

the Unrorean

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**Editor's Pick!*

The Dandy Suicide

One gentleman was observed to hold his hat onto his head all the way down.—Kevin Starr, Golden Gate

He balances on the rail
Remembering that the color
Is called International Orange.

His hand smoothes the tie—
dark, tasteful, perfect
for this kind of imperfect act.

Music comes into his mind—
That falling song of Satie's
long missing gymnasts.

He taps the bowler, sure
of his angle. He holds it
with both hands then

stretches on his toes and tilts.
All the way down he is glad
of the tie-tack taming the silk.

He hears wind and blood
in his ears and sees steel gray
water waiting to receive him.

He holds the hat firmly
On his freezing head because
It's a perfectly new, perfectly good hat

—Mark J. Mitchell

Modern Arts

Haydn's enlightened benefactor,
so said,
recognized genius,
never mind the dump in which the genius lived.
Such was the state of arts then,
but today art is cheap,
compliments of computer claptrap,
trillions upon trillions of terabytes.
Where are the benefactors?
Have they all slipped into artistic guise,
scribbling free form sonnets,
notating stilted symphonies,
slathering the canvas in languid landscapes,
while true artists
sink in the virtual cesspool,
waving goodbye, goodbye,
dear god, goodbye?

—C.S. Fuqua

Devin McGuire, Editor
Cynthia Brackett-Vincent, Founding Editor

Outdone

An owl in a tree
saw me below

and I saw the owl
in the tree above.

I stared long—
as long as I could.

The owl continued
to stare at the spot

I had been
well into the night.

*

At home
before bed

I looked
in the mirror

at the hole
in my chest.

—Michael
Meinhoff

After Another Calvary

In fistless night
Calvary was gone.
In the place of skulls
armchair families mimicked soundtrack laughter,
voted the spinner's view,
and never heard the wind turn.
For thirty pieces of silver,
oil-slick conglomerates swallowed stores,
speared oceans,
and never saw the seas rise.
Jump-suited troubadours belt-slashed stages,
mimed automatic outcries,
turned their backs on hands of the poor.

In fistless dawn
architects built windowless houses,
where wives stored shopping-bagged dreams,
and where husbands crucified love upon the bed.
Presidents and Secretaries gouged eyes,
kissed merciless palms of blood.
The sun melted horizons,
the moon descended into the sea,
and stars shone not again.

—John T. Hitchner

Eyes of Verdigris

They were color coded, those eyes,
a curious kaleidoscope,

like the ocean, for instance.
Not the postcard version,
but the agitated
tide at dusk
when a new storm rides
the horizon, and the sun—
after dipping
a finger in the deep
of the sea—learns no measure of water
will put out certain fires. Here

is where color collides with color
as if commissioned
by a master hand. In this restless
space where time is
everything and yet nothing at all
you might catch a flicker of her
raging within, but then she will blink

and break you
from this world
so your enlightened moment can
become another shard bursting
like a bouquet of drowning arms
as they reach to hold something solid.

—Jenifer DeBellis

Origami

For too long, I've not been given to reaching.
Or, let me say, I haven't shared any secrets.
Numb from witnessing a parade of naysayers
Onto the stage of what nowadays goes for real,
Aside from making me wish reality flat,
Perhaps so that I might fold it too into a swan or crane.

Plying the heights of my bleakest imaginings,
All of my hope is for the familiar ache of becoming.
Reappearing at the edge of my being somewhat prepared,
Encased within a longing to reawaken sparkling—
New, my mission is to shout at the sky,
This affords me some sense of back at you!

Remember our joy together, the time we had
Embraced cheek to cloud, above Fukushima?
A nimble hand will see us soar once more,
Stone monuments to the superstitious fear
Of flying far below, grounded, worn smooth
Nowise up where we are pasted against the sun.

—Stephen Todd Booker

Angela

There were no mountains
or sea,
not even a candle.
Just a hospital room
and you cleaning my "shark bite"
a massive abdominal wound
caused by the flesh eating bacteria
Serratia marcescens.
My body being devoured alive.
After 81 days
10 infections
and 14 doctors
love healed like my skin graft
and deformity bloomed
as if my misplaced heart opened
to the touch of your fingers.

—Philip B. Crosby

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What Do You Think

carl
& amanda
have
stored away
in that
huge
wooden
crate
on their
driveway?
i asked
rebecca
staring out
the peephole

*i have
no idea
she said
turning
the page
of her
glamour*

*& i really
don't care*

it looks
like
the box
the arc
was kept in
from
indiana jones
i said
slugging back
my coors

& i'll
bet you
good money
it's got
all their
demons
inside.

—Lawrence
Gladeview

After Tequila

After the vodka
And wine

After a
last shot
Of Jim Beam
After the last song

After the sting of chrome
The perfume of tire
The spider web glass
Antifreeze on the concrete

After the loud red noise
Of the ambulance
Squealing its approach
And silence of tail lights
Going away Turning the corner

After the whistle
Through clenched teeth
After all the questions
How cold
The handcuffs
About both right and left wrists

—John McKernan

Your Life as a Super Ball

Dedicated to: Susan Naomi Berstein

If you had stopped because you thought you would fail, they would have been right, tragedy more than a stone in your shoe, a hole in your parachute, pathetic flapping, because what you need then is a bounce off the face of the earth, the etched green and yellow squares of fields too far below to see they are rippling now the canvas into which you fall, for in order to rebound, you must first strike, the harder the better, all in the landing so you launch again into what by then must appear glorious sky even if the birds seem only moving specks because you are rising so fast. No flailing, please. Curl up and take it, become the ball of your own velocity: knees to chin, heels and arms tucked tight. Eyes open.

—Sandra Kolankiewicz

Paso Doble for the Working Girl

Boss Bull tosses his horns,
Paws the turf, snorts the dreaded
Snot from his nostrils.
“From now on I want...”

As if there had never been a then.
He excretes another pile of make-work.
“I want this back on my desk
First thing in the morning.”

Clownish picadors inevitably distract him
Whereon he wanders off in the wrong direction,
Thoroughly dissatisfied by her lassitude.
“Fix that attitude. This ain't no Lully minuet, baby.”

—Phillip Larrea

Sunlit Interior of Grand Central Station

The light from the high ceiling windows is like something holy, representations of cathedral interiors by Renaissance masters, stained glass elegies for martyrs and saints, fallen soldiers of foreign wars, favored royals and court administrators; this is a beatific shining on, a consecration of the host, though, here, in Grand Central Station the haloed, favored few are from an upstate metropolitan New York City area, rapid transit passengers in perpetual motion, while the forgotten are here as well, lurking below ground in tunnels and in between stations or in sealed-off deserted compartments, disused lines, refuge for the unclean, ragged, pale relics consigned to the depths by madness, criminality and addictions existing beyond the law more like deformed centipedes than human beings, kin to the beatified above, strolling the cool, carved, polished marble floors bathed in artificial light.

—Alan Catlin

P.S.

Despite the restraining order,
he sends you an email,
says he misses
the free morning paper,
someone paying bills,
cooking special meals,
giving him blowjobs.
He tells you it's too bad
it's cost your mother
\$60,000 this year
for your rent, gasoline,
buying your groceries.
He is living with four guys
in a friend's spacious mansion,
wishes you hadn't screwed
up his last bodybuilding contest
by having him served, then arrested.
No apologies or restitution
for the money he owes you.
At the end, he expresses
his misery at the way
things are now, for him.
By the way, he still loves you.

—Jennifer Lagier

Conceptual Poem

pigeons thrive in a factory
that once made iron

tin whistler
saint patron of park benches

my wife's nudity
watching the crane dance

birds soot over sand
white sea of sun

it is Sunday and Monday

dust on the diamond of the stylus
notes note notes note notes

Inventory
body count

silence
like it

—Jack Galmitz

Lucifer, 6 a.m., Sheridan Square

I catch a pretty dairy wind
Don't I? Just a rifled sniff.
Loosed upon civil sounds
This tumble sodden morn
I stumble on cack stained cobbles.
A modern villain cantering.

Only nearly drunk, I make
With success, my clumsy leap over
Black plastic, like spoiled piggy insides, now split.

There is a capsized carton of sour milk
“Best used by March fourth”
Pouring odious and pell-mell
Onto the street.

To the rich and
I have danced amidst
The rotten smells of this square
Before.
For women in fur, so expensive,
With leather to their knees.
For heels. For God's sake—I have danced
My way to Hell.

—Ryan Hillary

Post-Coital Rooftop Confession

The sweet ruckus of Bourbon Street boils
through the viscous haze of this mid-August night

and here on the Monteleon's rooftop the stars
are the wisdom teeth of god.

I'm learning the slow art of losing you,
but I'm not bitter because all we can ask

of the long Absent One is to be happy
for a while. After all it is silly to pray

to the Great Atom of the Universe to protect you
when I'm gone. Just remember this night

when new fingers detonate your hollow tomb,
that something flourished here like wild oleander

amongst discount confederate flags, 2-4-1 X-X-X
all night slow pole grinds, streets crammed

with roving Montagues & Capulets
ready to collect debts of blood.

—Eric Lee

Lunch with Lacan

Jacques would not commit to an order,
just sat there delaying gratification,
holding up a mirror to every baby
who passed, little others
in the arms of mothers. We see ourselves
in fragments before we dance
on the stage of completeness, he said.
Somehow from French, *stage* came
to mean phase, he explained. An omelet
showed up under his fork. He said,
subjectively speaking, of course,
I am famous for a mistranslation.
I am Prufrock, a failure to articulate.
Linguists love me. They gave me a branch,
a stick to hold in a current. You can
all be Lacanians if you want, I am a Freudian.

—April Salzano