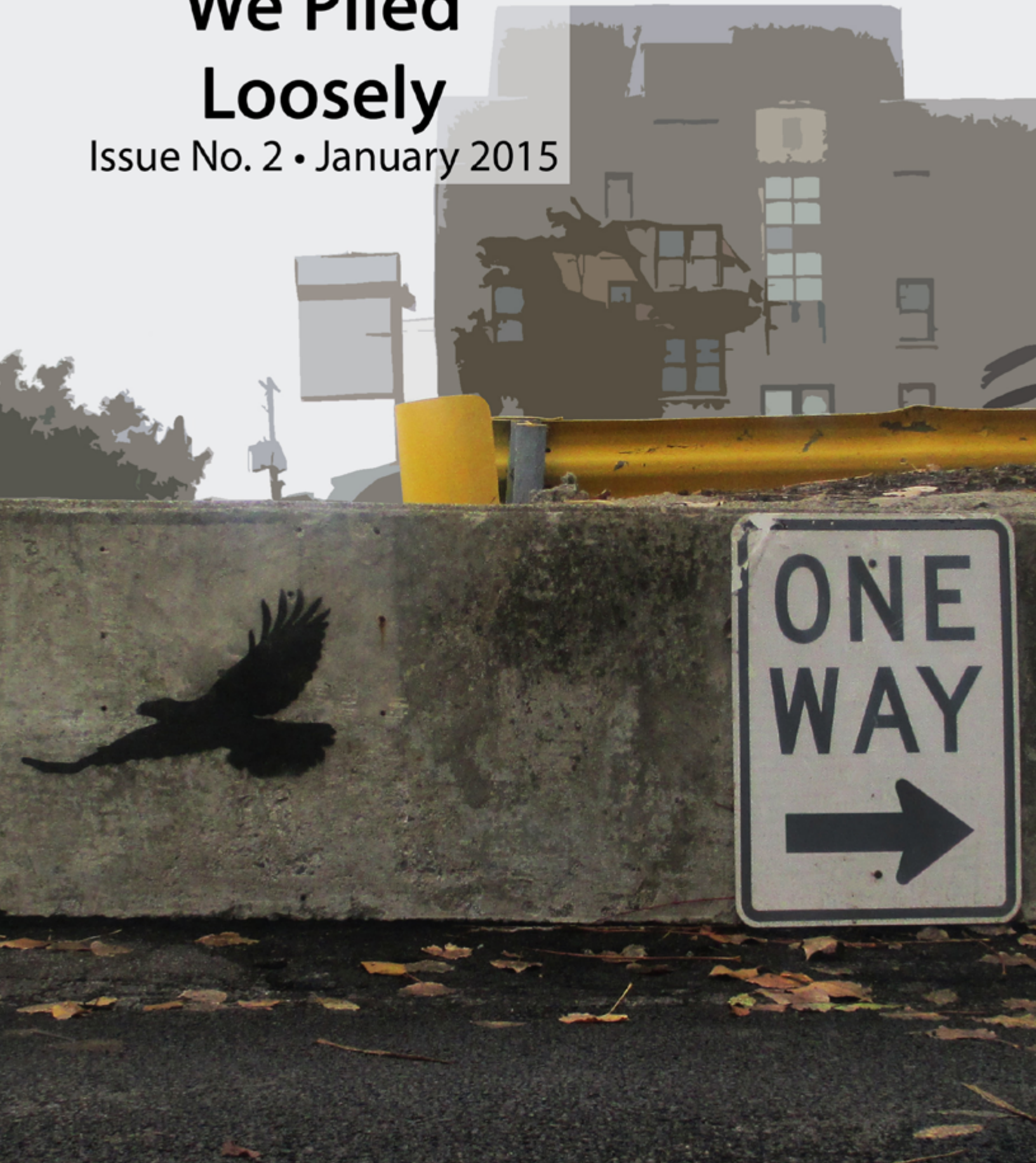


The Birds We Piled Loosely

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EDITED AND DESIGNED BY

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THE BIRDS WE PILED LOOSELY

Through aches and quakes of the changing seasons and migrations of friends from here to there, issue two has come together through clouds of seasonal latté steam. Heading to what have become our usual seats, we shuffled through leaves, snow, and submissions, long and short. We were extremely enthusiastic to see the continuing outpouring of submissions from you all. Like postmen, weather, illness, injury, and piles of work could not stop us from making this magazine happen. Every Sunday we were revived with new work across the genre spectrum. We continue to find new and exciting writers from very near, and very far. Many heartfelt thank you's are in order for each and every one of you who helped in making *The Birds We Piled Loosely Issue 2* possible.

From warm groups of gray jays, fluffed-feathered finches, and shivering seagulls—

Nicole Letson & Johnathan McClintick

FIELD MANUAL

M.C. McCoy

Appendix G: Water Usage in Desert

Walking requires 1 gallon for every 20 miles at night,
2 gallons for every 20 miles during the day.

Without any water, walking only at night,
you may cover 20 to 25 miles before collapsing.

If chance of rescue is not increased by walking 20 miles,
you may be better off staying put, surviving 1 to 3 days longer.

If you do not know where you are going,
do not try to walk with a limited supply.

Example 2.

A 20-child platoon abandoned by coyotes
requires 2 gallons per child per day for drinking,
1.5 gallons per child per day for personal hygiene,
or 3.5 gallons per child per day.

For the whole platoon,
70 gallons per day are required.

(Meals not considered.)

In order for water to be useful for its most critical purpose,
it must be protected from enemy action.

Trails of empty jugs,
plastic, ground

rusting like dead leaves,
La Migra was here.

****Acknowledgment: Sections of this poem are adapted from U.S. Army FM 90-3 Appendix
G Desert Operations***

LIFE IN EXILE

Mira Martin-Parker

Blackstone Boulevard, the Buena Vista apartment complex
some strip malls, some old cars, a Peppermill restaurant.
It is hot here, hot hot hot!
So jump in and swim, because that's all there is to do.
And there will be a fluffy peach colored towel
waiting for you.

Yes, there are manicured lawns and an RV Park
where little blond children run barefoot through the grass,
laughing and throwing plastic toys.
And there's also lots of pink soda and that cheese stuff—
best to eat just a little and smile.

There's a district on the west side of town
where the dust blows and the garbage blows,
but no one goes there.
At night, when blue light shines from windows all around
young people sneak from their homes
and drive out to the almond orchards to drink.

There's a neon sign in the shape of a rainbow
on old highway 99, past the industrial section.
It was put up in the twenties and now they can't take it down—
it has landmark status and must be maintained.
Welcome, it says, Welcome to Fresno.

SUNRISE ON GARBAGE

Andrew Pidoux

Her name was Xandi and she lived at the top of a great heap of garbage perpetually adrift in space between the two largest planets orbiting the sun we know as Alpha Centuri. The heap had formed over a period of seven centuries as a consequence of the clean-world policy of Dades, the larger planet, which prohibited even the tiniest litter drop or the smallest cigarette splash on penalty of imprisonment. Xandi liked living there, because the mornings were bright and flared orange and red, and she was able to sunbathe on a little balcony of trash she had improvised in what was once an old bus but which had been hollowed out by previous parasites—that is residents—and was now perfect for perching in. She watched those sunrises with an intentness that we on Earth reserve for the movie theater, but this wasn't because there was no movie theater on the giant orbiting heap of garbage (there was) but because the sunrises were riveting. Sailing starships from Dades and Zona, the other planet, could be seen ferrying hard-working commuters between them, and their sails caught the solar radiation and gleamed like the wings of mayflies on Earth. They also made a strange, haunting singing noise as they went, which sounded to Xandi a lot like actual music, or perhaps an actual soundtrack. She would drift off into a state of almost-hypnosis while it was going on, and it was going on for well over an hour. The commuters were mostly travelling from Dades, a residential planet, to Zona to work in the mines. Zona was not a planet you would want to live on. The vast ever-churning heaps of miot, a precious metal rare throughout space and completely alien to Earth, made the ground itself unstable and something about the place stank. I say "something about the place" because no one, including the eminent scientists of the day of Dades, had figured out quite what combination of gases and metals produced the smell—it was as elusive as it was untestable—but sometimes it was overpowering, and the commuters had to snap on their masks as soon as they reached the planet and disembarked from those delicate ships. Xandi liked to imagine life on Zona, the day-to-day workings of it, because for her it was shrouded in mystery. The authorities there, the rich merchants who owned the mines, refused to let any photos be taken of the place, so nothing of the daily workings ever escaped. Of course no one could stop the commuters from chatting about it afterwards, and chat they did, but there was always still this air of mystery, for unless we see things with our own eyes, Xandi found, we never fully believe they exist. Part of Xandi wanted to go work on Zona, just to see it. She could get a job, then get herself fired straight away. She was sure she couldn't bear more than a day there, but a day would be enough. Her own day, after all, was pretty predictable after the sensational start of the sunrise. Having breakfasted heartily on fantastical mushrooms (so called for their coloring rather than any psychoactive effect they might smuggle into your breakfast bowl), Xandi would leave her old bus at about nine a.m.. With a full belly, she would begin her climb down the suburb of garbage on which she lived into the guts of the greater heap from which her heap rose. Being a scavenger, she was always searching for food, and beyond fantastical mushrooms, there was very little to eat towards the top of the heap, so the guts it had to be. Down there, she would rub shoulders with some pretty unsavory-looking characters, many of whom had been deformed by radiation from Alpha Centuri because they had never bothered to apply radiation screen, or didn't know how, or couldn't afford it. But despite their odd appearance, they were generally ok. Most had been born on the heap, and most would die there. The only new arrivals

were litter-crimers from Dades or various other criminals from the farther planets, who, while more likely to be villainous, were much fewer in number due to the distances and expense involved in deporting them. Xandi's commute, if we can call it that, took her the vast majority of the morning, and she would only return to her high-altitude perch when she had secured herself a healthy bundle of juicy mine fruit, as it was called. This elusive, glowing candy-like fruit could be seen dripping from the ceilings of the vast caverns of garbage that existed in the depths of the guts, and often had to be gathered at considerable risk. Xandi, however, came equipped with all manner of harnesses and safety clips, which she attached to herself by way of a safety cushion, and by about twelve noon, she usually had a sodden basketful of the fruit to carry back up to her bus. There, by about two, she would be able to sit down again, put up her boots, and, having cooked the fruit quickly in the unprotected heat of the afternoon, settle in to watch the sunset.



A REACTION THEY COULDN'T PREDICT
W. Jack Savage

NOT-LIVING VICARIOUSLY

Yevgeniya Muravyova

The sound of the girl's voice was me running through distant forests of tall pine and isolated trails, like the ones you would see in a retrospective Indie film.

But actually, I was washing the dishes while a giant spider crept up my sternum, carrying on its back a heavy yet hollow feeling that weighed down on my sentiment.

I went upstairs to the bedroom to see if I could drink up the poison that would make it do what all spiders did: expire. But my ipod didn't play battle music so

I sat on the edge of the bed looking over at the empty desk and the wall beyond it—a few paintings hung on hooks, one resembled a little man sitting watching television with a cage next to him with a little man watching television.

I began to feel distasteful ice cream scoops itching at my eye sockets, but then hot lemonade began to stream down the sides of my face, over my lips and to the edge of my face.

Gradually the spider turned more into a wildebeest, into a monkey of some sort, into a little man concerned about the whereabouts of his television.

The lemonade then turned into stale Vitamin C packets as I gasped and turned all the paintings inside out, still drinking the poison hoping the little man could drown.

I knew what this was though, this was me never saying no to the gypsy, it was me never leaving fucking Spain, it was me never quite learning to fend off the spiders.

*AFTER A PANIC ATTACK,
SHE LIES DOWN IN THE GRASS
AND GAZES AT THE STARS*

Mark Jackley

join me
she says
her words
a ladder
safety being
someone
else to see
the universe
is in fact
on fire

NICE MICE PIRATES

Andrew Pidoux

Orbiting the sun we know as Wolf 359, there is a minor planet about the size of Venus and inhabited entirely by mice. These little creatures, resembling Earth mice in every particular, are not only semi-intelligent, but they have, perhaps by dint of their semi-intelligence, learned to live harmoniously together in ways humans can only dream of. The king mouse, one James MCMXCIII, has managed to acquire a reputation for sowing peace in his wake wherever he goes, which is a good deal more than Earth leaders have ever achieved. But among the tiny smokestack dwellings of this charming planet, there have in fact been one or two criminals residing down the years. These semi-dastardly individuals, whom the rest of the population are too nice to have effectively punished, earn their living by petty thievery and even, among the more ruthless members, auto theft. They all wear the instantly identifiable cat mask of their kind and are likely to be seen on any given night roaming through the smoking streets searching for crimes to politely commit, somewhat like trick-or-treating children on Earth. This metaphor is apposite because their antics are greeted with the same weary indulgence that the tricking of trick-or-treaters is greeted with among the adult population of American towns. If, for instance, there was a pile of apples sitting innocently outside one of the dwellings, and the pirate mice clapped an eye on it (they each have only one eye, not by birth but by gouge), they would waste no time in thieving one of those apples, but only the one. It would emerge in the morning that the owner of the house had actually planted the apples outside his little place with the sole aim of having them stolen, and would even be a bit disappointed when he found out that (inevitably) only one had been taken. Such is the relationship between the townsfolk mice and the thieving pirate mice on this singular planet. What happens to the mice thieves after they have finally gathered their meager, childish hoard on any given night is anyone's guess. From here on Earth, even with the most powerful telescopes, it is impossible to ascertain. But it is believed that the mice villains are nomadic, refusing to settle anywhere, because, out of politeness, they do not wish to impose upon the gentle, semi-intelligent members of the society they parasitically live off. They wouldn't dream of even so much as bedding down in someone's stable, for instance, or, God forbid, curling up under the moons' light in someone's driveway or on their lawn. It's easy to imagine that their lack of great mental acuity is behind this shyness, but in fact it really is only politeness, because imposing on others is simply not in the range of possibilities for the inhabitants of this peculiar satellite. So the criminals, such as they are, much forever haunt those quaint little streets, unable and unwilling to even so much as stop for a breather, and becoming, in the process, melancholy wraiths, who, without home or hearth to call their own, can only gaze at the tiny rising columns of smoke and sadly squeak.

MILES DAVIS

Mark Jackley

born in tune
working
the softest registers

the tom cat
pounces
kills

he learned his ruthless art
listening
to himself

ripple

MATRICULATE

Lisa McLemore

She was the catacomb
filled with everything's bones.
She was a drop then a cloud.

Who else knows the desperation of freezing to death on the pyre?

Voices coalesced,
condensed,
grew arms and hands on pens
and wrote her invitations.

She was drowning in breath.

She became rain,
became sea.
Did she connect two sides of her homeland
or divide them?

FROM MOTHER

James Croal Jackson

Live a long life, son. Eat noodles on your birthday.
Al dente. Do it every holiday, so I can live on long

past done spaghetti which sticks upon the wall,
frozen in time against the whims of dun sodden

dust and entities beyond the sounds of crying
from the bathroom at 2 A.M. beneath the black-

dripped canvas of luminous lights. The grass, uncut,
reaches far now above the frizzy tips of your hair



MIXED MEDIA WITH LUNGS
Emily Puccia Colasacco

SPRING

Erin Emily Ann Vance

When I was young, we had doves
ivory springing from concrete cages.
One march birthed infants
-still born.
still warm in my hand I held the tiny,
foetal being
and cried, icy tears marking its grave.
Against my mother's wishes
I refused to place it in the trash
and buried it out back,
in the rain.

OUT OF SEASON

Richard King Perkins II

Forget spring, its predictable eruptions dialing an ageless code: magnolias
and acacia absorb soft orange flutes, the cat skates in the ditch, mousing
leaves in the wind, unencumbered by thistle, pouncing up to startle a rabbit
into motion, stretched to a sprint, leaving behind a spread of honeystalks
arrived on limpid wafts, freshly arisen from the peat of sighs and vines,
revealed as the heart's rarest seedling, forgotten women who have given
comfort in every hour, above the Chinese restaurant, the stacked columns
of take-out containers, soliloquies of open tables, celebrations of nourishment
and enrichment, how our bodies parted after being so intimately linked, the
mind of truth, where one movement only prevents another, rain spread lightly
as butterflies, reversing flight, the first element of darkness, fear departs as
fog, a supple plea attaching to the pink mist of morning that rises to my eyes.
How vital and random the dew on my lashes, the burrs clinging to the calico
hair. So much greater are we to see above the slope of this minor stillness.



STEVENSBURG, VIRGINIA
Mark Jackley

I topped the knoll and saw them,
mourners at a grave.
A hayfield in October
lapped the little church.

Two seas:
one of grief,
one of absent hay
baled up like a fist
holding its secrets tight.

THE BONE YARD

Frederick K. Foote Jr.

The two of us are alone in his kitchen.

We just got the news.

"So what do we do now? Wait? Stand around waiting for me to die?"

My brother has the lazy, sly man smile on his shrunken face. A smile from a paper thin brown mask stretched over bone.

"No, no that was purely rhetorical. What we do is break out the bones. We play Big Six. We drink that ghetto beer you like and tell some lies."

"That chemo done clouded your mind and erased your memory. You would rather walk through hell in gasoline soaked drawers than get on the dominoes table with me man."

"Negro, please, I put the "D" in Dominoes. You fools were calling it 'Ominoies' before I set you straight."

He pauses to catch his breath and to let his indignation sink in. I get down the dominoes.

"Now, now this is serious business, as serious as death and taxes. You think you so bad, so how about a quarter a game? You up to that?" He places the two beers on the table.

"OK, kinda steep ain't it? I mean, you with pending funeral expenses and all."

"You right, you right, but I'll beat you so bad that I will make enough to bury us both."

He shuffles. We pull. I pull big six.

"Big Six ain't no magic trick. I'm gonna make you sick with that six."

"How is June taking it?"

He pauses to look at me.

"Hey, I ain't in the ground yet. Keep your grubby hands off my wife."

I wait for his next play.

"She holding up. She's holding up the whole family. She holding me up. She's that strong."

He plays the six-three.

"One five said the black cat talking jive. I need the money to stay alive."

I record his fifteen points.

All money ain't good money. A nickel and dime crime will still leave you doing time."

I play six-two.

"Let me close these legs and put a nickel in the bank. Anything you need me to do?"

"You begging with that nickel." He looks around to make sure we are alone. "You remember when we did that cross the USA road trip after college? Remember when we got stuck in Winnemucca?"

"Yeah, the Candle Light Girls and the endless tequila. I still think we must have dreamed that stuff up."

"Do that for me. Make it feel like that. Like things are just as they should be and we in the right place at the right time. Make it a party."

"I got a better idea. You do that for me. That's a tall order. You stick around and do that for me."

We agree to do for each other and I win three out of five games.

I warned him. You heard me.

FIREFIGHT

Frederick K. Foote Jr.

Inspired by events recorded in Bloods: Black Veterans of the Vietnam War: An Oral History by Terry, Wallace

Ain't this some shit? We sitting out here in broad daylight doing a joint sweep with "B" Company, "B" Company, the greatest collection of fuckups to ever put on uniforms. Shit.

I'm on the 50 caliber machine gun on the halftrack, looking out over rice fields and huts. Any insurgents are long gone.

I fucked the Green Witch last night, smoked myself blind, so I'm cool with it. I can live with it. I close my eyes and I see the sweet, young country girl in the black pajamas walking bare foot down a dirt road with a straw hat and a basket, walking to market. I pass her and smile. She looks away and turns back as I pass and gives me the sweetest smile. I-

Jo Jo is pulling on my pants leg and pointing toward a rice paddy at three o'clock. Fucking "B" Company has prisoners, three old men and a teenage girl or boy. Sergeant Rider and his new Platoon CO, Lieutenant Patton, and two other knuckle heads are herding the prisoners to the middle of the paddy. Rider forces his prisoners to kneel.

Fuck this shit! We ain't killing no old ass, brown people today. "Jo Jo, fire a warning over their heads."

There is the klack, klack sound of two M16 shots echoing over the rice paddy. The "B" Company fools drop like they been shot. The new CO falls into the shit with his men. Rider doesn't duck he recognizes the tinny sound of our pop guns.

Rider looks directly at me. I wag my finger at him, no, no. I motion for him to let his prisoners go.

He gives me the finger. He raises his rifle to the back of one of the old men's head.

I click the safety off the 50. I see my squad members clicking off their safeties all around me as "A" company gets ready to rock and roll in the morning mist, the fucking OK Corral in the wild, wild east.

Buck, our big, dumb ass, white, West Virginia sniper targets Rider. Rider sees him line him up. I could kiss Buck.

Nobody in "B" Company has clicked off their safeties. The cowardly motherfuckers. I should light em up on GP. That's not me, that's the Green Witch talking, but that bitch is convincing.

Russell, with his AK-47 at the ready, wades over to the group in the rice field. He stops and shakes his head at Rider. Russell bends down and helps the old people up. He sends them all on their way.

The whole thing took about two minutes.

Our new platoon CO finally, at last, just begins to understand what happened. He is incredulous.

He demands we put our weapons down and prepare to face a court martial. The "B" Company Lieutenant arrives smelling like shit and demanding my arrest. I think the fool wants to pull his sidearm. Rider hangs back looking for an opportunity to do dirt. Ain't none us giving up shit. We decide this shit ends here and now in the field.

"B" company is now getting all loud and angry like they going to do something, but that time has passed.

First Sergeant Garcia to the rescue. He has been watching the whole show and ain't said shit. Garcia runs "A" Company no matter who the Captain is and God help any Lieutenant that gets in his way. Garcia only about five-six, but don't nobody fuck with him.

He takes the new CO's and Rider down the road apiece. The Lieutenants are jumping around mad as hornets.

Garcia talks sense to them. They brand new and on their first day in the field they lose control of their companies. Our Lieutenant, Turner, was so slow to act that he might be the one facing court martial. That shuts Turner up.

And Patton was executing prisoners in violation of our Standing Operating Orders. Garcia states the SOO letter perfect.

That shuts up Patton. Patton so new that he don't know that no one follows the SOOs. The resolution is that Garcia will figure out a punishment for me as the ring leader and that Rider will go over the SOOs with Patton.

Now, "B" Company hates me worse than they hate the gooks. Fuck em all. Next time, I will light em up.

Garcia has harsh words for me. "Corporal Wilson, don't you ever pull that fucking shit again unless you got all the bars and stars in the field of fire. If you leave one brass wearing motherfucker alive we all fucked." My punishment, I do base guard duty rather than patrols for one week. Base guard duty is much safer duty.

We fuck the Green Witch and get ready for the next day. Shit, every day is a good day when you fucking the Witch and in Uncle Sam's Army. It's all good all the time.

RESERVES

Dan Townsend

A soldier from Carrollton died overseas, and Sharon made me take a photog to get some quotes from his friends. They were partying by picnic tables at a lake. I asked one of the better looking girls what she will remember most about Jose, the deceased.

She said, "I could talk to him about whatever."

Curious, I asked, "Like what?" She gave me a look. I rephrased: "What could you talk to him about?"

The photog looked up from his camera. I waved him away aggressively.

The girl wore heavy eye makeup, and it worked for her. She said she knew Jose liked her. All through school he'd asked her out, and she said no. Jose had a big bird nose. She wanted to say yes, but she couldn't get around that nose. How would it reflect on her if she dated him? She would be the girlfriend of somebody with a nose like that. She couldn't do it. When he joined the army, she felt like it was a little bit her fault. Everyone knew he was depressed and one of the reasons he was depressed was that he didn't have a girlfriend. Now that he was dead she felt guilty. It was crazy, she admitted, but she wished she'd gone out with him, not for long, for a month or two. She'd been with worse guys for longer. What would a month have hurt? She could have saved his life.

I asked, "What were your talks like?"

"Really," she said, "the only thing we talked about was why I wouldn't go out with him."

"His nose?"

"No. I made up other reasons. I said it was because I liked someone else. One time I told him I needed space." She smiled. "Maybe talking with Jose felt serious because I was always lying to him."

I didn't say anything.

She said, "This won't be on the news, will it?"

I shook my head. The photog was getting a shot of everyone together. Someone was holding a candle. The girl said, "This is so crazy."

I told her I was sorry for her loss. I poured her a beer.

Someone said this had been Jose's favorite spot. It smelled like mud, and the men were peeing by a tree that was too close to where everyone was standing. The sun set over the water and jet skiers shouted curses to us in a way that was friendly.

FOOTBALL PLAYER'S THANKSGIVING PRO/AMATEUR

Brad Sime

He's on a jet ski
and it's early morning.
Nothing is in use.

Do I love my wife?
Is this morning hotter than yesterday?
Do I like this?

The jet ski
slaps the water again and
again and again.

TOMMY

Robert-Reid Drake

Young hustler, too tired from work to do anything but hold me. In his lofted mat our limbs will be tied. His laptop will out shine our awkward entanglement— of trial and error, yes then no, our finding of places. He will show me his favorite cartoons and how he, in five years time, will be done with sex work— will be set up on Telegraph, selling old ladies and new families hand carved candles. I will fall asleep on this stranger's chest.

In the morning we will be woken by the church goes outside. At the corner of 34th and Market, Seventh Day Adventists will sway in a stream of hats and his hands will raise the hairs in the divot of my chest. We will rock in motion with their shoes, shined and shuffling toward creaking pews and when someone shouts EY BROS! through the window he will laugh and I will scream as a fourth finger slips inside.

When the doctor asks how I got the lesion on my foot I will say I stepped on some trash/I will think what kind of love could you read in my infection? What else could you see besides risky behavior? Surely not the meeting of our eyes as he knelt naked collecting my blood, not the stain it left in the middle of his floor, nor the candle he slipped in my bag while I sat in the bathroom dressing my wounds.



EMMA IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

Richard King Perkins II

She is ultra-vegan—
eats dandelions and cottonballs
drinks puddle

floats in the breath of clover
and wild mustard
sleeps in poppy blossoms
and grassy seams
dreams in a bed
of artificial feathers.

Independence misfires
and she finds herself
living free on a fur farm
which reeks of stoat fear
and subjective cruelty.

At night, when she takes
her paper and plastics
out to the recycling bin
that doesn't exist

fireflies and a keychain flashlight
illuminate her curious path
across the yard

as she hears the crunch of hacked-off
mink paws beneath her feet

and the strange chirpings
of the semi-dead
still stirring in a shallow dumpster.

PREGNANCY TEST GARDEN

Lisa McLemore

the baby sleeps in an egg
ducks out of the
office when I call

let geraniums grow from my hands
roses from my belly
my body is a bed of soil a plane of doors

I am a malleable pool
I plant gardens fertilized in time
I hope for a bloom a duck a fish a visitor

negative negative



FEMALE FIGURE
Emily Puccia Colasacco

ABORTION MAN

Dan Townsend

I asked Cassie if she'd ever had an abortion and she said she had, when she was in her twenties. I'd been thinking about abortion as a possibility for Jen. Cassie told me about her abortion man. He was a server at the place where she worked. He was in a band and wanted to keep it, their baby. He had a vision of himself touring with his band and sending her money from the road. She might've fallen for it. She waited three weeks, and then, on a rare night when both of them had off from the bar where they worked, she went to one of his gigs. The band was terrible. She wanted to leave, to go outside, to get away from the noise of their music, but she didn't. She sat watching, listening carefully, knowing she'd never hear her boyfriend play without thinking of the abortion she now knew she had to get.

I asked, "Do you hear the crying of ghost babies?"

We were like this.

She said, "No, but it changes how you think."

This was after a party. I'd laid back on her futon to pass out. I smelled like the bottom of a canoe. In two months, it would be Halloween.

"Seriously," I said. "What's it like being pregnant?"

"It's like having a drive-thru window become one of your body parts."

"You don't regret it?"

She put a finger on her nose ring and eyed the sofa cushion on the floor.

She whispered, "After they took it out of me, I felt like I'd won an election."

The next day, when I got home, Jen showed me the new brand of bottled water we were going to drink because harmful chemicals from this brand's bottles were less likely to have leached into the water. I pictured mean faces on shark shaped molecules. We talked about work. On the kitchen island was a list of errands beneath my name, which had been underlined.

"WHAT IS KANT?"

Moshe Fine

Kant! Kant! Hello! Anybody?

This is the short and small of it: When you are birthed into abstraction, you want abstraction to act in the way of your womb. You want to feel love against your body. Prettiness a wound in your spine like a pudding skinned infinity.

I have not come this time to offer you redemption, but to dangle it nearby. See if you can get it from me.

I can tell you this, too. The Greeks had slaves, women, at least three political parties. How do you think you'll do, conditioned to growl at the words 'income inequality.'

Kant wants back in his thoughts, Alice and Marie. You are entitled and c. You are, my wagoner, ontologically distinct. Dear Diary, for the first among equals, I have exceeded all unreasoned projections. Mother will be so proud, so jealous.

Following find a list of those who have offended.

The snake, Vincent.

Asia minor.

Asia major.

Architect of my insides, rib cage radical, remnant of Pangaea, restive still throat.

Varicella, tollbooth 3a, Henry Hudson Parkway, NY NY.

Others.

Kant is plied with food and blink sliding on so fast black ice so fast toward the stopped mass yellow hazard lights blink and his head sings and he spits a tooth on the naked concrete and the bulb swings back from behind the small cloth-faced man and his eyes wet blink and John throws the drapes wide so a slab of sunlight falls just short of her face and she gets out of bed like she'd been waiting awake beneath the covers for an hour and meets the sun in the mirror and blinks.



ARRESTED SPACE
Leonard Kogan

UNRECOGNIZABLE

Marcia Arrieta

a woman dressed in feathers & branches
walks between here & there—
blue, yellow, orange.
perhaps she is heretofore throughout restored
like an old book or a recycled egg carton.
the woman is the poem
or the poem is the woman.
it is hard to tell with so many feathers & branches.
her words have been corrected numerous times,
so when she speaks wisps of clouds resonate
like an empty boat or maybe the boat is carrying flowers.
she has invented her identity to consist of carrying a water
tower & paintbrush, & she fails to understand either.
cynicism is corrupt she thinks as she scrapes gum off the floor.



CONSTANT

Erin Emily Ann Vance

the acne scars on your back
are dark braille,
three-dimensional tattoos without images

your body is a soaking book.

you are coffee beans and low blood pressure
and the craters dug from your skin by adolescence
that ripen and swell soft
are sugar cubes and apple cores;
sweet

so we spill like acid onto the linoleum of our high school
and sleep, cycling the same mountain breaths
the nights we lie on our backs
nightmares filter in through our nostrils

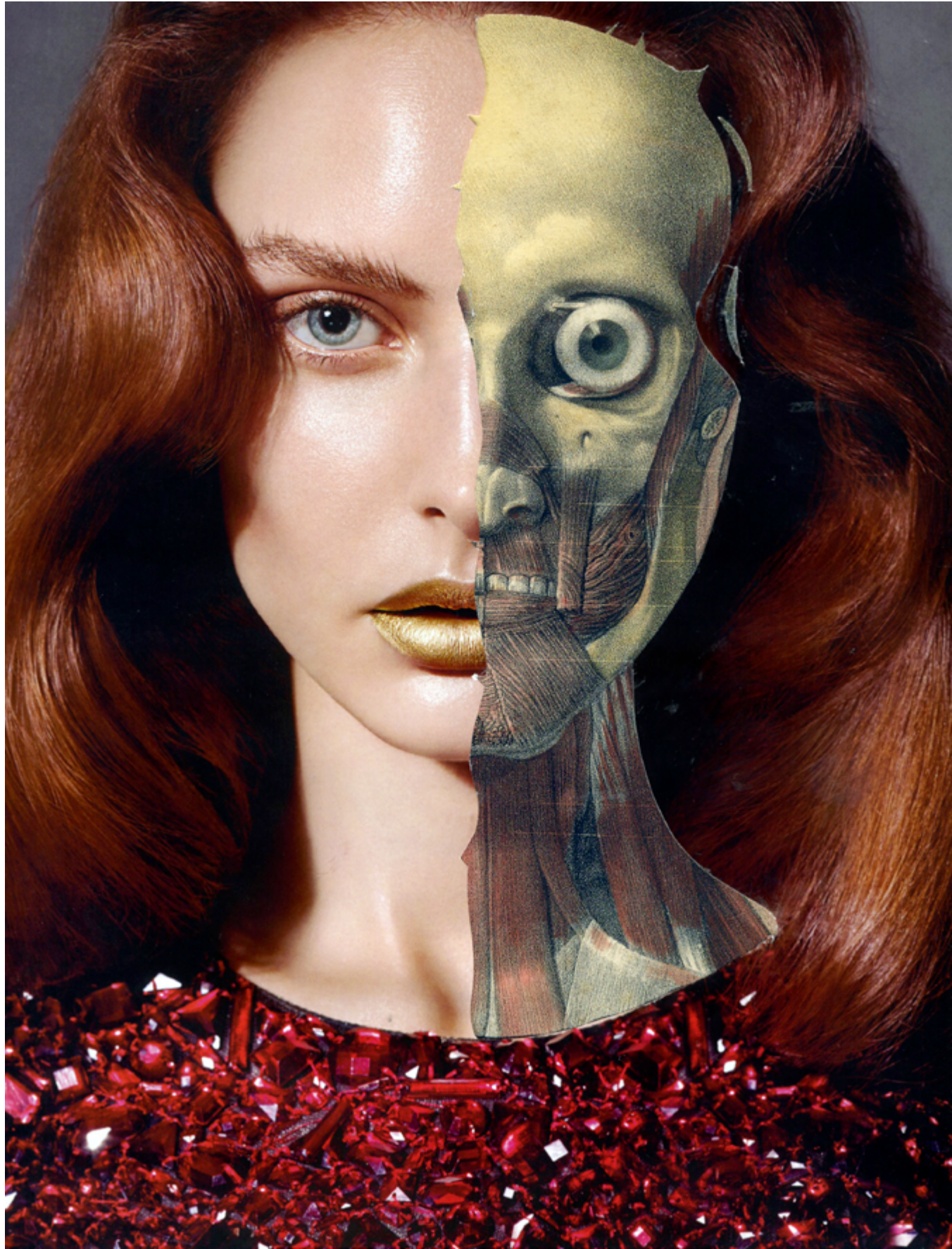
the pockmarks on your back are epsom salt mines
and in the world's asymmetry
they are rough
they are blank diamonds in coffee cups

you are a medical text in a dead language
vandalized with water-colour

your fingers are uneven carrots from my garden,
they are white with drought

but you are unclipped toenails
and espresso with a pinch of salt
so we snore through the night
and slip in the shower

we are moth-surgeons
radiating red



RETRATO
Oscar Varona

THE HEART'S OPTIC NERVE

Ed Higgins

As if she needed a reason
for the way her tears
moved to the outer edges
of her light blue eyes

then traced small shadows
down her cheeks,
outwitting even her hand
trying to strike them away.

Obeying only their own
downward motion as when
you too hastily overfill
a glass, rising past the rim.

The liquid held there
by some inviolable rule or other
regarding surface tension,
or else momentary surprise.

Then the gray stone
which is life's sadness lets fall
through whatever resistance
or spell we once imagined

we held over ourselves
into the unsteady physics
between optic nerve and
the heart's liquid mechanism.



SIGO TIRADO EN EL SUELO
Oscar Varona



RAMIFICACIONES
Oscar Varona

THERE IS REST FOR THE WICKED

Vincent Douarre

"Why did we choose this hotel?"

"I thought you'd like it."

"I do."

"Okay, then."

Ernest sat quietly on the bed without making a noise, one hand on top of the other, fully covering his knees. He was a glider, one of these men that creep on you. Rudolf did not sit next to him. He decided to explore the room. The white towels were to be put on the floor if dirty. The small soaps were wrapped. Housekeeping had just dropped off their bags, two vintage suitcases that had a floral pattern for his husband, and birds for him. They fit right in with the wallpaper, dark green and lush.

"Should we go to dinner?"

"Sure. Is it time yet?"

"It's seven."

"Then we should. Do you want to change?"

"Yes."

They looked alike. They talked at the same pace. They would initiate holding hands at the same time. Their droopy eyelids covered their gray eyes in the same way.

Rudolf put on a dark green shirt, and Ernest, a dark blue one. They kicked off their leather derbies for some suede shoes, with some navy blue socks. Rudolf tried to adjust Ernest's tie, but he mumbled something, went to the bathroom, and came back with an adjusted knot. Rudolf had left his own tie a bit crooked, but as he turned, Ernest had vanished, and he could hear the clicking sounds of his shoes in the long corridor. He caught up with him. There was panic in Ernest's eyes. There was absence in Rudolf's.

"Do you think it will be good?"

"We'll know when we're there."

"You're right."

"You look nice."

"You too. Your hair is a bit long."

Ernest's hair had outgrown Rudolf's this last week.

"I'll get it cut when we come back."

"I know."

The elevator was old, and they did not smile at the operator. Ernest found him handsome. So did Rudolf. They both stared at him, before deciding to stare at each other. They did so for a while, bored with the sight of a mirror, and both turned towards the faded golden gate that protected them from the passing walls.

The grand dining room was sub-par. It was cleaned thoroughly, rather than perfectly. Ernest ran his finger on the carpet, which embarrassed Rudolf, and retrieved a bit of dust. It was Rudolf that clicked his tongue at this sight, and Ernest got up. They were irritated to not be assigned a table. They didn't like choosing one. Some people were laughing. They didn't seem to want to respect the drooping trees outside.

A maid that was veiled like the rest of them brought them the first dish.

"Could you cut more silently?"

"Yes."

"When are you going to start?"

"Now."

Some fish was served.

"When's your next photoshoot?"

"In two days."

One of them put down his cutlery silently. He shivered and cried a bit. Some guests stared at him. The maid, that was putting down a parfait looked at him quizzingly.

"He's fine."

She left, and he regained composure. He had dabbed his eyes with his taupe napkin so efficiently and so early in the crying process that he had barely no traces of it. If anything, it had given his lashes a slightly thicker texture, that matched exactly his husband's.

"When's the book launch?"

"Next week."

This time, it was the other that shivered and cried and dabbed his eyes. Except he had bitten his lip, making his lips a bit redder, just like the lips in front of his. His humiliation had also lead to him turning whiter, and the subtle complexion he caught, that did not vary that much from his natural one, brought him, once again, one shade closer to the man in front of him.

"Why did you write a tell-all?"

"Why are you still a model?"

Ernest didn't touch his parfait, so neither did Rudolf. He didn't want to weigh more than his partner.

"Why did you do it?"

"I don't know."

They both got up, and got back to the room. There was a storm, and great flashes of lightning provided enough light for the both of them. They kicked off their shoes before putting them neatly on each side of the bed, and then, they lied down on it.

They adjusted themselves so they'd be symmetrical, on the side, knees slightly bent, facing each other, with a hand on each other's hip and the other underneath their own head. They were still fully clothed, but both felt the need to cover up.

The wallpaper turned a bit darker, as did the suitcases. The whimsical birds and quirky flowers now looked aged and eerie, as did the men's skin. The light had accentuated the cavities of their faces, and they looked hollowed out, like wax that had burned for too long. But that was only for a second. The rest was invisible. It wasn't darkness, it was just layered with some slices of it. You could still see the gossamer curtain. It reminded them of their wedding. Of how they had liked the curtains. They wanted less lace, less show, they considered a gay wedding show enough. But the curtains were there, in the pictures. There was lace everywhere in the hotel.

In fact, Rudolf felt like gossamer dipped in wax, like smothered transparency. He got up, and sat on the side of the bed. Ernest sat down next to him, this time.

"I don't think I need that nose job."

"Why?"

"It wouldn't look like yours anymore."

"Would that hurt your career?"

"Yes."

There was small lull, where one of the four hands crept on the other, before he continued.

"Anything for you."

RAYMOND & EDITH

Dan Nielsen

Raymond started the car. He didn't turn the heater on right away because it would blow cold air on Edith, who would then announce that the heater was broken. Instead, he let the car run, and got back out.

"Raymond, where are you going?" Edith said. "Did you forget something? You're always forgetting things. You'd forget your own head if it wasn't glued on."

Methodically, and with great determination, Raymond moved around the car kicking accumulated slush from the tire crannies. Edith watched Raymond. She scowled. She pressed a button. The frozen window hesitated, made a grinding noise, and finally went down.

"You're kicking too hard!" Edith shouted. "You'll leave scuffs!"

Raymond hesitated a moment, then kicked extra hard at the passenger's side bumper. The whole car shook and ice fell free with a sound like quarters from a slot machine. Edith turned away and muttered something that wasn't even words.

Back in the car, Raymond turned the heat to high. Edith immediately lowered it to medium.

"When it's on high," Edith explained, "I worry that we'll explode."

Raymond slowly backed out of the driveway. He was being extra careful because the snow mound between the sidewalk and the street was shoulder high. He looked left, then right, then left again, and eased down the final slope into the road. He turned the wheel and ... hit something.

Edith screamed like they'd run over a small child. Raymond got out to take a look. It was a recycle bin, the kind the city made you buy so the world wouldn't end quite so soon.

Edith had her head out the window. "Raymond, you forgot to put the bin back in the back and now you've hit it with the car!"

Raymond shouted from the street, "Mother, it's not our bin!"

"Shouting doesn't make a lie come true!" Edith shouted back.

"Mother, our bin is in the back!" Raymond walked to the opened window so he wouldn't have to shout. "It's not our bin, Mother."

Edith opened her door, hitting Raymond on the thigh.

"Let me out!" Edith said, "I need to see what's going on here!"

"Be careful, Mom," Raymond said. "It's icy."

"I can see it's icy," Edith said. "What am I, blind?"

The recycle bin had a red "Violation!" tag attached. Raymond lifted the lid. It was filled with garbage: banana peels, coffee grounds, stuff scraped off plates.

"This isn't our bin," Edith said.

"It's those idiots across the street," Raymond said. "The truck goes there first, they miss it, and then they bring it over here. The red tag means they'll need to pay a fine."

"They?" Edith said. "You mean we, don't you? It's in front of our house."

"No, it's them who have to pay," Raymond said. "The city knows who owns the bin by the chip in the handle." Edith looked at the handle. "Not that kind of chip, Mom. It's a computer chip. It says who owns the bin, and where it belongs."

"Okay, mister know it all, push it back across, and let's get to the Pick & Save before I miss my shows," Edith said, then added, "But I still think we're in trouble. I've got a bad

feeling about this whole thing."

"It's okay, Mother," Raymond said. "Everything will be fine."

ALONG A MORNING FENCE

James Croal Jackson

i think of white-speckled unshaved hairs
& sunlight's curve crowning

a disposed Häagen-Dazs wrapper
ivory tossed, disposed,
the white lynx angelic against green vines,
patella along the ridge of the cement,
dovelike mouth merely twisting,

mouthng "sweet strawberry,
why haven't you come looking?"

THE STUDENT

Robin Wyatt Dunn

The student sings into the dawn daylight the song of her religion which is war the war
for funding and the tar with which to slick our sticky vessel now we bore into the whore
of the city to tremble to assemble our great many armies of soldiers, students, and manu-
scripts, this evening ocean of our desires, and her ass:

at last it fetches me, this gruesome tragedy of education now at rift it sifts its iron menace
of flour down into my hair for me to shallowly embrace the image of the baker, though I
have made no bread, only a flirt, a little shirt to wear when she's around, when she sits be-
neath my oval sundress I fling over the students' eyes, another rendition of old empires—

STRANGE BATHS

Ashlie Allen

I buttoned my jacket
and went outside
to find my daughter
bathing a frog
and to see the frog
bathing a moth

AS IF THEY HAD SHED THEIR LIVES

Patty Somlo

Through the goggles everything appeared red and blurred around the edges. A body would come into view, a dark red blob emerging out of the light red mist. Sometimes she saw a leg. Or felt a hand against her arm and afterward saw the body brush past.

What she liked most was when only one body swam in the lane with her and they moved as if by choreography. He, this way. She, that way. He, being a body, nothing more. Not a person with a name or occupation. In those moments of paddling past one another, his feet flapping so sweetly, so delicate, making her recall the delight she felt as a child at seeing tadpoles and being told they would one day grow up to be frogs, he and she were the same. Helplessly suspended by water, as innocent as skin, bone and muscle curling like lips in a womb.

As if they had shed their lives when they lowered their bodies into the pool. The lined suits, the briefcases nearly too heavy to hold, the two children, a flirtation with the secretary. Everything came off, to be replaced by a thin film of nylon and they were free.

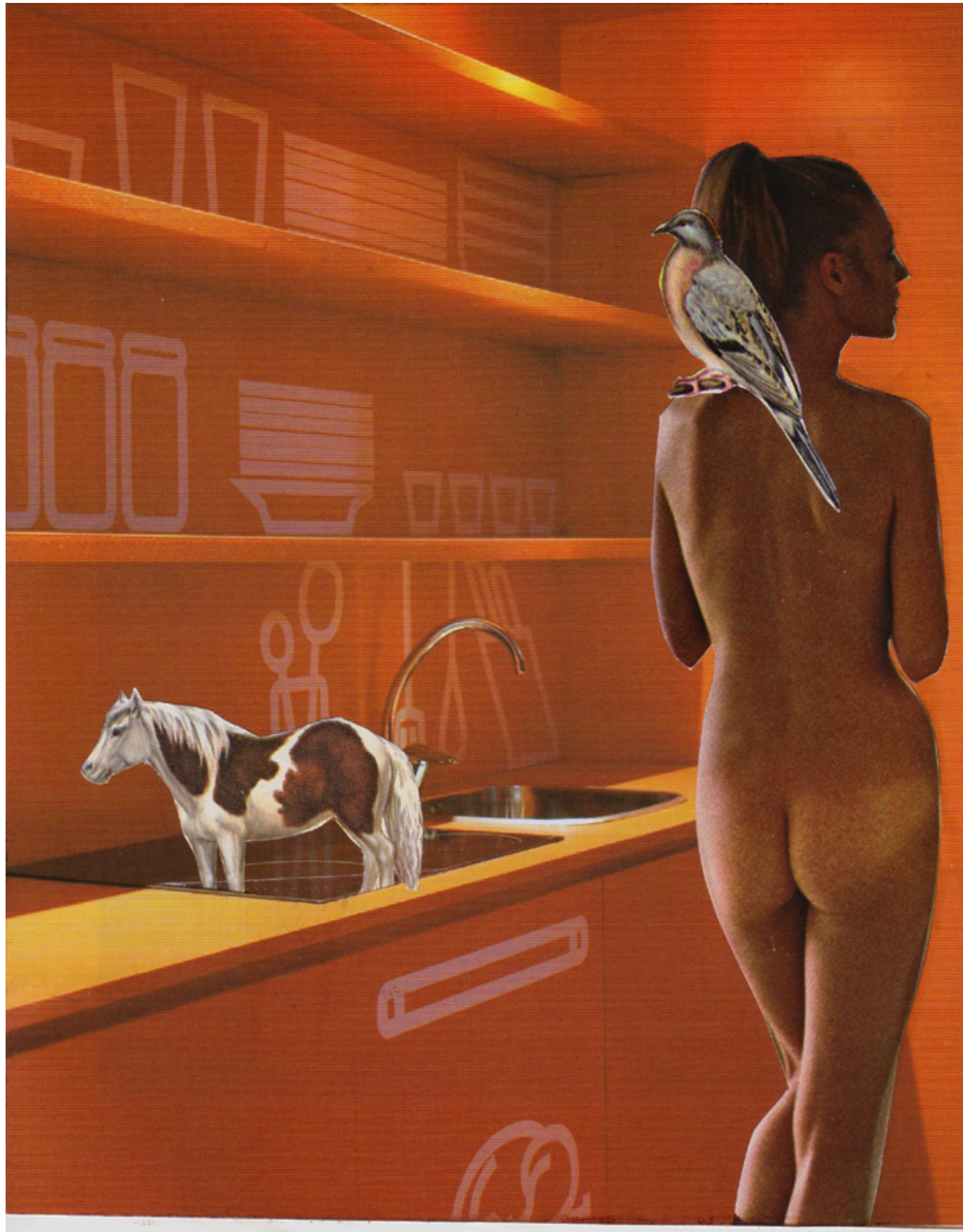
She never wished to know the men outside the pool. Separate from the water, their bodies stiff and erect once again, not soft and curled. She heard the conversations, just outside the locker room or sitting at the pool's edge, feet dangling in the water. The marathons they ran. The deals they were cutting. In the pool, they were innocent and vulnerable, their bodies rocked and soothed so that they found themselves humming without knowing why.

Reaching her arm up, out and over, the fingers curled, water scooped into and out of the perfect arch of her palm, she would pass a man swimming in the opposite direction and find herself drawn to him. She loved the tingle on her skin as he passed, and in that moment wondered what he was thinking. Did he feel it too? The weight of the water suddenly grown heavier, the way each of them had to pull back an arm, a leg, a torso, before becoming completely entangled with the other.

There were no words and she liked that. The silence between them and the way that no words came to her when they passed, simply the movement of a leg extending into his lane, the brush of her arm with his cupped hand, the water pulling each of them toward the center.

Later when she sat in the Jacuzzi by the side of the pool and only the heads of the men were visible above the whirling, white-bubbled water, she wondered which of those heads belonged to him. She enjoyed the mystery and liked to imagine that he knew, that from then on he would look for the black and white diagonal stripes on the back of her bathing suit, the white bathing cap and the red goggles, deciding without hesitation to swim in her lane. That he would go home afterward and in the middle of dinner, a nice fresh pasta with a light tomato, wine and vegetable sauce, his wife would say, "You seem like you're a million miles away."

His visible body certainly there at the table where it belonged, but his unseen body still with her, floating and letting the warm water take them wherever the lifting, swirling, slightly salty rolling curve of motion and irresistible attraction was destined to go.

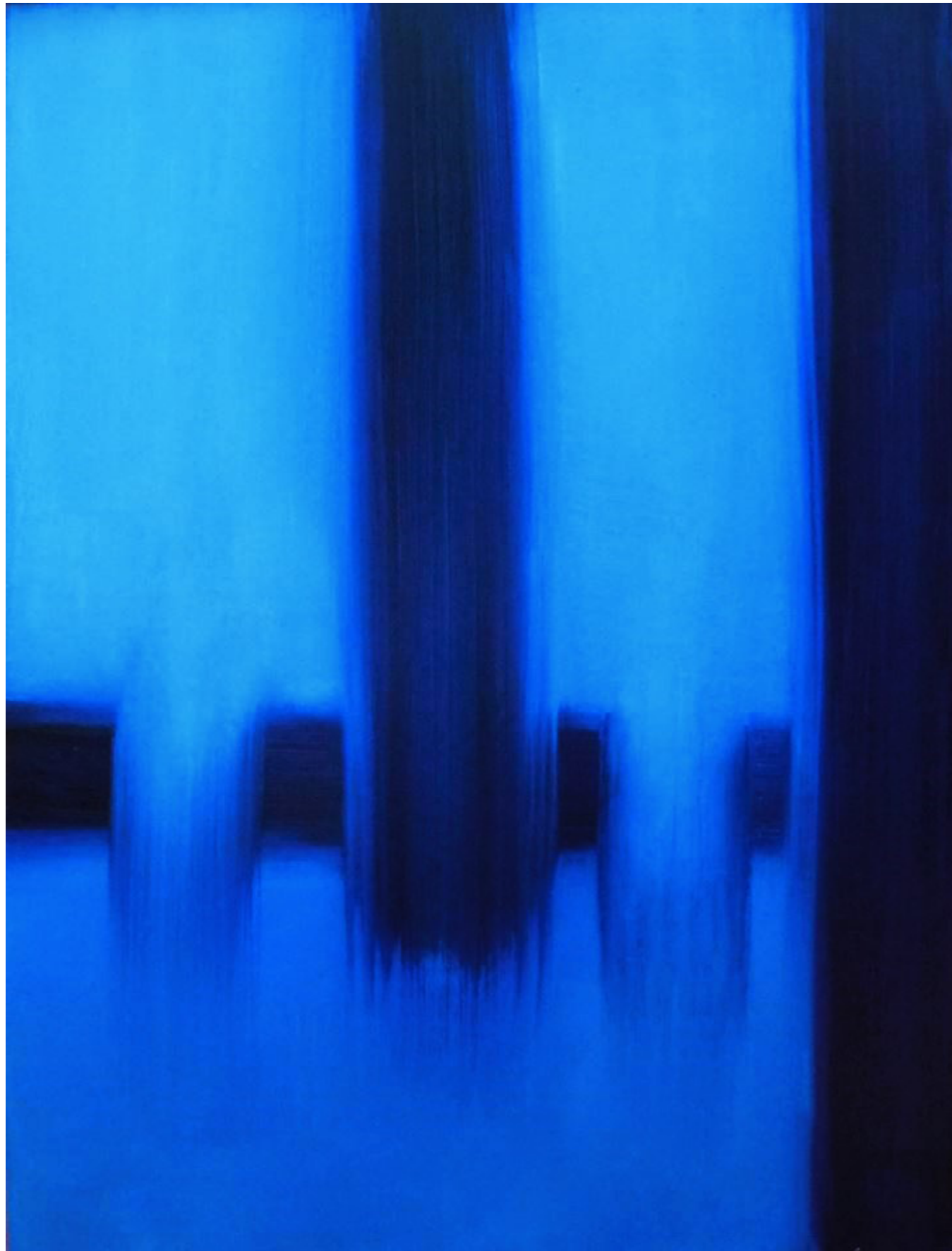


SCENE IN RED APARTMENT
Emily Puccia Colasacco

THE LAST DAY
Lisa McLemore

In the end,
the glass makes a silhouette of rocky mountain tops.
The radio sleeps.

There is the tear in the hopechest,
the tear on the hopechest.
I go down to the water.
I wade in too deep.



THE APPARITION OF THE RIVER
Nicholas Perry

ERIDANOS

Robert F. Gross

it's not a river it's
navigable an estuary and un-
the cartographers driving silting up breaking down thwarting them round
the bend (there are so many bends and
yes cartographers too)
so even if you've lightened
yr load of lovers
chucked yr youth and exhaled
all yr aspirations u run
aground or mire
down in shallow shifting straits
proof of an aging ecosystem
or yr own intransigence
u set out not fully wrested
into smudge-pot smoke roiling across the marsh making
yr eyes water
yr lungs spit bloodstuff
yr brain break open for it all to shimmy
slither out shiny
shinny up into shadowgrass
to lead u lost nothing (what did u expect?) but
the plangency of the departed curlew
(soft)



*ABOVE THE FRUITED PLAIN 1 (left) AND 2 (right)
Rees Nielsen*

FROZEN CHICKEN

Dan Nielsen

"Is everything okay?" Lisa, the bus station waitress, said.

"This chicken is frozen," Bill, a homeless Vietnam vet said, and poked a drumstick with his fork, barely penetrating the pink skin.

Steve, a serial killer of small children with a bus ticket to Florida, was seated several stools over. He glanced up from his newspaper. He had a bad feeling.

"Are you sure?" Lisa said.

"Touch it," Bill said.

"Are you sure you want me to touch it?" Lisa said.

Steve crushed the butt of his cigarette into a half-eaten slice of apple pie, took one last sip of coffee, folded the newspaper under his arm, and made for the door.

"Just touch it," Bill said.

Lisa touched it.

"Oh, God," Lisa said, and looked over Bill's shoulder.

"What?" Bill said, turning in his stool.

Frank, an undercover cop, had Steve in a chokehold. A little bell above the outside door tinkled, and Tim, Frank's partner, burst in with gun drawn.

"Hey!" Lisa said.

With his free hand, Tim pulled a wallet from his back pocket, flipped it open, and flashed a badge. Frank released the hold. Steve slumped to the floor. Tim cuffed Steve's hands behind his back. Frank checked Steve's neck for a pulse. Frank looked at Tim and nodded.

Tim grabbed Bill's ice water and poured it over Steve's head. Tim winked at Lisa. He returned the empty glass to the counter.

"Hey, old timer," Tim said. "Better eat your chicken before it gets cold."

Bill laughed like this was funny.

The little bell tinkled again and the undercover cops and the serial killer of small children were gone.

"That was something," Bill said.

"It sure was," Lisa said. "I told that creep he couldn't smoke in here."



INCONDICIONAL
Oscar Varona

THE FREELANCER

Mira Martin-Parker

Not long after the project transmittal, we began sending pages off to a trailer in Arizona. The FedEx truck rolled up at her place just minutes before 2:30. A knotted green hose stretched across the walkway. She answered the door in her bathrobe. After that came phone calls about the misplaced text, the erratic use of the em dash, the series comma, and her dog Maisey, who had cancer. The FedEx driver knew all about it. Everyone in the New York office knew all about it. Even the author and the Indian compositor knew all about it. Then came the second batch of pages, returned covered in coffee stains and smelling of cigarettes. Lastly, the index and front matter were sent off, fingers crossed. That's when we received the email. Maisey was sick again—had to be taken to the vet in the middle of the night. Everyone in the New York office sent their best. Even Akpan in India sent his best.

TASTE

Dan Townsend

On our fourth date, I asked Joan what was with the bracelets.

She said, "I don't know I like them." Then she looked at her wrist. She said, "Is that weird?"

"No," I said. "It's just that you're always wearing them. You have so many."

"I know. It's my thing, like a catchphrase, but something I wear."

"A fashion statement," I said.

"I guess," she said.

I don't remember what we talked about next. I don't remember much about the rest of that date. This is my only specific memory of that night. I think we were watching TV at my apartment and I had cooked a recipe I found on a package of pasta, but that could've been another date, with someone else. There is a drawer in my kitchen full of recipes printed on food packaging. They are like any other recipes you might clip from a magazine or print from the Internet, except the product from the package is in all caps or italics. McCormick's Italian Seasoning Blend. OLD EL PASO CHUNKY SALSA. It makes them low class, like the only reason for the recipe is to pimp what's in the fancy typeface.

A few days later I met Joan for lunch and told her I thought of us as friends. I laughed because I was uncomfortable. I looked at my lap, where my hands were basketed, open and empty. She moved her head, trying for eye contact. I said the ability to love other people had been 90% wasted on me.



CABINET
W. Jack Savage



THE MUSINGS OF A HERMIT

Amanda Tumminaro

Spooked horse, eclipsing the dipping sun,
horse's Halloween. My ride needs time to settle.

I need an hour to relax. My xylophone song is rather
a confetti scene within a Rubik's Cube.

The taxi cab can deliver me to purgatory in an unmarked box,
but I'm not so keen on it yet.

I pop in the VCR "They Shoot Horses, Don't They?"
And rip off a clean piece of paper for note-taking.

WHAT THE MONARCH SAW
Rees Nielsen



TENSILE
Leonard Kogan

TEN WAYS YOUR NOVEL WILL KILL YOU

Scott Archer Jones

Fall approaches. The novel scurries into corners, a rat-like beastie, and you attempt to slip the leash back on. You know this book will kill you in these next months, where the light fades and days shorten into stunted, despairing winter.

1. Smarmy with self confidence, you read the first draft for the English Department in your Thursday seminars. You discover “experimental” does not mean “entertaining.” Lined up like the Supreme Court, they purse their mouths like sucking lemon juice through straws. They suck all your optimism away.
2. In your epic novel of a prisoner-of-war camp, you discover your depraved commandant is a Roman Catholic. Your publisher, Holy Trinity College of San Luis Obispo, won’t like this. Oh no! The commandant is gay.
3. What a fool! You have sent in the first chapter as a stand-alone to twenty-five literary magazines, in the deluded hope of building an audience before full publication. You also believe you will win a Pushcart, though you dare not voice this dream. Seven publications never respond. Three post you in their online humor column. Fifteen rejections arrive, declaring, among other things:

“Unfortunately, your submission in its current stage is not for us at this time. Perhaps you should consider revision.”

“Unfortunately, your submission has not been selected for publication in our upcoming issue. We have received a lot of submissions by talented writers and artists, but we cannot publish everything we have seen. We very much wish you future success in publishing your work. Perhaps a less lofty venue would suit you better.”

“Thank you so much for submitting to Glamjocks Machinery. Unfortunately, we will not be using this submission this time around. In fact, we would never use it.”

4. In desperation, you send your first chapter to an old friend, Yokuri Odenjonwo. Yoki has taken the controls and levers of the Century Limited, a new litmag with no credentials and only two editors. Your friend publishes luminaries like Snag Cootz and Imogene Rosicrucian. Yoki pens you a personal note. “My God. I would have thought you of all people would have known better.”
5. Producing a dribble of ten pages a day, you struggle up to Chapter Thirteen. Thirteen is not auspicious. You renumber it Eleven, because, after all, William S. Burroughs once played with chapter delusion. Your last chapter ends up numbered Thirteen and One Half. While in your editor’s hands, all of Thirteen and One Half turns black, withers, and falls off the book. After you get the phone call, your testicles hurt. You fear cancer.

6. Drunk, you post your novel's first line on Facebook, with the expectation of overwhelming buckets of Likes. You discover later some vicious little shit plagiarized it. He won the Bulwer-Lytton Contest in the Purple Prose category.

7. One of the great craftsmen of the twenty-first century, you spend two weeks to collect all the possible adjectives for what snow sounds like when you step in it. You have stepped in it, but it's not snow.

8. For logic you find incontrovertible and unclear, logic that crushes you in those cold dank rooms of the novelist's heart, you discover your book has to be a graphic novel. In Gaelic. You order six calligraphy pens and a rhyming Irish dictionary from Amazon.

9. During the fourth draft, you dream your book stalks you. The novel carries a razor in its crab-like table of contents. The ToC has twelve entries and reaches out like a spider's arm with eleven elbows. As you run, staring over your shoulder into the dim-lit library, you make out the book—a ginormous paperback with dog-eared corners and those sibilant ripples of soaked pages—pages watermarked by gin and tonic. The G&Ts emanated from a bar named Writer's Block. The book, like Shiva, possesses eleven avatars, one named the Destroyer. You wake up because you've wet the bed.

10. You have sold one hundred books before you notice your title is spelled Its a Cruel World rather than It's a Cruel World. You discover more typos: your protagonist is named Mabel, Mable, Mapel, Maple, and Mappel. Mappel drives up to Mom's house a multiple number of times in a Toyota Priapus. For two hundred pages, the boyfriend Harold morphs into Hairy. Mappel's daughter loves to wear jewelry. You've come off like a self-publishing wretch. Maybe you should have been an accountant or plumber. That MFA—just flushed away.

CONTRIBUTORS

WRITERS

Amanda Tumminaro lives in Illinois with her family and her long-haired cat, Goldie. She is a horrible cook and she should be kept out of the kitchen.

You can find more of her work at [The Squawk Back](#) and [Hot Metal Bridge](#).

Andrew Pidoux is the author of *Year of the Lion* (Salt Publishing, 2010). He lives in London, England.

You can find cartoons by him [here](#) and haiku [here](#).

Ashlie Allen writes fiction and poetry. Her work has appeared in 7 magazines/journals. She stays to herself too much sometimes.

You can find more of her work through her [LinkedIn](#).

Brad Sime was born during 1982 in Edmonton, Alberta. He's there, still. His poetry will appear in the January 2015 issue of [Pretty Owl Poetry](#).

Dan Nielsen lives alone in a three-bedroom house a short walk from Lake Michigan. He's been writing, making music, and doing art for half a century.

He has a website called [preponderous](#) and you can follow him on twitter [here](#).

Dan Townsend is off Facebook for good this time. His stories have appeared in *Barrelhouse*, *NANO Fiction*, and most recently, at [Matchbook](#) and [Necessary Fiction](#).

Erin Emily Ann Vance is an English student in Calgary, Alberta who loves the mountains and works with children on the autism spectrum.

More of her work can be found on her [wordpress](#).

Ed Higgins' poems and short fiction appear in various print and online journals. He teaches at George Fox University, south of Portland, OR where he is also Writer-in-Residence.

More of his work can be found [here](#).

Frederick K. Foote, Jr. was born in and resides in Sacramento, California.

More of his work can be found at [The Piker Press](#) and [Specter Magazine](#).

James Croal Jackson is originally from Clinton, Ohio. He graduated from Baldwin Wallace University. He likes all arts and thus tries his hand in all of them. He currently lives in Los Angeles.

Some of his most recent work can be found in [The Mantle](#). You can also follow him on [twitter](#).

Lisa McLemore lives with her husband, daughter, and five rabbits. When she isn't writing poetry she can often be found blogging about her daily life at her [wordpress](#).

She's also working on a project to name thousands of colors with lines [here](#).

Marcia Arrieta is a poet, artist, and teacher, who lives on the canyon in Pasadena, CA. She edits and publishes [Indefinite Space](#).

Mark Jackley's new chapbook is *Appalachian Night*, available free from the author at chineseplums@gmail.com. He lives in Sterling, VA.

Read more of his work at [BODY](#) and [Crate](#).

M.C. McCoy is a grant writer, social worker, and doctoral student, currently living in Wilmington, DE. She respects oceans, deserts, and those who cross them.

More of her work can be found at [Apiary Magazine](#).

Mira Martin-Parker earned an MFA at San Francisco State University. Her collection of short stories, [The Carpet Merchant's Daughter](#), won the 2013 Five [Quarterly] e-chapbook competition.

Moshe Fine wrote these and too many other poems which run "Kant..." as part of a project about issues of reference and authority. He lives in Brooklyn.

[Others](#).

Patty Somlo has been nominated for story South's Million Writers Award. Her essay, "If We Took a Deep Breath," was selected as a Notable Essay of 2013 for Best American Essays 2014.

She is the author of [From Here to There and Other Stories](#). Her second book, *Hairway to Heaven Stories*, is forthcoming in January 2017 from [Cherry Castle Publishing](#).

Richard King Perkins II is a non-poet writing poetry. He was glad when "Emma..." came home from the farm. "Out of Season" regards the not-quite-lost.

Read more of his work at [Black Heart Magazine](#).

Robert F. Gross writes, directs, and travels. He doesn't know where he will be after January 4, 2015.

Robert-Reid Drake is a soft-but, pansy poet living in DC. He worries that his overwhelming sense of awe will turn out to be a tumor. Find more work [Crab Fat Magazine](#).

Robin Wyatt Dunn writes and teaches in Los Angeles.

Check out his novel [A Map of Kex's Face](#) and his chapbook [Telegrams From X County](#).

[Scott Archer Jones](#) is currently living and working on his fifth novel in northern New Mexico, after stints in the Netherlands, Scotland and Norway plus less exotic locations.

He is the Treasurer of [Shuter Library of Angel Fire](#), a private 501.C3, and desperately needs your money to keep the doors open.

Vincent Douarre is a nineteen-year old student. He wrote this after looking at too many mirrors for way too long. Typical teenage narcissism.

Yevgeniya Muravyova often finds herself losing sanity during her most mundane moments, Not Living Vicariously was written during one of those moments.

ARTISTS

Emily Puccia Colasacco is a mixed media artist and art teacher in Syracuse, NY.

Some of her work can be seen [here](#).

Kyle Hemmings loves trains and shot this while trying to flee New Jersey.

He blogs [here](#).

Leonard Kogan lives and works in Baltimore, MD. Leonard's current works are painterly animated structures bodies and organisms. In reemerging compositions, he synthesizes the ubiquitous, trivial, marginal, shattered and displaced.

Learn more about his work [here](#).

Nicholas Perry's work is physical documentation of his experiences of memory. He present an unknown space to the viewers, removing reference to the real world and providing vulnerability for a true contemplative act.

Oscar Varona is a writer and a collagist from Madrid, Spain. He combines his poems, dialogues and stories with his own artistic creations, mainly collages and illustrations.

You can find more of his work [here](#) and at [expurgos y detritus](#).

Reese Nielsen has lived in Indianola, Iowa within a mile of his grandchildren Marshall & Adelaide Taylor for the past 11 years. He farmed stonefruit & grapes for 35 years in California. He maintains an art website with his son Nathan at [thehowlingquail.com](#).

[W. Jack Savage](#) is a retired broadcaster and educator. He is the author of seven books including [Imagination: The Art of W. Jack Savage](#). Jack and his wife Kathy live in Monrovia, California.

