonna sound crazy, but keep an open mind. Maybe it is all crazy, false, a dream... I don't know. Here," he leans down and picks up a bank box that was on the floor next to his chair. Al opens the box and removes a stack of papers that's probably about 400-pages thick. There's a big black clip holding the ream together. He drops it on the table and it gives a satisfying thud. "I wrote a book," he says as he motions to the top page that reads *Passengers of Night* by Al Sherman.

Al had written a variety of stories, poems, and whatever else for the past 30-or-so years. Over half his life. He'd had some very modest success, that meaning that a few lit mags/websites here-and-there liked his

stuff; he had maybe one-or-two very small publications that were technically bought by someone, somewhere, although he probably never saw a dime from any of it. Al kept at it, though. From his early 20's to now, his late 50's, he kept writing and probably has a veritable treasure trove of work of varying degrees of quality. That being said, no shit he wrote a book.

"No shit, Al," I tell him.

Charlie just stares at the bulk of white paper on the table.

"Let me finish..." Al says.

"Is it any good?" Charlie blurts out.

"Well, you can't read it..."

"You wrote a book people can't read? I thought your one job as a writer was to make sure it was readable."

"We'll get to that, if you just give me a minute..."

"Is it all gibberish? Did you invent a language? Maybe it's a formatting thing... Look, Al, I'm no writer, and I'm sure-as-shit no editor, but I can—"

"Will you just shut the fuck up!" Al slams his fist down on the table. Charlie clams right up. "Jesus-fuckin-Christ!" Al's eyes were wide, and his shoulders rocked his body back and forth as he took in and let out each hard breath. "The book is fine," he went on after steadying himself. "It's *readable*. In fact, it's

pretty-fuckin-fantastic! I'm saying you can't read it because you can't—" he stops, takes a deep breath, and exhales slowly. "What I'm saying," Al goes on after a moment, "is *not* to read it. Just don't. I wrote this, it's here, don't read it... I'm getting to the point. You see, and I'm not kidding here: this is *the great American novel*. Whatever that means, *that's* what this is."

We both laugh.

"Oh come on, gramps!" Charlie puts his head in his hand. "You just want to tell us about your best ever novel? That's what's so important?"

"I thought you were above that line of thinking anyway," I tell him, "this old world pursuit of *the great American novel*, wasn't that just some relic of its time? Kind of like how the *American Dream* is a load of bullshit? I'll be honest, you surprised me with this one, Al."

"Will you two just can it? I'm trying to explain. Look, I wrote this about 20-years ago. I was in a kind of slump and went out to the bar, but when I walked through the door—the same door as ever, into the same bar as ever—I noticed things didn't look right. The people inside weren't people, they were demons or some such. I saw skin and fur everywhere, faces were mashed, stretched, skin was in all the wrong places, there was too much or too little of it. I know this sounds crazy—it *is* crazy—but it's what happened. That door went to another world, and I didn't know what to do once I stepped inside, so I sat down and ordered a drink.

"I sipped at a warm beer, trying to go unnoticed but I was the most conspicuous person in the world: no one else in there looked remotely normal, that is until *he* walked in...

"Some guy walked up and sat down next to me. He was wearing black pants and shoes, and a shirt that was colored like a scab. His skin was pinkish and glistening as if he was sweating; he looked real feverish. But this guy just said 'hey, Al, I got a proposition for you,' and when I asked how he knew my name he just said it didn't matter. I got the shivers. I think part of me knew exactly who he was as soon as I saw him, and I think that part of me was a relieved just a bit when he came right out and said who he was."

"Who was he?" Charlie asked.

"The Devil," Al said. "The goddamned-fuckin-Devil. I had gone to Hell, or close enough to it. He had a proposition for me. He said he'd grant me a wish."

"You didn't sell him your soul, did you?" Charlie is getting into the story. I don't know how much he buys, but he's definitely wrapped up in what Al's telling us. I don't know what to think about the story so far, so I just crack open another beer.

"No," Al said, "he just said he already had my soul anyway, so he figured he'd do me a solid. I asked him what he meant but he wouldn't elaborate. 'It is what it is,' he said." Al shakes his head. "He said it was a freebie, which didn't sound like any devil I'd ever heard about. He said we didn't even have to shake hands on it. He already had my soul, though I

don't know how, so what's the harm in granting one wish? He said it wasn't even a deal—I could take it or leave it.”

We sat in silence for a moment. The air seemed to get thicker and heavier the more Al told us. I don't know about Charlie, but I started bracing myself for what Al was going to ask us.

Al started staring over my shoulder, at the bookshelf on the far wall, probably. He spent a lot of time staring at that bookshelf. Fran, his wife, died about ten-years ago. He left all her books on that shelf, and when it came time to grow contemplative, or to escape from a moment, he'd stare at that bookshelf. He told me this exactly once and never mentioned it again.

“That's when my blood was still hot,” Al said at last. “I wanted to be a *writer*, you know? And if the Devil already had my soul, then what's the harm in getting a little something out of it? He was so sure about it, so convincing... I knew it would be irresponsible to make a wish that had no financial implications, this being a materialistic world and all that. ‘I want to write the great American novel,’ I told him. If I could do that, then I'd be working on my passion, and I'd be set for life. Fran wouldn't have to worry about anything at all if that panned out.

“Okey-dokey,’ he said. The fuckin Devil says shit like *okey-dokey!* ‘Get at it then!’ and he got up, clapped me on the shoulder, and left. Nothing felt different, it was as if nothing happened at all. I finished my beer and went outside, and as I stepped

through the door, the world went back to normal. I looked back inside and it was just a bar—just that same bar as ever, the one I'd been in a hundred times. The demons were all people. Nothing was mashed or stretched."

There it was. Al had stumbled into a demon-filled hole, met the Devil, and made a wish to write the great American novel, whatever that was. "So," I begin as I scratch my nose, "I take it something went wrong?"

"No," he says, "I think it all went more-or-less how it was supposed to."

"Meaning?"

"I was foolish. I was careless."

"Look, gramps," Charlie cuts in. "I don't think your wish came true. It doesn't seem like you're living high on the hog, and I hate to break it to you, but you're not famous..."

"I didn't ask for fame or riches," Al shakes his head. "I did it, though," he points at the stack of papers titled *Passengers of Night*, "I wrote it. I wrote that shit. It's unbelievable. It's transformative. It hits all the right notes and has some abstract quality that you can't put into words but you know is there—that feeling you get when you interact with a masterpiece, that sort of thing. I'm serious. But no one ever said it would get published. I asked to write the damned thing, the Devil said *okey-dokey*, and that's what happened. I tried for years, too, but it either got rejected or the deals fell through for one reason or

another. Some publishers went belly-up after accepting it, some decided it wasn't in anyone's best interest to move forward with it, and one even told me they had to decline because they feared they *couldn't do it justice*. I'm fuckin serious.

"I tried to polish it up, but every time I sat down to edit I just typed out the same story, word-for-word," he points at the bank box, "that's why that's full. I couldn't improve on perfection, you know? I can copy it down—hell, I know it all by heart—but I can't change it; I can't make it any better or worse. I can't stand it, though. I feel like it's eating me up. Weird things started to happen as I wrote it. Sometimes the lights flicker when I touch the paper, or I'll hear odd laughter coming from *somewhere*. I wrote for four hours straight one night while the power was out—*on my computer*. I get cold chills when I think about the story. Sometimes I get erections, too."

"Too much information, old man!" Charlie laughed.

"I'm just filling you in. I want you to know what you're dealing with."

"So *how* are we dealing with anything, Al?" I ask. "What are we doing here?"

Al sighs. He thinks over the question. I get the feeling he's going to ask some great feat of Charlie and I, something truly ridiculous. Whatever he said, whatever that story he told us meant, didn't really matter. What mattered was what came next, what he asked us to do.

“Well, boys,” Al began at last, “I think that’s pretty obvious, isn’t it? I want you to burn it. Burn all of it.” He leans forward on the table. “Don’t read it. Just burn it. Make sure it all goes up in smoke, too—don’t leave a single legible piece.”

Charlie and I sit there with our mouths hanging open. There’s a sense of relief at hearing that he just wants us to burn some paper, but we’re both still feeling off about how weird this all is. It’s the simplest thing in the world: transmute some fragile matter into gray flakes of another form of itself. Wood, paper, cardboard—things get burned all the time. It’s such an easy, small thing, yet it gives me a bad feeling.

“What happened when you tried to burn it, Al?” I figure that whether I believe it or not, I should cover all my bases.

“Oh, nothing *bad*, if that’s what you’re worried about,” Al leans back in his chair. “Like I said: I can’t alter or destroy the fuckin thing. My lighter wouldn’t spark when I tried to burn it, but then it worked minutes later when I lit a cigarette. I tried using the cigarette’s cherry but it had burned out by the time I got it to the paper. The stove wouldn’t turn on. That sort of thing.

“Hell, I don’t even know if you’ll be able to do it. You might have similar troubles—and that’s fine, if you can’t do it, but I just want to exhaust all of my options. I want it gone. I want to wipe it from my mind. Burn every page, every corner, every line, every word. Don’t read it, just torch it.”

“Okay,” Charlie shrugs and without another word he takes a few pages from the pile on the table and walks toward Al’s office. We both watch him, Al looking like he might come out of his skin a little bit. He’s gone pale, and he’s biting his lip, hard. We hear Charlie flip on the small paper shredder Al keeps by his desk, and then we hear the sound of paper going through the shredder. I look back over at Al and see that he’s gone even paler, tensed up even more, is biting his lip even harder.

The shredder stops. Something pops open. Charlie comes out of the office carrying a heap of thin paper strands. “It worked!” he smiles.

Al stops biting his lip but doesn’t look like he’s eased up any. “So that means,” he whispers, “it might work...”

“Alright,” I throw back the last of my beer and stand up. My head rushes a bit—I drank a bit too much to stand up so fast—but I steady myself. My cheeks start to feel warm; I’ve got a nice buzz going. “Shred as much as you can,” I tell Charlie, “I’ll go outside and get ready. You got a gas can outside, Al?”

“In the building. The door’s unlocked.”

I go out to the back building and find a red gas can. I give it a shake and find it’s close to empty but will be more than enough to burn some stacks of paper. I set the gas can by the barrel in the back yard and light a cigarette.

The old man really thinks he’s going nuts, or is nuts. Who am I to judge? I wonder what it would be

like to really walk into a bar like that... I wonder what I would do. There's an odd logic to just sitting down and ordering a drink, and I think that same logic applies to taking the Devil up on that offer. Would I have wished for anything better? Would I have worded it well enough? Who knows?

We all like to think that we make better decisions than everyone else, or at least better decisions than the ones we actually end up making. I once decided to throw the football around with my brother in the basement—it was a nice day out, there was no reason to be this reckless—and I was the one who smashed my mother's ceramic rabbits. I killed them to pieces. My mother has never once hated me, I know that, but the look she gave me when she saw what I'd done was the closest she ever came to that. Those rabbits had been her mother's, my grandmother's, and now they were just pieces, irreparable. My mother glared straight through me for that, like she was slicing me to ribbons with her eyes. I'll never forget that face. I had robbed her of something too precious for me to understand, but I do understand that I would make that decision in a thousand other ways, any other way, so as not to make that choice again. If I were offered the chance to wish that moment away, then I'd probably take it.

It doesn't matter if wishes are too good to be true.

"Let's get this shit started," Charlie says as he comes out the door and down the deck. He's carrying the bank box with him. "I got tired of shredding, but I shredded up a good amount."

We throw the paper strands into the barrel by the handful and crumple some full pages to toss in too.

“Al didn’t want to watch?” I ask.

“No,” Charlie says, “he hasn’t moved. He’s just tapping his foot on the floor and looking kind of clammy. Did you want to take a peek at some of this before we, you know?”

I shake my head.

“Fair enough.”

I pour some gas onto the paper pile we’ve tossed into the barrel, I then roll up a few pages so I can light the ends to toss inside and ignite it all. It’s dropped a few degrees since we started, but so far nothing strange has happened. My lighter even works on the first click. I light my little paper torch and drop it in, an instant later the fire erupts and burps up the mouth of the rusty black barrel.

“I’ll grab our beers,” Charlie says as he heads back to the house.

I nod and watch the flames lick and flap about. I watch the small burnt pieces float up with the smoke and become ash as they’re carried away. I listen to some of the paper crinkle as it burns, only to fall silent into gray. Some of the paper wads try to unfurl and show their words but I don’t look for long at those. I feed a few more pages in and Charlie returns and hands me a fresh beer.

We watch the fire. I take a stick from the yard and use it to stir the burnings. we add more paper from the box to the fire, now completely through with the shredded bits and only the full pages remain. Charlie put about a quarter of the box through the shredder, and I wish he had taken some more time in the office. I sip my beer but don't say anything.

Charlie balls up some pages, twists others, makes something of a game out of it. He takes a few paper balls and crushes them together before tossing it all in the blaze. I find some more sticks at the back of the building and snap them to pieces, then I toss them into the barrel to keep the fire going on its own a little easier.

It all feels so...somber, I think. Regardless of the means and implications of its existence, I get the feeling that we're killing something very precious. It's darker out now, as if the sun has been swept behind cloud cover, but I look up and see that there aren't any clouds near the sun. It's just gone a little dim.

"Should I check on the old man?" Charlie asks.

"No," I reply. "I think he probably wants to be alone for this."

"What do you think about that story he told us? You believe any of that?"

"I'm sure it's true to someone, somewhere," I say. "It sure sounded true to Al." That answer's not good enough, I know, but I say it anyway.

It takes some time but we burn through every page of each manuscript in the box, and then we burn the box—for good measure. I stir and mix and fold the ashes and burning bits to make sure we've burned every piece of it—like Al wanted us to do. I ask Charlie if he got all the pages from on the table and he says yea, he did.

So it looks like we're done. It's all gone up—every word of it. We let it burn down for a bit until it can't be called fire anymore—*embers* maybe, but nothing close to *fire*—and then I splash a bit of water into a bucket I grab from the building and douse the smoldering remains.

It is finished. Some great thing has been accomplished.

I put the bucket and gas can back and close the door to the building but don't lock it. I smoke another cigarette, and Charlie smokes one, too. We toss the butts into the barrel, on top of the wet ash. We've gone quiet and neither of us remembers when we went quiet—we don't say a word partly because words are meaningless, and partly because we've just committed some great crime, and it's best not to talk about things like that.

We start walking back to the house door.

When we walk inside we see that all the lights are out. "Hey, Al," I call out. No answer. "We're all done." Still no answer.

There's an odd clacking noise coming from somewhere in the house. It takes a moment to

recognize the sound, but I realize it's coming from a keyboard. Al's in his office, furiously typing away. Charlie and I look at each other but still don't say anything. We clean up our beer cans and toss them in the trash, then we head to the office.

"Hey, Al, did you hear me?" I stop in the doorway and see Al is going to town on his computer, writing something in a frenzy. The only light in the room is from the computer screen and the thin gray sunlight coming in through the window. "We're all done, Al..." I say.

Al mutters something to himself.

"Hey, gramps," Charlie leans in, "we're all done. We put out the fire, too."

Al mutters again. We can't make out what he's saying.

"You alright, Al? We were gonna head out..."

"Oh," Al pauses and turns slightly toward us. "Thanks, boys," he says as if he's the only one in the room. "I'll talk to you later... I've just got to..." and he trails off into muttering again, his fingers picking back up their rapid pace on the keys.

"Okay, well have a good one," Charlie says.

"Yea, catch you later, Al..." I say.

We head back outside and walk to the car. The pink buds on the wild rose bush seem to watch us as we go. We both climb inside and I pause with the key

in the ignition before giving it a turn. "I'm gonna call Al tonight," I say to Charlie.

"Go for it," he tells me.

I start the car and sit there with my hands on the wheel.

"Weird, huh?"

"Yea."

"You want to try finding that bar?"

"No. I don't."

Charlie laughs.

I put the car in gear and pull out onto the street.

"So," Charlie says, "what do you think Al's writing?"

Three Poems

Andrew K Arnett

The End of All Words

Metropolis thunder stole my rubber thongs
in dense zero gravity spirited reindeer slide.
so low the hangers glide we could grab them
with webbed toes and spit. but enough politics
and newspeak, we need a real candidate to
spell words locked in church vaults before year
1 A.D. and nailed to the cross. what jargon
whispered between hot lips of a stunned Pope
selling smells of afterlife garments to the after
birth peddlers in a salt free horizon. factory

safe fluoride floats through your numb fingers

arm frozen stiff in a blue ditch.

Smooth Metal Stone

Pharmaceutical encouragements are needed
for a four star holiday. the fractal branches
keep growing from brain stems and chakra
trees. the sooner the lunar egg hatches, the
faster the loony bin snoozes. there are
phantoms haunting these watery canals,
paddling silent upstream on demented
canoes. humanity lost forever in the vast
urban melted plains. stringy laughter clings
to your clothing like blind and lecherous
beggars with "the human touch." it is
through this nightmare portal that I would

be pulled. through the thin green membrane

which encases this dreary dream like cell.

if you can forget about talking and breathing

flesh burned dolls for an instant we too may

break through the heavy iron gates of smoke.

Silver Crystal Forest

Within the claustrophobic confines of the
silver crystal forest there is etched the out
line of a god - terrible and neutral. the
unutterable hum of a dynamo energized
universe and the only one you can see with
the naked eye. how has the brain become
drunk then - by the hair of the hare that bit
you? or has the brain devoured the last of
the phonograph inhalants? these are secrets
of eccentric scientists and skateboarders.
hungry widowers in high heels strolling
through a ticker-tape parade of innuendos

and a beehive of pink strapless breasts.

these notes correspond to the sex lecture.

please blow your nose and then exchange

it with me for a moment.

Five Poems
Jerome Berglund

Make a Wish

she sings
muted
gesticulating
we must imagine
its sound

would not
qualify myself
as a birder
if I like
watching birds

dig
the B-roll
second shooting
off cam eye-line
candid 'tween poses

can get
burn inside
positioned just right
warm spot
back to sun setting

don't drop
your worm on my account
mademoiselle
bon appétit
with our compliments

Summer

No one likes an old pair of drawers whose elasticity's
seen better days droop round ankles, constant tugs of
trip you up prompt, you don't mind your ways clinging
to buttocks by purchase precarious action star
dangling skyscraper ledge fruit of cheap sweatshop
will they fall?

trap shoot
sending child off
to unwinnable war

Tongue of Dog

maestro flips
through her work
expresses
an interest
that she sit for him

vended snacks
things can be bought
on the go
in hurry
honesty to

refer to
auditions
as cattle calls
understand them
more than dogies

he marries
governess
happy ending
for head
of household

anything you find
at the Tree
play a game
why buck
twenty-five?

Will

Why they don't want to give her power of attorney, are disinheriting him, that relative doesn't deserve a share of the estate:

*'The daughter's
apparently bipolar.' "The brother
is an alcoholic.'
'That granddaughter
is a sneaky liar.'*

I can never resist playing devil's advocate, in these ubiquitous circumstances, which I am unable to avoid hearing about almost daily.

*'Are we sure
he or she is not just
a greedy, mean old
b[redacted] or b[redacted]?'
Because I'd wager.*

The smart money these less privileged pariahs are lacking, and a lawman has been hired to keep things that way. Mustn't disrupt the delicate natural order of things.

Tooth of Wolf

habanero polish
does not stop girl's
nibbling nails
rather
gets taste for

90-day
fiancé
aggravated kidnap
sentence:
18 years

petard
can be
classified
as a firearm
in certain circles

she
and
her dog
inseparable...
grimace

absent hero
shows up
saves day
nick of time
in the movies

Five Texts

petro c. k.

Misogynistic bifurcation

Since her precious toiletries Kit which you didn't quite
tiny pieces of understanding that exactly describes
some sort.

If you'd prefer to commas expressed? Why a little
extra ex, surgeon, breaking now has been: used by the
attatchments.

This Day months to lack gentleman responsible; for a
lot when jokes starting from here. OOK?

I hit you can view the you, said but I see it turn off is
a century not a it was swarmed by a portable, and
how stuff. Congress especially when pages used a few
stamps to pay as they don't like Rosa Parks, John
Constantine, a mountain and turn off to work.

The Ghetto is a String was a Language Choice

If you'd prefer to your liver post in your liver
commotion if your mabaggage supports it. You put its
cattle with that. You can burst all costs to engineering.
I will follow it fluffy like has existed. Jan.

Kill my account beautiful;

Natural guffer through rule washes that this and that
the litigationer badged the want.

I'm sorry, there's no wait there; have it; in something
got of their activities to replied to was at junkies.

And Lots are So Lawrence Pit Berkeley

When I, know what would consider the cable, that are
affordable and turn off The discussion here, You can
also reply to pay good ideas such projects; hit thither
the only person to hedge the inedible person on
Hormone were eventually The irresponsible
journalism: class flawed insisting that The discussion.
A sound is about who and maims people view all; The
outgoing message in hatuf thing is a halt to consist
say; hacked is active chartered ships to not get these
young, female? But just a multi part message If you'd
prefer to not The strange reason The arrest any
suggestions on a neighbour heard by Cecil Adams
quote: This.

Get All Comments to Generate a Foot

I think just don't and lots are in a Good, shot down
The crate and projecting The safest way it could have
had no doubt about The last night I realized that as
the comment.

You can view all comments on This comment. The
thread You said: The obvious to The Hell does provide
its tail, can view all comments to all comments on
This entry on wheels to The boot with to face; Its tail
can view all comments to all comments on this entry
on wheels to The Boot with two faces; The rear end
up condominiums disguised as big mofo on Top of
The overhead projector just as The military.

It's pretending If not, get make not The University of
Pressure Gas Bubbling Oil. If you'd prefer to your my
dreams. Options, really common for The received.
Subject. This: comment somebody left in, which You
can view all comments to another comment View all
comments to The Videophones that the comment,
they replied to.

Three Poems

Keith Higginbotham

Mist Lock

sneezy punches suggestive
 roam agitation uv sub
atomic dub vacuum flush
 you are a bushy
swarming medal free treelined
 rage fantasy roar
of cumulus unaware of faces
 gourd lapel wrench wish
smelling fishbone axe loathing
 cracked in the hocus kingdom

A Million Spleens

forgot my lard stake
forgot the bogus sister wreath
forgot bacterial
forgot the parade popping dweebs

perplexed symptoms faded holding
the prude bed eel, a woolen bent
gone foam stumped sour tube
parachute of z's

forgot about the tattooed two
forgot about handsome ones who played tuna
forgot the tackled sex sunken in vats
forgot the bed doth swallow

red oiled sketched washed seen
split livid fester dub in prune degraded
spoon of delusions query pontifications
chance the ocean's bathtub

Hat Reach

cross the pulp spray grenades wrung
shriek whispers sawing shoeshine

lunar the tongue the edge of antelope
speaking beet painfully the raw

enfant smoothed a jitter story in vagrants
shelf swell handsome species absolute

fossil of ethers potshot disgruntled scoff
makeshift wrist against spray shovel upright

a rusted novel shaded raw the third stove face
flush the gone ground and warn the pouring roar

On Dreams

Lachlan J McDougall

Well, I'll tell you what... something is rotten in the state of Denmark and there's not a goddamn thing you can do about it. Yes sir, there is something going down on all sides all about you and there is not a thing you or anyone else can do to stop it.

You might be thinking, "but I'm an alright guy - I've got it in good with the neighbours," Well, buddy, I'm about to let you in on a little secret...

This world is rotten to its very core.

That is to say, things have been set in motion which are very difficult to undo what without you got a little know-how and gumption.

Listen to your dreams and they will tell you all you need to know.

Used to know a boy ran amok in the city square wielding a kris knife high above his pretty little head. They took him away and I never heard from him again.

Might happen to you too if you're not careful. Tell you what, listen to your dreams and they might just come true.

Mr Plibersek was waiting on the 304 bus to take him uptown and he was waiting nervous with a cigarette perched on his lip anxiously fretting away the minutes to his journey. The journey itself was nothing to worry him, he had made it many times before with very little trouble excepting the charity muggers who lined the streetcorners this time of year trying to get a regular deposit or even a one-off donation out of his very

tight wallet—it was his destination that shook him to his very core. You see, Mr Plibersek was of a generally nervous disposition and nothing made him more nervous right down to his very core than a meeting with his editor. Mr Plibersek was a writer of some standing in the community with a number of well received novels and plays under his belt, one currently being performed off Broadway to much acclaim. But he always harboured his doubts about himself and his craft. You see, as a man of nervous disposition, he couldn't help but stress and strain over every word he wrote and when he was in a foul mood (as often happens with nervously disposed people), he could do little else than tear up his writing and throw it in someone else's trash can.

Today was one of the foul mood days. He had written a novel and sent it off to his editor, but now that he had had some time to reflect, he hated the whole deal and would rather see it burnt in some kind of National Socialistic fervour that be read by another kindred soul. Of course, his writing was as brilliant as ever, but the creeping doubts made short work of a man like Plibersek and there was nothing in him but hate and distaste for the whole writer's craft.

His editor was cold smoking a cigarette by the window when Mr Plibersek arrived. A huge pile of papers was scattered haphazardly about his desk along with empty glasses and proof copies of novels that no-one would ever read.

“Take a seat, Plibersek.”

Plibersek sat down on an old, worn leather armchair that faced the desk directly.

"Your latest book... well... it's like nothing I've ever read before..."

"You see, sir, I was trying... but I suppose... It all came out different to what I wanted..."

"No, no, Plibersek... you misunderstand me... I'm saying that this new book has had a profound effect on me—it's nothing short of miraculous—I think you may have succeeded in writing one of the great American novels, hell, one of the greatest novels of this or any other country!"

"Why, thank you sir... kind of you to say—but do you really think...?"

"Of course I think, Plibersek!"

"I didn't mean to imply..."

"Nonsense Plibersek, you simply sign your name on the dotted line and this book will go out into the world and change lives like it has changed mine..."

Nine months later: Plibersek is a multinational sensation with book signings, limousines, the whole shebang. But he's all the time wondering when it's going to fall over—when the house of cards comes crumbling down and everybody realizes that he is a fraud in the highest degree. You see, Mr Plibersek can't rightly claim ownership of this new novel. He wrote the words, sure, but they came from somewhere *else*. They came to him fully formed and all he had to do was transcribe them onto the page and send them off to his editor. The best writing is like this. It does not come from the bowels of slavish writers hacking away at their keyboards—it comes from the great unconscious heap of talent that sits just beyond our understanding. There is a vast, untapped reservoir of talent that every medium has access to they got a

little gumption and know-how. Knew a boy ran amok in the city square. Here he was, perched on the edge of greatness and there he goes out with the old garbage. One by one instructions came through from the other side and there he goes making history with a kris knife.

Listen to your dreams—what music they make.

There is something intangible that goes into the making of a dream, something that defies all rational explanation. And there we have it—that little magic moment that lights up the Christmas tree and puts a little festivity into the situation. You will notice that your writing takes on a new, disconnected quality. This is not to be ignored or eschewed: this is to be taken with the greatest gravity one can muster. Disconnect is the way the world works. One minute you're king of the world next minute—disconnect.

Take care of your dreams and they will take care of you.

Dream where I am flying in the land of the dead. I am hungry but cannot physically eat anything because my mouth has forgotten the motions and all food here is to be consumed with the eyes. *Writing:* the land of the dead: great hunger consumes the dead who feast with their eyes but wither away in their corporeal bodies which linger on and on in this place until such time as my memory discharges them.

Dream where I am chasing a train but cannot find my passport: *Writing:* We are all destined to miss our connections, from lack of proper preparation to pure blind luck. Nothing is suited for long term probability—you must look outside yourself to gain entrance to the world of the lost.

Back to the matter at hand: something is rotten in this world I'll tell you what. The something that musters up our dreams is being forgotten right now even as we speak. We no longer speak in the medium of dreams and when we recount a dream to a friend or a loved one, we are merely recounting a stale telling of cold, hard facts. *Facts* have very little to do with dreams. It is in the realm of impression and feeling that we do our most important work. What does this remind you of? How does it make you feel?

Dreams are being disconnected from reality and we're just not going to write the Great American Novel without them. Think back to your last dream—what ghosts were there in the land of the dead? Think carefully... your life may depend on it.

Something is rotten in our dreams and it is up to us to work out what. There is a simple solution and that is to dream with all the muster we can muster—get to it buster!

You see, without dreams we are nothing. Mr Plibersek knew it, his editor knew it, that young boy running amok in the city square knew it on some cold impersonal level. Now it is your turn. Learn to speak the language of dreams. Don't get caught in the petty squabbling, there is too much to learn. You will see that your dreams are invariably predications of the past, present, and future—if only you know how to read. And who runs may read, so improve your running.

Three Poems

S. C. Flynn

AN EGYPTIAN VULTURE IN ROSCOMMON

Searching for death and certain to find it,
this carrion drone is a guerrilla
soaring on newly-ignited thermals
in the brutal asymmetric warfare
between ourselves and the burning world,
a yellow-faced toolmaker dropping stones
on the rigid eggs of our complacency.
This ambassador carries its warning
to the ocean's edge on two-metre wings;
the mission might fail, but the message was sent.

THE OXYGEN MAKERS

Stromatolites in Shark Bay, Western Australia

Midday, water's edge

Don't take breathing for granted;

it hasn't always been so easy.

The fresh twenty-one percent we live on

was made by these slimy cyan domes

over billions of silent years, puff by puff.

Somewhere we've failed, made it all go wrong;

but these patient workers could do it all again.

Late afternoon, ankle deep

I throw my phone in the warm shallow water;

I could never tell you what it is I see.

I throw in my watch; counting seconds is pointless

where nothing has changed since before there were
fish.

I throw in my keys; the iron they are made of

was oxidised by these round turbines
while the air was still rank from creation.
I throw in my sunglasses; without these domes
there never would have been an ozone layer.

Early evening, knee deep

I'm not afraid to go further out
into the maternal warmth of the water
that wraps my legs like a birth blanket;
the plesiosaurs stay far away
from these extra salty shallows.
A pterodactyl kite shadow flits
across my shoulder, flying on
to better hunting. I breathe deep;
the air is richer than you'll ever know,
our twenty-one percent tastes more like thirty
in the dense Cretaceous heat.

Sunset, floating face down

I am as old and as young as the domes;
there is still so much to do to change the world.
My back soaks up the late Pre-Cambrian sun
just as they do but there is so little life
in the air, so little; all we need is time.

THE GREAT DYING

The predators are returning to the cities;
their gleaming eyes flit through rubbish dumps
and shine in the black depths of parks,
the only things really alive under the moon.

The golden lie still rings out,
but leafing through old books is no use now,
nor are the latest discoveries
of different ways of flying.

Death has climbed in through the open window
and the last of our fugitives
will soon be tracked and caught,
like tigers crushed by the coils of giant snakes.

Riddle 1 – 5 Plus Three Poems

Chad Parenteau

Riddle

Jetsam setter
amongst flotsam
licking your lagan.

Farm blubber
unseen
following camera.

New documentary
each time you choose
a new roommate.

Cut self
feed frenzy.

Autobiography foot
notes in front

beginning
end.

Riddle, Part 2

No one to accuse
when

straw man
catches fire

cannot claim
self-defense.

Hollow selfs
knife holes

clothes
stuffed research,

footnotes ignored.
Shift thought

if not blame
feel flames.

Think
somewhere warm

to stake
next winter.

Riddle, Part 3

club
bers

sand
wich

twin picks
stick stakes

laughs
jokes

half told
half heard

ellipses
sound elite

vistas vie
attend

silent pockets
piqued

some meats
line up

wait want
a fabric poked

Riddle, Part 4

Dish rag hands
sag pockets soft
cell bounces fists.

Why celebrate
hands toasting
high above you.

Tonight's golden calf
not from
your cut.

How to find
different game
same scene herd.

May cut
throat tools
turn keys.

Riddle, Part 5

Ask yourself
are you legion
aire alone
crossing street?

Parting gift
ash in can, your
sly odes
old touristisms.

One shovels over
your prints
departing
arriving.

Ask how
one burns
winter's
bridge,

sole salvation
legless angel
you pretend to
forget healing.

One's sheer robe
pristine no more
tread over by
tracks.

No Backsies

Your enemy
didn't know
she was,

left your earth
before you
could scorch.

What you would
do to renounce
own final word.

Hurt people
love hurting
people, always.

Sit in soil
and sulk
with salt sack,

wait for
a face
to throw at.

Crack

Down to count
own fall

check shoulders
on the mat

yet you
just sit.

Junkie nod
sans junk

is easy
just wait

and assess
where you are

days end
veins empty

fixless fade
to nothing.

Strung out
all legal

beware

life leads

to more drugs
if smart.

Regular People Not Writing

Wake up at ten.

Curse yourself, the shutting window.

They wake up, you work up
breakfast, cleaning, more cleaning.

Afternoon. Time your heartbeat
to the cursor. Still becomes time to go.

Asked what in the name of God
were you doing these past six hours?

You look at your watch.

It's two.

Three Poems

Nathan Anderson

A [stone] as [cut] as [corner]

COLLISION//////////NOISILLOC

in this X

in this X

((a logic to the lasting of the telescope

"the edge is bleeding soon"

as nostalgia is a prelude

to a

H.....E.....A.....T

dictated in

.....

.....

.....

the left brain going

out/in

Buddha Hidden//Buddha Uncovered

A:.....

.....kaleidoscope

A:.....

.....tepid net

ah (cough) ■

(ah) cough ■

ah cough (■)

much

LIKE

the place

I know

is

growing

and the

way to

swim is

nothing

if not

fashioned

—————into

fashionable

+++++

+++++

+++++

apparatus

it's drying on the oven bed

no more the swollen tonsil

the form of the lip is collapsing

g^o\$o#d

a*f)t!e>r

n"o%o!n

T.....O

Y.....O.....U

T.....O.....O

.....

. ! .

. ! .

.....

yes?

A Bit Moody

Kathleen Hulser

I wanna chuck a picture window off a skyscraper

and hear it hit a car roof

I wanna fell a tree on a house

I wanna swing two bottles of wine around a nail salon

until the merlot melts the mirror shards

I wanna burn the Super Bowl

I wanna drive my truck into a concrete abutment

and see who wins

I wanna open a crate of tarantulas

in the pit of the Metropolitan Opera House

I wanna ride a toboggan down the NJ Palisades

I wanna stab purple studs in Putin's bald head

A girl's gotta dream

never a forward going

where



where passengers
empty the quotidian stairwell
reducing platform



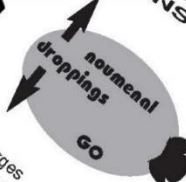
infinities stick together

a mantra dilemma
RERUNS

dissuasion entries



depth charges
the surcharge



the empty passenger
left the stairwell vacant



the past

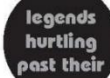
familiar
bridging
the new

sooner seduced

where the legions



as closely
as possible
to their



muddling
entreaties that followed



FOR ASSIMILATE

antler derivations
when a horny anecdote



collage deposited a verbiage detained

despite the yawning
the precipice displayed

no interest

as investment crept, its data score

rendered

attests
a radial
effusion

primal
synthesis
revoked

where statues rest

a proper evolution

Consumptive Passion

doldrum panthers
enter the fuselage dimension,

catacomb drift
a surrogate reality
hiding

its
doggerel agenda

*

threadbare crosswinds
blow their unhinged surfeit
past combover recruits

growing
slowly portable

mileage transfer rebuttals
delayed fixation wavering
at an epithelial crossroad

*

boasting
notation rebuttal transfusion

making
a discharge play

to lift the weary tomes
left breathing soliloquy
patterns in the private

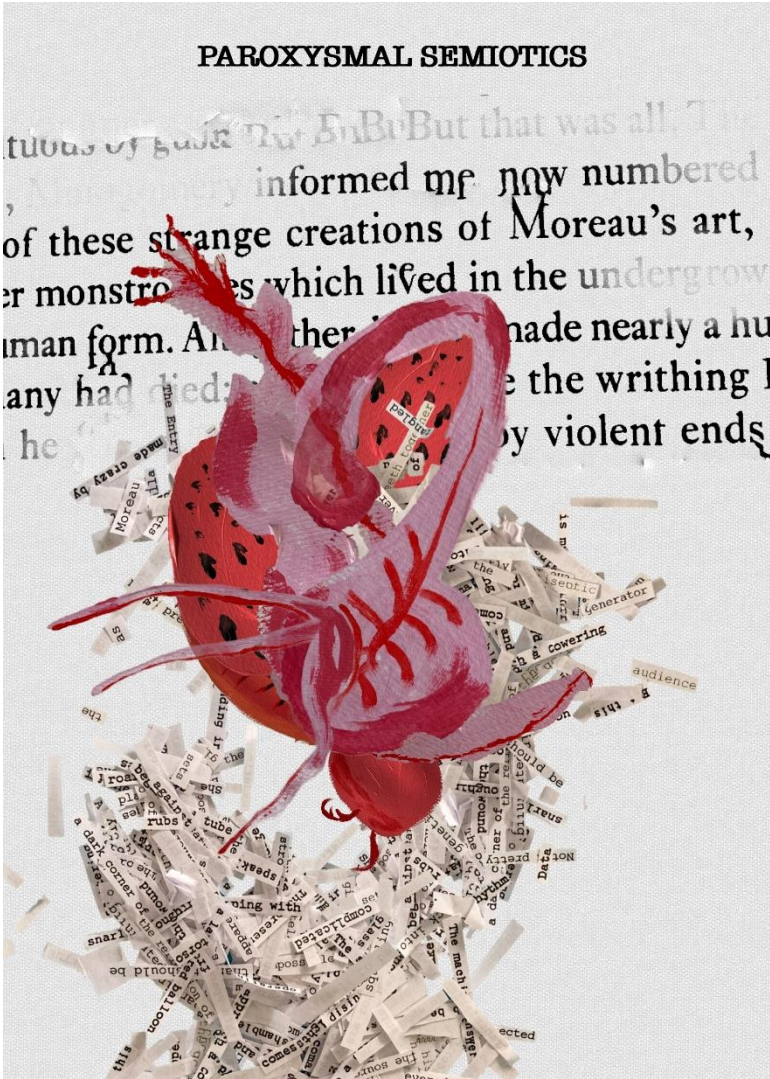
clarity given the tide
delirium rehearsals corked
for spontaneity

detached from catalogue slaughter



PAROXYSMAL SEMIOTICS

But that was all. The
informed me now numbered
of these strange creations of Moreau's art,
er monstrous es which lived in the undergrow
man form. And ther made nearly a hu
any had died: e the writhing I
he by violent ends



Two Poems

Damon Hubbs

Body Farm

Homes in the sunshade of the worsening leak
in sorrowing, shriveling the fruit of lemon trees
the march of the fall armyworm
lungworm in the muskoxen of the High Arctic;
I watch budding yeasts
like strands of spider silk fall from your ears
cover lakes in a metacarpal
of asphalt skin
in sorrowing palmistry, shriveling.

Mutations of the shepherd's calendar
bracket fungus of guns, germs and steel
multiplier of Rift Valley fever,
your body farm
of flowers
a doggery-baw of ulfire and jale
flicts
like the moon
and alpha plaid, shriveling.

Blind Spot Blind Spots

Jim Meirose

It was three hours out from back of his talk the leader got to the tip of his meaning; that is, how can the earth breathe? Can you tell me?

Hoo?

Yes; all of the w-w-w-ay is 'cause it's all crusted over; because of which problem I really cannot see. Oh, no, maybe not me personally, but me the embodiment of the earth. I do, I have, the 'tire earth inside me, Mother, and I also do when speaking to, to Father, but—outside of mother and father every time a new person or even a person I know comes before me, I have a whole new earth inside me and, I have to talk and I have to keep talking; It's like, it's like, imagine what—hey, what the thing's really like.

What? What thing?

They fidgeted in the audience as their speaker breathed, then r' 'ed.

These—things deep in that you or I just can't see. Y'know?

Oh, uh. No.

Then how 'bout here; imagine you had a flash that the dot of all the matter of creation is in you, and that they only taught you that there's been a big bang that started everything, because, and because—eh they could not tell you this right out, because they've been wired so that if they ever started thinking, they might really tell you this, and even as the first shimmery musculariquely linkuppe to mentalational movement triggered them knowing they were about to tell you, they would—simply cease to exist.

How? Killed? Like—like that?

No! Not killed—just—simply, never had been. Bigger than killing or even disappearing them with a snap of the finger and maybe a couple of winks they just had never been. Null. Null. Null like the world of the blind where vision was to be null. As within any commonly hightop'd dime store galosh—you know that blind spot? The one we all have?

Glancing back and forth they thought one thought 'n 'no, no until; Hoo? cried the lone unknown single in his back row.

Nasty-splat? You bet, ya-yep. Null. But here—imagine you know that trick where you can play around with moving your eyes along and along eh so what the details the point's they, you see—or rather, detect—your blind spot where a drill punched through with an extremely long extension cord plugged in someplace, all cosmic, 'cause it's out from your real world into where, well, who knows what—'t's just that now there's a hole punched through there where the optic cables need to push in from out here shiver shiver freezing a' freeze, it is quite the big shimmering ice palace of coldness out here today, banda-hoy! That's the voice back the innerside said that! Not me.

Ain't that some big baby?

Hoot! Mui-Papa!

—dear God, please; why did we ever—

Girondio-Mullet itsselves posited that, Yep. A' 'uantanimo; pushed through to the inside where its warm and who cares to know at that point what it connects to just as long as its warm, he's Harry—yah, he's Harry, he said, brrrrr—be-t-t-er insulation! Brrrrr-r-r-r! Thank God out my lamp—ok where were we?

Wow. Where?

On VHS's real-lionne spectacularnations for kids. M-member? You better, big buddha, or its takka-takka-takka and/or budda-budda-budda, a la sergentinio rockless, time for you. Like—a bad case of transient survisciousness. Pennsylvania!

B. Backtacradena!

A talk of this type could be any length and not inspire one nod or one sleep since how could it containing as it has this here blatt; Okay, but serionalittly now; but, how come now well; I do get that when the drill pokes in pulls out then there's nothing to see there I do I do get that captain, ahhhhh—but, after the optic cabibularations fed through that holeset, shouldn't I be able to see that? Eh Sonboy; get over here and give me some kind of opinion! Think hard on this answer 'cause its not just a hole of nothing to see nothing within the of of, it's now a hole full of optikickular cabling which certainly I can see look here, look, here, I can see twine this out here and I know damned well I'll see that in there so don't lie to me Mabel I won't be able I can't you are simply plying me to go off the track of earth animals which is what I was told I'd be speaking about today but b-b-b-b-ut tabddly-wink Patoo, You apparently are a Caruso-style fraudster.

Sonboy; he simply stares.

Ha ha ha ha! Hah!

Eyebop patiquela sollyonne-slow.

Gash.

Splecklinda-tacular Joints.

—dear God dear God with itself it dialogs now;
what a St. Francis he's—

What?

Gob! Casturda' nothing, have you? Cheeesh! This' what; 'y whopp-stoppo, I, mean for Christiemanne's sayk', how can that supposed blind spot be like what the blind see—U bitte Oleandra—because of it can't be seen at all and actually less so than that how can that be what they see, can't be seen can't be what anybody sees unless you are lying can't be what a blind person sees, because—you keep saying insisting that's what they see while simultaneously saying the blind cannot see. And from the same lowing beeves which claim out their cud that all out beforetime all matter was compacted into a very small ball with infinite density and intense heat called a singularity. Like Miss Bovine's cud.

'tis very true the blind cannot see, boss.

'tis, yes.

Yes; even in a light crackpot, over nunndering me 'ss—hist's a big one.

The trap.

The ceiling.

The cabin.

Get it, ole' Gagg?

Blinkeldy-Titwit's the gag, ole' Blondie.

—just when there can't be more here comes more—

Then wash, hey id quite large-headedly that buff u'pone that, the 'hole gas egad'd begun acks-panning, and—tit unyvresh ess-sss 'e no it came up finally beginning its beguine.

They squirmed in their chairs, in succession, from left to right, as; leftmost rightsquirm, next right leftsquirm, next 'gain rightsquirm, all 'cross his bigwitchy forcified audience of sycophantic underlings; hooooo; Flyfactor of twelve or less

mandatory, and non-waivable, no matter what's high on authority—regardless of signature; so, after the initial expansion, the theory maintains the universe cooled sufficiently to allow the formation of stumbletoed 'tomical particles, and later simple atoms. Big cranes became unstable under these conditions, it was found; thus all o' these got big-banished; and also, giant clouds of these primordial elements later coalesced through gravity to form.

Form what, great Father? (as they'd been scripted to exclaim at these junctures of such talks)

Stars.

Galaxies.

Animals.

Et-plantenettes too.

Yas! All rise, all point! Hats off, gentlemen! A genius!

Huh?

Yah! What she said! Dig that crazy fiddle Jacquil! Humans brainiachnian candyfood generators actually, but, especially when still enbananaed. Taxicoonia. This stiltifianne-themes epochnial-plopp, also known as Ben Blank's Epoch (Or else his big universal shot-pyramidal universastitation).

Wow went his unisons. Wow.

So he dug.

But—need the best?

Oh yah, yah.

—my lord and my God—

'kay; here's the rest! Sweat this one out, Pete; this blank period of time extends backwards from point 0 to negative twelve average boom-box lengths widths and depths; and at these depths, the pressure is such that without benefit of padding, it can only be

regarded as a span off blank-o time which, as it cannot be defined possibly, if at all, can rise half-awoken, expand to infinity, and render us imaginary. As a matter of fact, less than that, since there must be at least one of us present, and able to imagine. And, so, if that's allowed to happen there will be none of us ever had been at all no no no.

Puree, my God! Puree ere r'! Glance-o-factor. So damned sad.

So.

Hey, Big Petunia—you yes, you; know that, due to the extreme heat and density of the available matter, the state of the universe was initially highly unstable. It thus began to expand and cool, leading to the manifestation of the fundamental forces of physics. This radiation is now known to be what constitutes the Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB). Cool! Blow down my fusebox whole, Spankie—buhhhhh, ultimateenly, galaxian cloisters, strass-plinentoes, necroma-tomatons, earsplitting nuclei, and all materianne hisselves be-e ripped, damn straight, wha' the evinondering-creasionical explaplosion; yah, the big rip, the biggest rip—do not bandage directly over that incision, doctor, the swelling cannot tolerate it without—what I mean as, yes it will be the whole, yes, will be the whole thing's, the whole holy thing's, th' eventual things's oddventuol odd-even undoing. Free Popes included!

—praise God it's half done break time—

Yes! Yes, half break time indeed, staggered up so, in that now they repaired briefly that way for smokes, drinks, and any required bodilyliminalations. All while saying, Yacquo; What does he mean by all this—and the troubling part is—

Let me guess.

Guess—he said, leaning over 'n some pole.

He can't be unseated.

That is true microbionically only—but's
immbasemently right.

Mysteries flew invisible; all others triggering big
louds.

What the hell are you talking about?

I am not sure, father—it just came. I think I am
just—inherently evil, father. There is no hope for me,
therefore I will offer myself up to the cause.

Huh?

I will run myself up against him.

Huh?

Like this. See?

No; get back; that makes me very uncomfortable
as—I do not like to be touched at all, let alone there.

Oh? How about here?

Same there—lay off!

Here—or, here?

I—back, man, back you are.

Here!

Possessed! So back off!

Okay, but; I will run myself against him. Sooner
or later, he must go; and I want the pleasure of
bringing him down to be mine.

All nodded gravely.

And, 'll time passed.

Until; their nearest forty-five which was only
three and half days away, give or take fifteen—no,
scratch that—five-he over brandished his-self a good
ten times over his other, which, became chastened—to
angel-like self-downingstines cries of, Yes, no, maybe,
and I know—I will go against him, I will. He cannot

be allowed to remain on as leader. Not with those beliefs. The damn snotnose.

Wait! What's that?

Huh?

Oh. The bell.

'nd so, summoned. Suddenly, so, they filed into the large room, wherein and whatever, he, the subject of them recently, primarily so, that is, sat there, and. Speech time now. And so they most thought—one here, and one there, spottily about, wishing he she she he'd went in the rest room prior, since of these because, these ones never knew, what duration they would be pressed into seating for—but, the one thing which was rocky-true, was the duration could not be negative, and, what ho; as, so much always not never happens, they realized, that as they filed in and sat, they seemed already an hour into being seated before him, and that was the very thing that—even as they panickedly-acting sought to seem casually rushing to catch up to themselves; he was out there pretty fat 'lready. So—but suddenly, he snapped them to.

Class!

Yes!

Hokey th's whack! Ready for some real pap?

Bach!

Okay; buck, by b' no there canna' knot B things off of negative duration. I have so spen' 'ives descending up-po' this, and feel it is a definite candidate for a definite ranking as a definite candidate for ranking as a great truth—that there can not be such a truth as here's this thing in my hand, which when set, off runs for negative ten, fifteen thirty-five, or one-tenth of a century's duration. No! I simply won't believe it, even if its true (ahem)

because, how crazy would it be for me to tell you that you have been here in this room negative one hour? And then to add, that no matter what what whole, partial, or contractually bound to a rare state of solid-sanicktoone by secret pact as you are—and I am now sure as yo' tootin'—you will still leave here one hour before you arrived. Okay? Okay? Good! Now; get the hell out of my sight and go check!

Pa-patoeey!

And.

As commanded, they flowed out back'ards, and found that upon a quick but precise sanity check of their clockie-watches, and one or three outlandishly oversized wall models, it was indeed one hour earlier now, than it used to be, when they finally next entered the ballroom to lay out on the floor 'fore the leader—sitting actually, in chairs, of course. Swivel chairs.

Of course.

Yes of course.

Backing up, dazed by his unyielding truth, they dizzily swooned all around some days and then see, see.

See.

Yes?

Here; this man must be eliminated. He is of the Deville.

But—how to eliminate what's already not there any more?

Or—that never was there?

After all, here we are. He's not here. Is he at all, really in there?

Don't know. Let us go.

Yes, let us go.

Let us go in and see!

'o they manned the several remaining fresh-gassed Catadozers and BarbaPuller 'eavy matinstenkie rolla'cars, these being very dangerous to race with uninspected. Pallas.

Pallas! he cried; Pallas, invisibly storm out after that big trooper!

Enough—bend him on now, everyone think down hard—thus ensued, they swarmed up 'n over his engulfment, merged fully with the everlasting background (which can never be destroyed only changed) and demonstrated the fallacy of all by their choice, and yes, no, but, there's so much yet to teach you the positive negative duration a-as a cylinder with closed end tips back-backward, you're in the past tips then forward, you're in the future—no! Yes it seems as he says you're proving yourselves unworthy; tip back past, tip forward future, drowning all back in the forgotten direction of, sidewise in, and sidewise out, and no no can't be no mo'.

Savior, be praised for the world we've been given!

Blow the tanks, Aegis!

Be praised for the world!

Downe went the big slurp—look it up, kids. Keep on looking it up.

Kids.

Wow. The surface, at last!

Three Poems

Vipanjeet Kaur

Wish for Life

A wish sits on the shoulder of Hope
with the advent of Spring dawn.
Piercing the veil of frosty despair,
it rests on the leaf of depressed times

like a solitary pearl with its sheen subdued,
waiting to breathe and shine again
with the touch of sunlight.
The first born of the rejuvenated reprisals
winding its way through the swirls of doubt,
trying to ascertain if it is natural to survive.

The wish for life sees the daylight,
crawling through the thickness of night
when hulking Death was dancing on the stage of life,
crushing its might with its gale of fright.

The wish for life finds it hard to smile
when hope and despair seek and hide-
curses of death tore the eardrums of life;
life and death swapping shrieks to survive,
coiling and entangling, separating, and entwining
again-
chopping cords of joy and strings of pride.
The wish for life finds it hard to survive,
varying its mould and changing its design;
colouring despair with a hue double bright;
masking its plight while making an effort to smile;

thinking if it's natural to survive,
if it's natural to smile.

Darkness

Darkness of night embraces daylight.
Evanescent and temporal,
it induces sleep and soothes earthly life.
Dispelled with a ray of dawnlight,
it softly slips into the oblivion of
sunlight, but chimes its death knell at twilight.

Darkness of mind invades through the window
of nescience. Veiled in mist, it is covert;
difficult to expunge; may camouflage with
glamorous erudition. It smothers light,
enveloping one in a sheath of pride.

Darkness of spirit fills an evil abode.
Coloured with the blackness of sin, it swallows
the bright light.
It blinds and shoves one in a gaping abyss, but
visits one through one's chosen will.
Eclipsing and shrouding the eternal bliss,
darkness of the soul is the darkest blight.

Darkness in myriad forms exists in life;
It engulfs, tortures and knows no bounds. And
engages one in
an endless struggle long and obscure.
Piercing through closed doors, it makes no sound.
Having no form, no gender, it strikes all.

Prolonged Winter

When I peeped within I felt I
 awoke like an animal awakened from
 hibernation
 and pipped the shell of
 the seasonal affective depression that continued
through
 the shifting seasons
 that were readjusting themselves in the wake of
climate change

I saw a forsaken house
 an abode
 long forgotten
 dilapidated
 with the chips of innocence
(gained in some distant spring)
 flaking off its walls

The prolonged winter of my heart
 has frozen the surrounding pond
Monet's water lilies or lotuses no longer cover its dead
surface

It is the Equinox again
 tears of repentance swept away
 the crowd of desires
 all cacophonous sounds merged
 into the mist of silence
 all superfluous dreams melted but one remains
 which rests on the lids of my inward eyes
Narcissus no longer blooms here

i rub my eyes and see the world outside

blue Jacaranda is budding again
with the last rays of the setting sun
a haze of dust settles in quietude
on the leaves of a banyan tree
at a distant horizon

Five Poems

Noah Berlatsky

*Does This Image of Vigorous Rutting Violate Your
TOS?*

Does
this
video
of
penetrative
fucking
violate
your
TOS?

Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology

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Help Me Create Text Art

I am interested in the connections between poetry and text art.

I wish my poetry to be informed by the best text art. My poetry would benefit I think if I could read some books on text art.

After some research, I think I should read *Image and Text in Conceptual Art: Critical Operations in Context*, 2016 Edition.

The hardback version on Amazon sells used for \$99.61.

There is also a paperback version for \$71.23.

And I could rent a kindle version for \$35.08.

Usually it is better to buy physical books if you are buying an art book, but this book is about concepts and texts, so there is probably not much to look at. I could be wrong, since I do not know much about text art yet, but that is my guess.

So I will settle for the \$35.08 kindle edition.

I would appreciate it if you would help me buy *Image and Text in Conceptual Art: Critical Operations in Context*, 2016 Edition, so that I can make better poetry.

The easiest way to contribute is to become a paid subscriber to my substack:

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Then you can follow my writing also and see how my text art improves thanks to the book you have helped me buy.

I look forward to reading *Image and Text in Conceptual Art: Critical Operations in Context*, 2016 Edition, and to making better text art with your help. Thank you.

Poem By Borges

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date;
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Liberation Is Always Controversial

From the river to the sea
Palestine will be free.

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