

Lingerpost

a literary journal



Issue #2

July 2011

From the Editor:

Here we are again......another issue of *Lingerpost*...another collaboration of wonderfully lovely poetry and art. Thank you for joining us.

Why are we here again? Tim O'Brien said it best in his novel, *In the Lake of the Woods*:

“What drives me on, I realize, is a craving to force entry into another heart, to trick the tumblers of natural law, to perform miracles of knowing. It’s human nature. We are fascinated, all of us, by the implacable otherness of others. As we wish to penetrate by hypothesis, by daydream, by scientific investigation those leaden walls that encase the human spirit, that define it and guard it and hold it forever inaccessible.”

So, you’ll find more hearts, guts, jars and walls to cannibalize or jackhammer, to internalize—to replace your tendons and glove around your bones.

Special thanks and love to our many wonderful contributors.

Enjoy,

Kara Dorris
Editor-in-Chief

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SARAH VAP

I've trapped a roach over the drain

While it thinks, I crawl
on the floor searching for rattles and bits

of the glass that I broke—their secret
alignments, I know you have heard this: a secret.

It feels like a secret

I'll carve out more deeply around us
with this child. To talk to you of my son

is to talk to you about God

with the awe
spinning or dropping from the mother

of this house. You won't forget me,

when I lift this glass, and I won't forget you.

Gush

The long, tan ribbon;

the long skin pudding

shaken out— my sympathy
comes from my body. The baby's old brain

and new brain, without the sense burnt
or built,
are terrible into the light—or, thoroughly,

we believe otherwise. *Wash,*

splash,... each wave's

erotic lunge to earth—the longing
of my body for the body

I surround; will never *hold*. A fever mark

on his cheek. These are the years,

childbearing, when the children will live

or will die inside of me. How still
is this reciprocity

that I did not invent: it is terrible

to let alone something
that I might have touched.

The baby

will in time rub soft, old gold coin smoothed

of its ruler.

Of its love

of almost mythical completeness.

To keep the gods moving inside the crystal, to keep

a myth-time true: baby, seaglass rubbed glossy
by the waves moving like my baby

who can't stop moving
the toy that he holds. Spot-lit baby;

stalled baby. Frozen baby
surrounded by the swaying

foil birthday balloons—baby stay an omen in your crib. Stay
something very real: as the moment you stopped

inside me and then were cut right out. Sleeping beauty,
little benumbed

little failing light. Knight. Shimmering unwrapped

baby; the baby will
and must tell the secret and magic dies? The baby, pivot: a sweet

testament edging; baby ceremonial lie.

Just a light. A small light

is the separate soul,
truly. Baby

is not edges peeled back on the thread of history.

Baby is *not* separate; jeweled, unloose baby

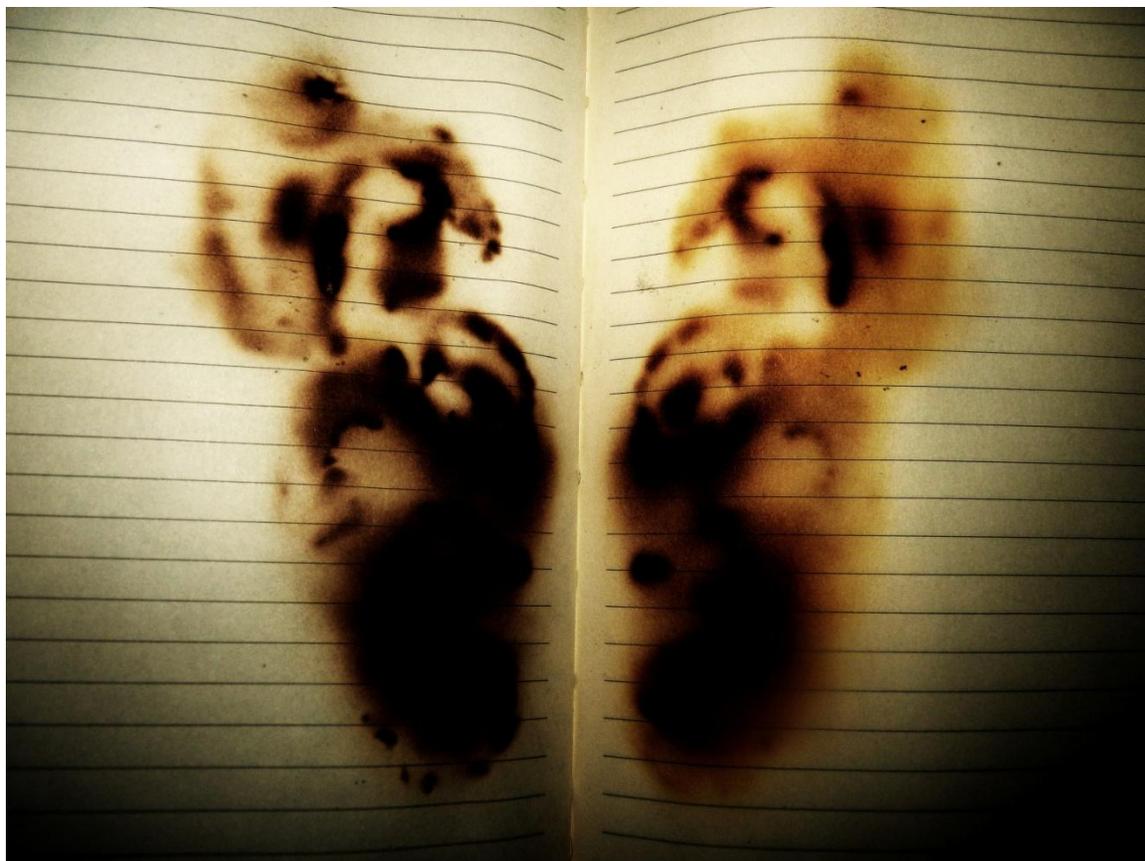
leaking away. A saint wheezing and cooing through
angelic baby; death

follows the slope that returns him

to the shame of all real love.

ELEANOR BENNETT

Carved from destruction



BRUCE BOND

Chalk

Minutes just before the tip, the power
forward powders his hands, tosses a fist
of dust into the air, a thing to master
the law of falling bodies, while they last.

Even ghosts have anatomy that dies
with us, like the pictures children leave
against the sidewalk, the clouds of paradise
pale with the skeletons chalk is made of.

Soon our drawing sticks grind down to stones
of nearly nothing, down to the bone, our bone.
The star player throws up a prayer. Soon
the night ahead grows hard enough to write on.

And yes, we love our bodies, which is why
we fear them, leave them even, why children
make their mark, their figures in the sky
we travel. And then the falling of the rain.

Flint

A man blows a mindful little prayer
over his plate of meat, less in guilt,
he tells you, than gratitude, a bit of air
to season the sacrament, like a ghost.

He is no killer, and so a killer's visions,
in the distance those who make the hunt
a rite, what begins where hunger begins
to chip its arrowhead, to bind the flint.

A gift, to sharpen as you break, winged
with edges to lodge inside the animal,
to travel one direction, the suffering
slowly draining from your act, your kill.

Wind was made for occasions like this,
to carry the scent like a thing on a fork
into a mouth inside the wilderness,
in every cell a stone, a hammer, a spark.

Radium

Light is a river, and all that radiates
a stream inside the river. Ask any rock
when it glows, solvent in the current
of its shine. Ask the blue hands of clocks

as they too would glow. Or the women
who once painted these dials with radium,
mute as they licked their brushes to sharpen
their aim, a spark of blue against each tongue.

One hopeful even did her nails with it.
Blue the eye, and bluer still the man
inside the eye. Leave it to the bright
to break into the facets of the diamond.

It would open most anything, a stem,
a particle, a bone, a city. Somewhere
a woman looks up to read the time,
and, forever dark, time returns the favor.

ALEXANDRA PASIAN

Escape

The afternoon is fading, dusty. We are erasing more
than we keep; as some grey city disappears from view

smoke gathers above the sky line. I cannot name
what is lost, left lying on the sidewalk. You are—

in your cap and shorts—the father of my salvation.
Even as the great wheel turns you are not drawn in.

ELEANOR BENNETT

Bubble town



JENNY BOULLY

footnotes

July 13, 2010

I told my landlord that I had experienced paranormal activity last night in my apartment, and maybe that is why the roof was the way it was.

The roof, which was flat and painted with tar now had shingles and a pointed roof. Some of the shingles had been blown off as if a tornado had come by during the night. The neighbor's roof was the same way.

During the night, I had gotten up to go pee, and I saw that there was another fan in the apartment. Like the one we already have, but a duplicate. It was plugged into the power cord strip in the dining room, beside a pink air conditioner shaped like a dormitory refrigerator and with silver accents, as if it came from the 1950s. I took a picture of it, because I knew that no one would believe me if I said there was a pink air conditioner.

I also knew that it was a product of paranormal activity.

Later, I was outside. I must have been having lunch with friends on a sidewalk of a restaurant somewhere. I saw a car slam into a brick wall. My friend said that it simply didn't happen. I knew then that I was hallucinating. I had become schizophrenic and knew it. I felt so terrible that I would have to tell my husband this.

SHANN PALMER

Rising Waters

2

She brings me

beans and bailing wire, but only for the sound,
the pfft and zing, her grating laughter.

Our featherbed is ticking poked, adorned with quills,
high-count cotton, sweet smell of hasty climax.

An orange is sufficient, a bushel >un-necessary<
once the peel breaks.

We are abundant and fractal, locusts dangle from my lips.
Our intentions are manly.

Take another assumption off the table.
If salted wounds scream, snow weeps.

KRYSTAL LANGUELL

Excerpts from *Many Lost Cause Creatures Could Form a Very Sad List*

You cultivate an image of your life like a Bikini Kill song
like you're a Lunachick on diet pills, but what's the word
for an unemployed woman who lives with a man: *Domestic Goddess*,
Engineer? Ambien is your drug of choice & you can lament like a Victorian.
Risk of chloroform poisoning not the only hamper to your productivity.

We protect ourselves best together. You know sometimes
he gets the narrative wrong. Drinking tea &
the so-called mortality problem. Never responded, did he?
If he insists narrative, we know our role. *Like this, provider.*

KIMBERLY ALIDIO

The Water Cure Helped, a Love Letter

“They swell up like toads.” —A. F. Miller, 32nd Voluntary Infantry Regiment, 1900

Rebranding better life-chances into aspiration, the chance to breathe is better with science, even better at the end of history, it's not information we want but to prove our ideology, you live because you aspire to outbid us, in spite of us, but never without us, this water down your throat is in fact a breathing tube, your descendents live among us, breathing in aspiration to be like-us but notlike-us, but at least to eat bacon every morning, every single finger of moral power beckons, palm up, caresses, pats you down, makes you criminal under your safe skin, so much the better

The Book of Ant Bites

For all the figure eights, infinite patience
Bug eyes, imprecise
Press twice, finite pant leg

There were many figure eights

Companies, departments, interview committees
Office hallways, memoranda circulating

There were trains and HOV lanes
And lines out the back door for stamps of approval

I ate in fancy potlucks and sat in symposia

I circulated through the windowless offices
Clustering and cohorting

I held tobacco in a two-fingered mudra

I entered the arrivals of the dead
And exited, dead on arrival

This was all.

This language is bitten out of me
 Rubbed in mud
 My cheek to the earth
 Beneath starry steam

Every unconsciousness came out in
Spanish

I am fallen in the circle of anthropologists
 One uttering my name
 Another feeding me a Zyrtec

My entrails, a trail of refined sugar.

Hesitate

Crack a night window
Condensing mouths hiccup mastery

This inhalation hangs distractedly

Cold without culture and kin
Words don't spiral from the waiting room

Swing back the double doors.
This hesitation replaces lost luggage

Her body the last word
Conjured halo'd, unwarm

Be a benediction machine

ELEANOR BENNETT

Feather on bone—a delicate death



EMILY SKILLINGS

Pflaume / Plum / Prunier / Prunus domestica L.

A thin black line
jets out
onto paper
with authority
This is the place
where fiber meets
smooth pit

This is the place
that grew in spring

This is the essence of definition

This is the place
to write the name
a history of tiny researches
in tiny databases

This is how to say pflllll
to say pluu
You say the fruit's given name
Its real name is another matter

This is where pesticides congregate
This is where the child bit

This is our thought about plums
and how they fit into the fruit spectrum
Lines growing like whiskers
or like swords
to classify space from space
We are not confused
about plums
We have plums, here.

FRANCIS RAVEN

Dodo

My mother once made a Christmas card with a picture of a dodo.
She was the wife of the director of a cultural institution.
He was my father, not the flightless one, but the director.
The dodo was an example, I remember. She wrote a paragraph about it.
I guess she was proud of it. She shows it to me sometimes
Although that was a long time ago and they are now divorced.

Fossil Array: Recent.

That was when people starting talking about biodiversity.

We were talking about it first, about what people could do.

The amazing thing is that there are drawings,
Like we have drawings, of that fool bird, accurate drawings
Of an entire species (regardless of the philosophical problems
Regarding the boundaries of natural kinds) that no longer exists
Just like I have memories, memories like I have now,
Of my parents' marriage. Aren't I important? Isn't that bird important?

I don't know when one stupid bird
Or one stupid marriage becomes important
Except to say *some things live in our neighborhood*
And we care about them. Although related to pigeons
Those rats of the sky, with tough meat, their flightlessness
Made a perfect headdress: a perfect recipe for extinction (17th century):
Hunting + fearlessness + flightlessness + invasive animals (dogs, pigs, cats, rats) =
Anything can be killed, anything in your neighborhood.

NANDINI DHAR

Bonsai

In the courtyard of our house, my mother has ceramic flower pots. In those, she plants saplings—banyans, orange, mango—all those big trees—which plant roots in soil, shoot up stems in the face of the air, try to tickle the cheeks of sun and moon. Her pleasure is in taming what cannot be generally caged. She forces rooms on things—even those whose nature is to roam around in woods and streets. To love things to the state of dwarfment, to make the world around her more and more like herself. She works hard to keep them small, trims their leaves every single morning. That's how they never outgrow their pots. Winding wires around them, she dictates them their shape, tells them which direction to bend to the last detail. She does all of these with a vengeance—as if her fingers, in trimming, plotting and re-plotting, are revenging themselves. From someone, something, many ones, many things.

What I really think it is, she is unwriting me with every one of her potted trees. Re-scripting my annals of disobedience abandonment into those of interruptions stunted growth endearments

ELEANOR BENNETT

Carpet of ice and bone



KAREN NEUBERG

Desire halts quite suddenly

at a weathered intersection, declares
its intention to scoot across
without even looking. The strangest part
is you let it go without you. Not understanding at all
departures are often not felt
until much later.

Spring Sow

Dear Today, close
as we are, I feel recall
& distance. Resistance
seems quite futile,
because you insist
with winged & shriven
droves of buds in giddy
concentration. Dear
ninth-grade Biology,
nudging today away.
You were sweet-pea
genetics, dominant eyes.
Dearest Boy and Girl
sharing frog & scalpel.
Instead, just now sweet
rows of pea seeds
planted near the trellis.
Dear Yesterday, you
shuttle train, you huckster,
luring me back & back.

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Shann Palmer is a Texan living in Virginia where she hosts readings, workshops, and open mikes to provide opportunities for other writers. She is published in print and on the web with recent work in *Fast, Short, and Deadly*, *Redheaded Stepchild*, and *Scissors and Spackle*. <http://shannpalmer.blogspot.com>.

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