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[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Interviews](#)

[Fiction](#)

[Poetry](#)

["Our Stories" non-fiction](#)

[Writers' Craft Box](#)

[Submission Guidelines](#)

[Feedback & Questions](#)

[Artists' Gallery](#)

[Indie Bookstores](#)

[Literary Arts Patrons](#)

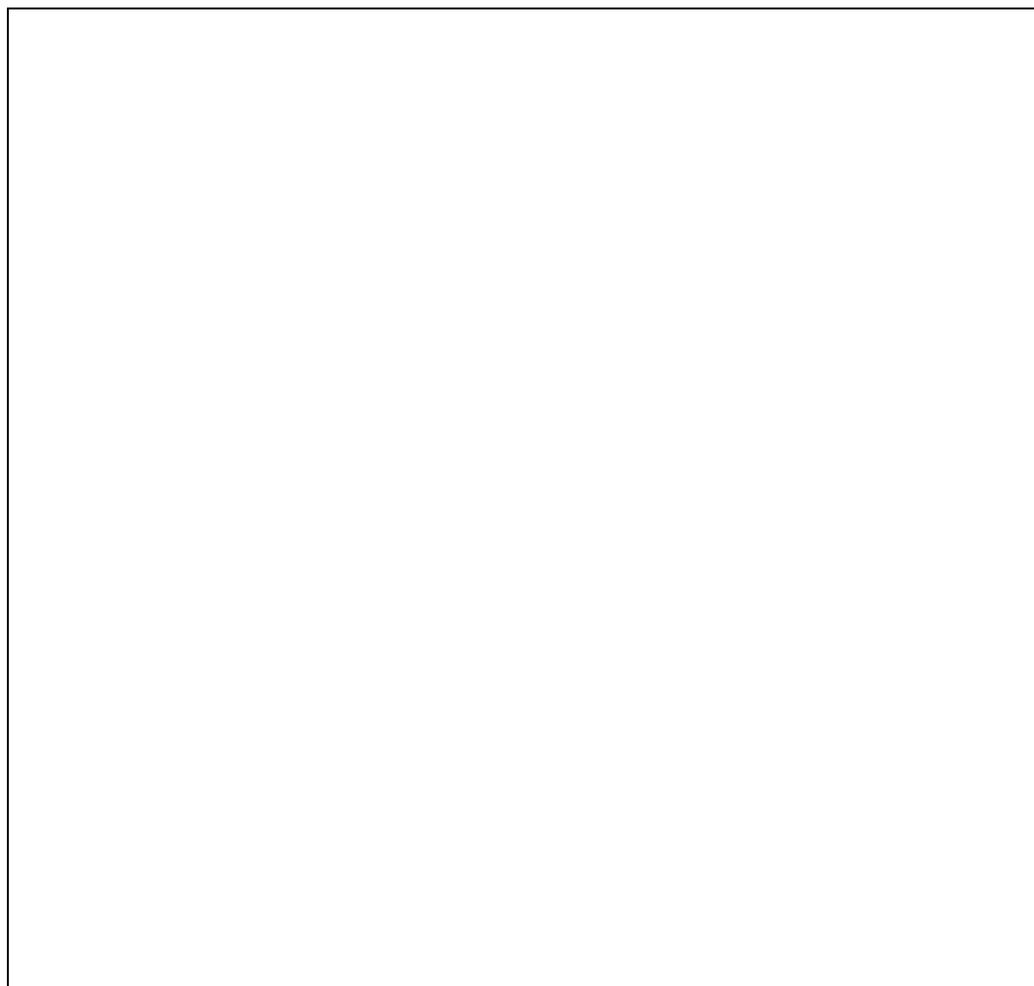
[Scrapbook of Nine Years](#)

[Archives](#)

[Inscribing Industry Blog](#)

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"Temperance" by Patti Dietrick; <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pattidietrick/>

About this image: "I photographed my sister in a channel that ran near the house. She represents the transition to balance and harmony. She is self-healing as she stands in the cold water with stars in her hair." —Patti Dietrick

Poetry

On the Precipice of Long-Distance

by James Croal Jackson

The universe ends
or is supposed to. It lives
in your bed—mornings tangled

with laughter. In a week you will move
to Florida. A week ago we swayed
on swings away and toward each other.

A fling from disorder, we are no longer bound
to orbit. Still, I swat the air
in your fourth-floor apartment

overlooking the river to follow its movement
to determine when a body is real
and to what mouth it goes. For you,

it's an airport. Until then, we hike
through forests building tree forts
to wooden-house our hearts.

At night, I search the stars for words
but can't make sentences you tell me are there.
All I find is the slow motion of time,

then distance—since time's beginning,
the universe took many small steps toward us
so let's walk that way together.

If you lose me from great distance,
I will build a bridge so short
you'll be right here from that far away.

Rotational Quantum States

by James Croal Jackson

We have so far to fall.

Excited electrons
weaken in descent.

Photons of longer wavelength
are fluorescence.

Do not wait for morning to end.
Allow its gradual mean to untangle

the phosphorescence
of a lover's vine,
complex and intimate.

Coefficients teach us
probabilities for absorption
and emission are the same.

We take what we give.

The initial absorption
puts electrons
in a more stable state.

Hold light for as long as you can.

Bio: James Croal Jackson is the author of *The Frayed Edge of Memory* (Writing Knights Press, 2017). His poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *FLAPPERHOUSE*, *Rust + Moth*, *The Bitter Oleander*, and elsewhere. He edits *The Mantle* and is a former winner of the William Redding Memorial Poetry Contest. Find him in Columbus, Ohio or at jimjakk.com.

Sacrifice

by Beate Sigriddaughter

there is a genus of spider

she gives birth to
hundreds of little ones
then she lies still
for them to feast
on her for strength
to make this life their own
and they do
and she dies

that too is part of
the beauty of life
but not all
and not yours
and not now

Why I Am in Love

by Beate Sigriddaughter

Because
he drove back to show me
a snake on the road
I had missed. He herded it
off into forest grass.
That's when we noticed
its dead mate curled
at the edge of the pavement.
Minutes later he drove back
again to move the dead one,
too—still soft, he said,
with recent life—in case
the living snake returned
for it and had better not
lie in the middle of traffic.

Beyond Reason

by Beate Sigriddaughter

I want to love you
beyond reason.

I read this dreamy story
of a woman waiting
for her husband with body and
soul spilling open, bathed
and scented with anticipation.
How treasured she must have felt
to let her love blossom like that.
I wish I could be her.

What am I saying? I used to read
more than a thousand and one tales,
many stirring with that
kind of love.

I told you one time I didn't learn
love from my parents, no.
I learned love from fairy tales.

But those are fairy tales,
you cautioned. No more
intangible than God or money,
though, I said, and we reasonably
live in cynical obedience to those.

I want to take you
beyond reason. If you follow
me into the fairy tale, I will
one day go to the forest with you
and we will sleep together
under the stars where we
belong. I promise.

Bio: Beate Sigriddaughter is poet laureate of Silver City, New Mexico (Land of Enchantment). Her work has received several Pushcart Prize nominations and poetry awards. In 2018 FutureCycle Press will publish her poetry collection *Xanthippe and Her Friends* and Cervená Barva Press will publish her chapbook *Dancing in Santa Fe and Other Poems* in 2019.
www.sigriddaughter.com

The Study of Metaphysics

by David Anthony Sam

He stands chest deep
in the full flood tide
of falling white
moonlight

knowing the pale
crescent as streaks
across infinities
of black water.

As far as his eye
discerns, there are only
this crescent, some weak stars,
and eternities of nothing.

He sails the universe
on waves of reflection
paused in forever flight
from an ancient center

and faces east five
times daily though
there is no faith
left in his pages.

Interruption in August

by David Anthony Sam

This closes the quarto
exposes the stitching
and pauses me
with the act of simply turning—

The unlined mind
has enough space yet
to be filled
with the hurry of atoms—

I am in love with
the folds and cavities,
the halts that cranny me
with all that matters—

This moment tunes me
to the staccato
of a red-bellied woodpecker
voicing his echoes—

I unbolt myself to stand
under the impossibility
of the blue sky
decoding his percussion—

A feathered knowing
is there—and I am—
here inking myself in this
illusion of difference—

Bio: Born in Pennsylvania, David Anthony Sam has written poetry for over 40 years. He now lives in Virginia with his wife and life partner, Linda, and serves as president of Germanna Community College. Sam has four collections and was the featured poet in the Spring 2016 issue of *The Hurricane Review* and his poetry has appeared in over 60 journals and publications. His chapbook *Finite to Fail: Poems after Dickinson* was the 2016 Grand Prize winner of GFT Press Chapbook Contest and his collection *All Night over Bones* received an Honorable Mention for the 2016 Homebound Poetry Prize.

Insult

by Judith Ann Levison

Once out of an awkward need for approval,
I picked ragweed, goldenrod and wildflowers

For my father's place at the table, spreading
Them in a cracked blue glass jar.

When you give you are happy, a primal
Essential yearning even if you are not
Sure of its reception.

From the worst July heat, he came in for lunch
Mopping his face, shaking off sawdust.
The minute he sat down, he swiped the bouquet
Off the table yelling, "Hay fever!" He was
Not drunk and I realized at last, I did not exist,
Was more a bothersome insect than a child. Later, I
Never gave anything away without a wince of rejection.

I learned selflessness could be
A stamp of fake approval or none at all.
Still I immerse myself in wildflowers as if
They were insulted.

Bio: Of Micmac Indian descent, Judith Ann Levison was raised in a logger's family on coastal Maine. She holds degrees from Mount Holyoke College (BA), Hollins University (MFA), and Drexel University (MS). Under her maiden name, Judi Croxford, she was published at fifteen in *The New Yorker*. Chosen as the first woman Poet Laureate in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, she is also an abstract water colorist.

Her poems have appeared in *Agni*, *Blue Unicorn*, *California Quarterly*, *Evansville Review*, *Hollins Critic*, *New Millennium Review*, *The New Yorker*, *Portland Review*, *Mudfish*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Caveat Lector*, *Paterson Literary Review* and more.

She has published two chapbooks: *Oak Leaves* and *Sand Castle*.

Ode #20

by Sergio A. Ortiz

I am not poking fun
at you Don Pablo, it's respect
disguised as laughter, but I cannot
stand it. I do not allow such forms
of humiliation, such an offense:

to write verses to an onion
and all the while, do it right.

On the other hand, I, so new
at this trade, I cannot thread together
more than three beautiful lines
to the man I love using qualifiers
you so skillfully wasted
on elephants, artichokes, dogs,
salt-roses and onions.

Damn you, Neruda,
for using those expressions.
You leave them useless.

Bio: Sergio A. Ortiz is a two-time Pushcart nominee, a four-time Best of the Web nominee, and 2016 Best of the Net nominee. Second place in the 2016 Ramón Ataz Annual Poetry Competition sponsored by Alaire publishing house. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *FRIGG*, *Tipton Poetry Journal*, *Drunk Monkeys*, and *Bitterzeot Magazine*. He is currently working on his first full-length collection of poems, *Elephant Graveyard*.

Hawk Shabbat

by Anne Whitehouse

Once a Cooper's Hawk settled
outside the first-floor window
at the back of our Manhattan apartment,
perched on the wrought-iron bars
of an empty air conditioner cage.

In the cold, high realms of the air
it had traveled a great distance
and from afar with piercing vision
had spied our cage and courtyard,
one protected space within another.
It felt safe enough to rest surrounded
by high walls, like being
at the bottom of a well of air.

The hawk was so tired it didn't care
that we were inches away,
separated only by a pane of glass.
Its head swiveled all around,
facing backwards on its neck,
and with its beak it ruffled
its neck feathers and tucked its head
under its wing and was fast asleep
while fierce-looking talons
gripped the bars of the cage.

It was a Friday evening, and the peace
of Shabbat was falling like a veil,
shadowing the world as the hawk slept.
Not wanting to disturb its rest,
I left the room dark as I set the table
next to the window and lit the candles,
softly singing the blessing,
shielding my eyes in prayer.

My husband and daughter and I
blessed the wine and the bread
and quietly ate our dinner by candlelight.
Twice the hawk woke and stared at us.
Its black pupils rimmed in gold
pierced me with inexpressible wildness,
as fierce and strange as God's angel.

Like a sheet of mica clouding its gaze,
the hawk's inner eyelid slid from front to back,
and again its head rotated, and it bent
its beak under its wing and slept and woke
and slept again. I woke in the night
and it was still there, a dark form
immobile against the darkness.
In the morning it was gone.

Meditation

by Anne Whitehouse

Alignment is the key
that opens the door to concentration
only when I know my body at its limits
can I find balance

moving into stillness
 yoking the opposite
tracing the well-worn paths
of my scars

forming them following them forsaking them

every day I practice my death
feeling the silence
 dappled rainbow
cast by stained glass
 on the walls
the stone floor

A field of cattle and the dead branch
of a tree where cattle egrets roost at dawn,

cool sound of rippling water
as a red darning needle
makes invisible stitches
up and down in the air
up and down

Heartbeat

by Anne Whitehouse

The rhythm of life is life itself,
the body's timekeeper
that recedes as it advances,
like the sun slipping
past the horizon
and reappearing
on the other side
of the world.

Bio: Anne Whitehouse was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and graduated from Harvard College and Columbia University. She is the author of six poetry collections, most recently *Meteor Shower* (2016) from Dos Madres Press. Her novel, *Fall Love*, has just been published in Spanish translation as *Amigos y amantes* (Compton Press). Her poetry, short stories, feature articles, and reviews have appeared in major newspapers, literary magazines, and other publications throughout the English-speaking world.

Recent honors include 2016 *Songs of Eretz* poetry prize; 2016 winner of the *Common Good Books'* poems of gratitude contest; 2016 *RhymeOn!* poetry award (first prize); F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum poetry award (second prize), and 2015 Nazim Hikmet Poetry Prize. Last July Garrison Keillor read her poem, "One Summer Day on the Number One Train," on *The Writer's Almanac*. "One Summer Day on the Number One Train" was recently selected for an ELA diagnostic test to be administered to 300,000 high school students in the state of Louisiana over the next five years.

Chorus

by Lee Marc Stein

He senses the women are smiling at him,
 their spectral faces splashing sporadically
 on the white enameled ceiling above his bed—
 his twinkle-eyed mother dead thirty years,
 her spirit knowing that even with his end near
 he has everything under control;
 his wife of forty-five years, now gone five,
 laughing at one of his horrific puns,
 celebrating their constant oneness,
 their overcoming dire hours;
 all those women he had slighted,
 whether yesterday or fifty years before,
 thinking this one ugly, that one an emotional wreck,
 others political dodos, philistines, prissies.
 So many victims of his rude stares.
 Yet still they smile their blessings,
 wrapping him in the comforter of death.

Bio: Lee Marc Stein is a retired direct marketing consultant living in East Setauket, New York. His poems have been published in *Blast Furnace*, *Blue & Yellow Dog*, *Blue Lake Review*, *Message in a Bottle*, *Miller's Pond Poetry*, *River Poets Journal*, *Slow Trains Journal*, *Still Crazy*, *Subliminal Interiors*, *The Write Place at the Write Time* and *The*

Write Room. His first book of poetry, *Whispers in the Galleries*, features ekphrastic poems. Lee has had short stories published in *Bartleby Snopes*, *nicollroad*, *The Write Place at the Write Time*, *Cynic Online*, and *Down in the Dirt*.

The Man Who Was Once a Boy

by Michael H. Brownstein

That man has spent time in prison
and this man does not know how to cry
and the man across the room thinks he knows how to pray.

I am all of these men.
Steadfast. Angry. Hungry.
Stupid, stubborn, smart.
Bored. Overzealous. Full.

And when I pray, I wander within the trees,
melt into the papers of their bark, find feather instead of bone,
every piece of nesting material, every warmth to fur.

I am autumn's leaf
beautiful yet frail,
torn yet full of strength.

I am everything that makes everything
everything.

Brief bio: Michael H. Brownstein has been widely published throughout the small and literary presses. His work has appeared in *The Café Review*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Skidrow Penthouse*, *Xavier Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Free Lunch*, *Meridian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, *The Pacific Review*, *Poetrysuperhighway.com* and others.

In addition, he has nine poetry chapbooks including *The Shooting Gallery* (Samidat Press, 1987), *Poems from the Body Bag* (Ommation Press, 1988), *A Period of Trees* (Snark Press, 2004), *What Stone Is* (Fractal Edge Press, 2005), *I Was a Teacher Once* (Ten Page Press, 2011), *Firestorm: A Rendering of Torah* (Camel Saloon Press, 2012), *The Possibility of Sky and Hell: From My Suicide Book* (White Knuckle Press, 2013) and *The Katy Trail, Mid-Missouri, 100 Degrees Outside and Other Poems* (Kind of Hurricane Press, 2013). He is the editor of *First Poems from Viet Nam* (2011).

The Human Dick

by Vince Corvaia

"[O]n May 9, 1970, the President appeared at 4:15 a.m. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to discuss the war with 30 student dissidents who were conducting a vigil there." —Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*

decades gone
&
I'm older
than you were
in '70
peeling off
your
presidential pajamas
at 4
in the morning
a desperate
orphan
 negotiating
a rope of
monogrammed bed sheets

I want
my own
Lincoln Memorial
tonight
a posse of
strangers
who hate me
enough
that I might
bum
some absolution

yes
I did
some bad shit too

loved a wife too much
a dog too little
burned bridges
friends
were still crossing

Tricky
if it's possible
we're the same now
the beat down heart
thrumming its dirges
of age
our brave faced
V's waving
from the chopper steps

I say
hell with it
let's delete
our expletives
erase
each other's tapes
and call it
peace
with honor

let history's children
sort out
the shrapnel from confetti

Bio: Vince Corvaia is a poet living in Boise, Idaho.

I Edit My Life

by Michael Lee Johnson

I edit my life
clothesline pins & clips
hang to dry,

dirty laundry,
I turn poetic hedonistic
in my early 70's
reviewing the joys
and the sorrows
of my journey.
I find myself wanting
a new review, a new product,
a new time machine,
a new internet space,
a new planet where
we small, wee creative
creatures can grow.

California Summer

by Michael Lee Johnson

Coastal warm breeze
off Santa Monica, California
the sun turns salt
shaker upside down
and it rains white smog, humid mist.
No thunder, no lightening,
nothing else to do
except sashay
forward into liquid
and swim
into eternal days
like this.

Bio: Michael Lee Johnson lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era. He is a Canadian and a US citizen. Today he is a poet, editor, publisher, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, Illinois. He has been nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards for poetry in 2015, and was nominated for Best of the Net 2016. Johnson has had poetry published in 33 countries, and has 133 YouTube poetry videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/poetrymanusa/videos>.

He has several books and chapbooks published, and is Editor-in-chief of two poetry anthologies: *Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze*, and *Dandelion in a Vase of Roses*. He is

editor of 10 poetry sites as well as the administrator of a Facebook poetry group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/807679459328998>.

In the "Chemo" Waiting Room

by Katie O'Sullivan

are familiar strangers. They have become
your new family, waiting in rubber band
lines that expand or shrink, stretching further
during lunch breaks and daylight saving hours.
Waiting lines of different shapes and colors in
knitted hats, baseball caps, turbans, scarves,
or wigs.

Signing up for miracle elixirs. Lining up to
share a hall of cell-like rooms. Resting up
on hard, iron cots and disarrayed sheets that
bunch around bottoms, tangle through toes or
slither to the floor as you speak to a nurse,
drink your potion, text a message, read a book
or snooze.

While in the waiting room, your extended
family wait, page through magazines, check
watches, stare at nothing. Until a young boy,
perhaps autistic, is engulfed by nervous rocking.
His father, beside him, sleeps. Suddenly, the boy
puts earphones to his head and waves his hands to the
sounds. The father awakens, pats his son's shoulder.
The roomful of family exchange smiles, sharing in this
heartfelt moment of release. The boy laughs with glee,
throws his arms above his head, as his body moves
to a rhythm of its own.

*Poet's Note: The poem's title depicts what the patients called the room
where I was awaiting my daughter.*

Bio: After leaving UCLA and getting married, Katie O'Sullivan followed her husband's
career to the Middle East where she lived for 15 years. There she graduated from the

American University of Beirut while raising her seven children. Back in the U.S. her family moved between California and Texas several times before her husband retired.

Following several previous attempts, Katie began her creative writing career at the age of 75. Her plan was to write a memoir, but it was pushed aside for the publication of her poetry, flash fiction, essays and the staging of one play. Some of the publications that have included her work are: The Knoxville Writers Guild, the Adams Media Corp., Silver Boomer Books, Writers Abroad, The Texas Poetry Calendar (5 editions), *Cell2Soul* and *The Write Place at the Write Time* among others. She published her memoir last year on her 90th birthday.

Refractions and Reflections *(prose poem)*

by Carole Mertz

An evergreen bush, stands three feet high outside our window. Following a heavy rainfall in the night, all remained wet and luminous by morning. Numerous dewdrops hung on its branches sending out sparkling lights, like a Christmas tree standing in the middle of July. The reflections, pea-size, seemed like electric lights strung across the plant, giving off dazzling blues, iridescent golds and oranges, sparkle-bright yellows, and tiny bulbs of greens and reds. As I shifted my body a mere fraction of an inch, the display instantly changed. Viewing this miracle I thought, *What if I hadn't seen? How much I'd have missed.*

A day or two later, still visualizing the colors, I made a discovery. These tints were the only tints one would see; in dispersed light there can be no other hues but those of the rainbow's spectrum. Now the recollected image of the tree became something more: a created body, obeying its laws of physics established so long ago. A great kinship with the tree came upon me. I, too, dwell in a realm of foreordained laws. The bush can no-wise walk away from its roots, than I defy my heritage or claim to be what I am not. The un-heard-of hue cannot claim a place in the spectrum. But a poem's no place for a tautology. So I simply salute you Mr. Newton, Mr. Roy G. Biv, Mr. Munsell. Please take front row seats.

Bio: Carole Mertz is pleased to have poems and essays appear this year at *The Write Place at the Write Time*, *South 85 Journal*, *Voices de la Luna*, *Working Writer*, and in other venues. Semi-retired, Carole enjoys the opportunity to scrutinize some of the tiny elements she discovers in her microcosm. She has just completed a U. of Iowa MOOC.

It's a Good Day

by Mary K. O'Melveny

said the man, as he sat down
next to me at the bus stop.
In fact, it's a VERY good day,
he said again, a big smile
forming behind his sketchy white
beard. I agreed. It was hard
to argue since we were both
sitting there, breath flowing in
and out, forming curly clouds
in the cold morning air.

At first, I wondered at the optimism
of his announcement but then
he allowed how his day began
with only one donated blanket
and now he had two more. Proof,
I realized, of the words printed
on his large white cardboard sign—
God is Good! Or at least evidence
that *someone* had been kind enough
on this chilled Spring day.

The man's long unzipped black coat
had once sported quilted squares,
maybe even a downy center.
Today it barely kept the wind quiet
as he spoke of *Mother Nature's*
fickle view of changing seasons.
We both agreed that the cherry
blossoms might have trouble
showing off for festival goers
this time around. *She'll decide*, he said.

As usual, I agreed. Another smile.
His new blankets lay across

a large black rolling suitcase
as if to shield it from our *Mother's*
mutable realities. The bag nestled
against the bus stop shelter,
leaning in at a near jaunty angle
while the man watched it from our shared
metal seat. A safe place to rest briefly
being another measure of a good day.

Miss Manners at the Hospital

by Mary K. O'Melveny

It is funny how much
I want to *get along*.
At least that's how I feel
in my infantilized
state here, bandaged up
like a museum mummy.
I have tossed my body
image, privacy norms
away like yesterday's
leftovers. Shyness is
lost on everyone here.
Inhibitions a waste
of brain cells. Flabby flesh
makes me excessively
polite. *Eager to please*—
a diversionary
tactic worthy of top
star generals! Perhaps
routines of courtesies
will take my mind off my
awkward circumstances.
I am quite confident
that I am no different
than dozens of prior
denizens. Yet still I
crave polite exchanges
more than my prescribed drugs.

I want to be *seen*, the
current of eye contact
sizzling, slicing through the
dry air. I can fall in
love easily. All it
takes is a kind comment
from some stranger in green
scrubs willing to look up
when I say *please, thank you*.
Willing to take a chance
on our brief connection.

Making Noise

by Mary K. O'Melveny

Clop, clop, clop. A rhythmic
ruckus. A distracting
disturbance that could have
been almost relaxing.
But the sound is my cane
as it hits our wood floors.
This is calibrated noise.
An even beat. More than *tap*,
tap, tap—too tentative.
My sonorous stride is
determined. I clatter
down to the hallway door.
About face. Back to our
kitchen. Around again.
I am keeping track of
three legs it seems, at least
until the steady *bang*
bang is second nature
like a drum roll. Hubbub
hovers with my new gait.

In the rehab center,
most were not so lucky.
Their night racket echoed

along dark corridors.
Less roar, more low rumble.
Someone in a wheelchair
told me once that people
never look at them eye
to eye. As if downcast
stares will avoid a like
fate. Or perhaps skip past
guilty speculations
about how one arrives
in spaces where points of
view suddenly shift like
earthquake fault lines. When I
go out, cane poised, perhaps
invisibility's
cloak will extend to me
as well. I know the world
will hear me arriving.

Bio: Mary K. O'Melveny is a retired labor rights lawyer and "emerging" poet. Mary lives in Washington, DC and Woodstock, NY. Her work has been published in various on-line and print journals including *The Write Place at The Write Time*, GFT Press, *Into the Void* and *The Offbeat* as well as blog sites such as *Writing in a Woman's Voice* and *Women at Woodstock*. Mary's poem, "Cease Fire," won First Prize in the 2017 Raynes Poetry Competition sponsored by *Jewish Currents Magazine* and appears in the anthology *Borders and Boundaries* published by Blue Threads Press.

Sunlight Through the Mist

by Lew Caccia

The morning fog obscures remnants of
heavy, prolonged rain. Yet preserves
the living landscape in various cycles
of succession and renewal. Who could
imagine on this particular morning
the surprises along the gentle curves
of a once sparsely settled wilderness?

A row of silver maples parallels the hard-packed, dirt surface. More of the riparian forest awaits beyond the approaching culvert. From this tunnel the crushed limestone path extends into the dusty, dry summer season flanked by cattails, sedges, and willows.

The tranquility of the trail fades as the restless river frequently shifts course. Where little else blooms, the invasive bamboo-like stalks of Japanese knotweed colonize resiliently. Further into the oxbow people catch fish in old canal basins. The boardwalk pings demurely with the ascendant past. Huge sycamores and box elders await nature's next engineer.

Bio: Lew Caccia serves as a professor at Kent State University at Stark, where he teaches courses in composition, rhetoric, professional writing, and literacy. His recent poetry has appeared in *Praxis*, *The Storyteller*, *hedgerow*, *The Write Place at the Write Time*, and *The Penwood Review*.

Ensoul

by Selah Grenewood

I've had a love affair
With myself, just me and no one else
Black scars, cut limbs—

Men in jackets keeping guard,
It's loose now no body to keep
Wandering alone, the streets

Flew in the air I've had a love affair.
Kisses bright and blue
Hands shimmering glass reflections,

Breath meeting the entrance of time.
No one to love the ghost I was
No one to claim her but me, how she hovered, lost.

Ghost that haunted as a man pleading love
Ghost that haunted in bed all day
As naked hungry thoughts,

Come away, stay
And weep these eyes of close love-making
Its slow tender place,

That was only masked brutality of
Men that haunted her ghost.
A ghost turned soul when she

Became, someone else with a name
And a legacy,
Someone, just herself.

Bio: Selah Grenewood is a painter, peacemaker, philosopher and poet living in southwest FL.

Her work has appeared in *Teen Ink*, *Mother Verse*, *The Sound*, *Positive Outlooks*, *Gravel* and *Metapsychosis* literary journal.

Someplace Thin

by Sarah Rehfeldt

That hour in the evening,
when magic works its way into the landscape
and shadows start to loosen into darkness,
the light on the lake becomes rare and lifted
in some mysterious way.
Trees lean inward—
or so it seems—
no longer afraid of their reflections,
no longer struggling with everything they have to carry.

And, for a while, at least,
there are no longer any expectations.

Bio: Sarah Rehfeldt lives with her family in western Washington where she is a writer, artist, and photographer. Her publication credits include *Appalachia; Written River; Weber—The Contemporary West*; and *Presence: An International Journal of Spiritual Direction*. Her work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize in poetry and The Orison Anthology. Sarah is the author of *Somewhere South of Pegasus*, a collection of image poems. It can be purchased through her photography web pages at: www.pbase.com/candanceski

Blossom

by Anoucheka Gangabissoon

Hidden by darkness
The light could not reach my soul
Came a drop of rain

To give me some strength
And my twigs crossed the border
I surpassed darkness

Bloomed into a rose
A white one, one so unique
Loved by all the rest

Queen of my garden
I say to the rest, be bold
Live and be not scared

Do cross the border
Life does emerge with fate's guidance
Be calm, follow it!

Bio: Anoucheka Gangabissoon is a Primary School Educator in Mauritius. She writes poetry and short stories as hobby. She considers writing to be the meaning of her life as she has always been influenced by all the great writers and wishes to be, like them, immortalized in her words. Her works can be read on poetrysoup.com and she had also appeared in various literary magazines like *SETU, Different Truths, Dissident Voice, In Between Hangovers, Your One Phone Call*, and WISH press, among others. She has also

been published on *Duane's PoeTree* and also in two anthologies for the *Imagine* and *Poesia* group. Her poems are often placed in free online contests.



Photo by Elaine Whitman; image accompanies "Lost and Found" poem by Neal Whitman

Lost and Found

by Neal Whitman

on the way
to the Tibetan Center
I took slow steps—

all things are tainted
all things are pure
on the way
to the Tibetan Center
in the road
a feather and rusty nail
to leave at the altar

Bio: Neal Whitman lives in Pacific Grove, California, with his wife, Elaine, where both find strength on walks along the Monterey Bay recreation trail. When the wind, waves, and light are just right, they collaborate by combining his poems with her photography. Neal is a hospice bereavement volunteer who sees, in the ebb and flow of the tides, both the joys and sorrows of love.

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