

horizon

art literature photography

(issue 3)
(August 2021)

Freya Bainbridge – Kristy Chan – Molly Maclean – Maria Park – Grace Copeland Tucker – Madeleine Ismael – Karwan Hardil – Daisy Culmer – Edwin Maliakkal – Ben Aroya Philipps – Matthew Richardson – Elysia Johnston – Bonnie Hancell – Rosy Whittemore – Tan Ya – Alex Aspen – Elsa Pearl – Katie S. Ballentine – Cassie Fielding – Ed Cooper – Dylan Hussey – William Lakin – Gabriel Karczewski – Isabella Abbott – Kate Ireland – Yvette Appleby – Matilda Sykes – Connor Daly – Michaela McManus – Lucy Rose – J S Van Der Kooij – Rainn Summers – Mitchell Smith – J.C. Davies – Kavel Rafferty – Anna Seidel – Julia Diago – Dana Al Rashid – Christopher Shaw – Louisa Clark

This is *The Horizon Magazine*.

WE ARE A SPACE DEDICATED TO THE CULTIVATION OF NEW VOICES AND BOLD WORK. WE AIM TO SHARE ART AND LITERATURE THAT PUSHES BOUNDARIES, CHALLENGES AUDIENCES, AND IS POWERFULLY EXPRESSIVE.

Horizon is a high-quality artistic journal that mixes mediums of *art*, **literature**, and photography. The magazine shall always be free to read, published online and accessible to all, as well as printed and distributed in select locations.

We strive to make each edition of Horizon a collection of beautiful and diverse work. We want every edition to be open to writers and artists from all backgrounds. There are no submission fees or requirements, as we believe there should be no limitations on the opportunity for self-expression.

This is a space for **the bold**, a space for [the beautiful], and a space for the *unique*.

for writing on the horizon



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[painting] by **J S Van Der Kooij**

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Louisa Clark: Inbetween Spaces and Moments

artwork

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Maria Park: Muddled Thoughts; It's Still Life

Madeleine Ismael: Letters to Bank Cards and Ex-Boyfriends

Daisy Culmer: Crowblack; Carn Galver Ridge
Edwin Maliakkal: Thanatos Deus

Elysia Johnston: Heaven's Sin; We Wait In The Dark; The Fall

Katie S. Ballentine: Particle Tracks II

Tan Ya: An Everyday Thought

Isabella Abbott: The Pianist

Yvette Appleby: booo

Elysia Johnston: Whispers
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The creation of this issue lead me to consider the relationship between art and conflict. At *Horizon*, we do not provide themes or topics to which submissions must relate. Rather, we keep our submissions open to all possible works of art and literature to ensure we never miss a brilliant piece. However, this does not mean that certain themes do not jump out at us when we are selecting the works to make up the next edition. In some theories of art, it is a held belief that art serves some form of reflective function, that art has the potential to mirror or focus in on certain aspects of the current times and force their viewer to reflect upon this. Often the submissions we receive seem to carry similarities in tone and content, which one assumes is because they are reflecting the same times. This edition, for me, one of the pervasive similarities was conflict.

Not every text and artwork in this magazine relates to conflict. In fact, many do not even border the topic, rather exploring other significant aspects of humanity such as beauty, nature, or balance. Furthermore, those that do explore conflict do so in very different manners. There are varying degrees of conflict, from the interpersonal conflicts found in Lucy Rose's *Changelings* that are presented through the eyes of a child bearing witness to a wild humanity, to the conflicts of nationhood found in the poetry of Karwan Hardil, the voice of the isolated surrounded by violence and terror. Moreover, how an artist responds to conflict is a question of great importance, one that results in a huge range of art and literature. The texts of Hardil and Rose create a dialogue between the individual and forms of conflict but, in contrast to this, Edwin Maliakkal's artwork 'Thanatos Deus' forces the viewer to stare passively at the ravages of conflict, at the technologies of the war industry advancing beyond our control to a horrifying level of destructive potentiality.

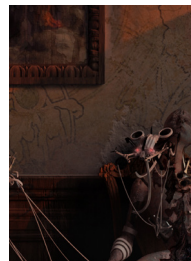
The relationship between art and conflict is long reaching, but perhaps has never been so drastic and pervasive. If we look at some of the oldest Western literature, the great epics of Homer and Virgil are stories born out of war. Some of the greatest wonders and artworks in the world are products of

the wealth and luxury born out of empire and imperialism. Depending on one's definition of art, even our earliest evidence of human creativity, the cave paintings at Lascaux, contain depictions of violence between humans and the natural world. It may be that art and conflict are inseparably connected. Yet, that does not mean the nature of the relationship is fixed. There may have been a time where great statues and epic poetry glorified the exploits of warring heroes, but there has also been a time where Pablo Picasso's 'Guernica' forced the world to look directly into the gruesome face of modern warfare. When I was a teenager, I first learned of 'Guernica' from a radio interview with an art historian. She described in awful detail the minutiae of the painting, the importance of every face, every body, every feature, and how truly appalling the entire matter of the painting was. I then searched for the painting online and was confronted with the black and white image of howling faces, tormented livestock, and the ruin of human life. I was terribly affected by this painting. Recently, I was at a gallery and saw a painting called 'Deification of a Soldier' by Kikuji Yamashita which, as like 'Guernica', powerfully represented the terror of war and conflict. I was stunned by the artwork, fixed in place, overwhelmed by the sheer horror of it. When viewing artworks like these, they force us to confront an unsightly truth in our society, to confront the conflict rampant in our history and our current relationships. It is a confrontation that is necessary, as it is only after that confrontation that willing people can seek to make a world with less violence, less hatred, and less conflict.

The following pages of this magazine contain works of literature and art that engage with this question of conflict. But also, works that engage with the more beautiful and harmonious aspects of human society, works that engage with love, beauty, and community. I believe it is important to take time to reflect on both sides of this strange existence we have all found ourselves in.

**p. 53 'Changeling'
by Lucy Rose'**

**p. 17 'Excerpts
From The Poems'
by Karwan Hardil**



**p. 22 'Thanatos
Deus' by Edwin
Maliakkal**



I. Tianducheng 2007

Bonjour Pree, bonjour smog, bonjour weak sun. Misplaced air. A second Paris craned up like the dead and oh, yes, Baudelaire. He's relearning the act of walking and coughing up mud. Oh dear, a lung. They paid for a therapist, but he spends his hour standing at the window, practising his nouns. Despair. Or désespoir, which is the French. Mr Therapist nods his head. His sadness is European, he notes, like terraces.

II. Behind a red curtain, Jane Eyre is reading

(after Lemn Sissay, by way of Charlotte Brontë)

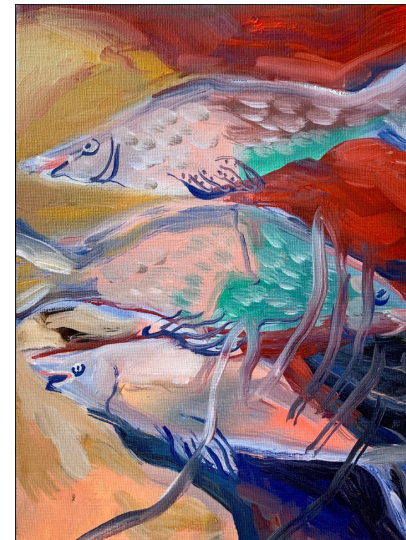
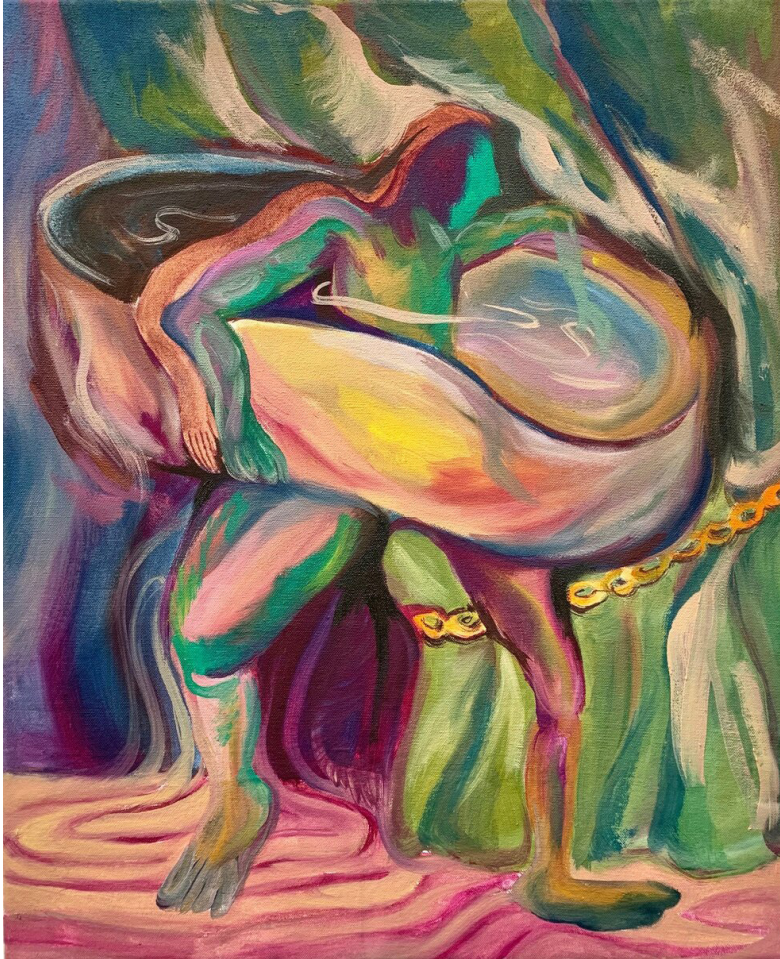
and the scarlet folds are a metaphor for the womb, and in this metaphor the window is the skin of a woman's swollen stomach, hard and waiting. Like a pregnant pause, if you will. And the November rain is also a metaphor for coaxing what's inside to come out. Saltwater pearl. A tear. No possibility of taking a walk, etcetera, etcetera. Only, don't bang on the glass. The fish don't like it.

I'm talking about Jane.
Jane is a fish.

We were all fish before we were this. We still want to swim elsewhere. And here, warm like the back of an ear, hush like a drum, the deepest part of the conch, little Jane is forming half-places. She's taping pictures to the walls of her bowl, because her bowl is boring, and round, and cruel.

They are pictures of shadowy, elusive things
 rock standing up alone in a
 broken boat stranded on a desolate
 moon glancing through bars of cloud at a wreck just

and it's sad because we know Jane will be in her bowl for a long time but in this moment she is both within the bowl and without the bowl
 she's painting roads on it to convince herself she's swimming places.



{ [poem] by **Molly MacLean** }

Muddled Thoughts



It's Still Life



[paintings] by **Maria Park**

If I pause for a moment by the *Guess What?* shop, and pause to sandwich and a moment, to have soup and see you. Let us sit a while in veined sunlight, top hatted branches, as men and women pass by, roped together on breeze blown bicycles. All the leaves; the nerves are humming. Cloud blue mother of pearl is flaking and the last leaves laugh red laughter. We sat a while in the park. Big sky boiling over the Zoological Gardens, Avenues of nakedness. Cast in a copper to the fountain, only the pennies and none in the pockets -Oh this time next year. Sing a song of sixpence and the birds begin to sing. In the *Guess What?* shop we have nothing. The night has come up like a tide and the garden empties, a queuing crowd of lipsticks, bowties, saucers, faces. Mouths mumbling *devine quoi* with sticky lips. Mumble me something gumjelly lips. It is evening and there will be rain. Cars splash pink sugar on bookend places. Music and cigarettes. Splash balconies in a blue Seine as the rats run round. The night is loud, and the stars in the windows are open late. Popped cork fizzing spotlight pastes itself on black streets.

Outside the rain was silent,
silentchapping gumdropping.

My
clothes
are on the floor
just like before.
Remembering lilacs and welloiled words,
a welloiled tongue lapping, lapping, lapping, laps,
become like vines, purple, pink,
yellow there is a tulip on your brow. Try not to cry out.
I wanted to laugh and scream and shout fuck or shit or anything and spit colours.
Cloud melting mother of pearl,
rose-tint, mother pearl,
rose wings, widow moth,
mother of pearl mother of pearl.
We will be here at least till morning.

With many mornings and days and nights and days became nights and nights became calendars.
Let's just put it all down to nothing.

Outside the *Guess What?* shop time for one more?
Fill your pockets and let us walk on. Soupsteam sauceface, you are ginger in this light. The park is blank paper now and the birds sang, the songbird song, sing, sang and flew ahead and sang.

D O L O R E M

I P S U M

p. 14 and 16 Letters to Bank Cards and Ex-Boyfriends [mixed media] by Madeleine Ismael

Hands as rough as the
end of the world
under the perfect geometry of mansard shingles,
or sheets before nightfall;
...zhoeh cohgn this evening wpng...
when the days are hollow and crass - endless mockery of light.

Adjectives fail to sand the edges of thought in this place
.... qlcmvaw our guest on the programme... and we are left without
overwrought poetic silt
to choke on
at rhythmic intervals
while a radio spits at you
in the corner
it's croaking just like you
(who listens to the radio these days?)

It's there to break the
silence that accompanies
the illusory speech panning
from ear to ear.
... phsyv you've all been nvrsrj for...

I'm sure the old sock at
the foot of the bed
knows more feeling
than this plateau;

or a lock of hair
fossilising beneath the mattress
of a scorned boy of fifteen
in a nineteenth-century
novel
...welcome, welcome!...

awaiting a return, a declaration
that never comes

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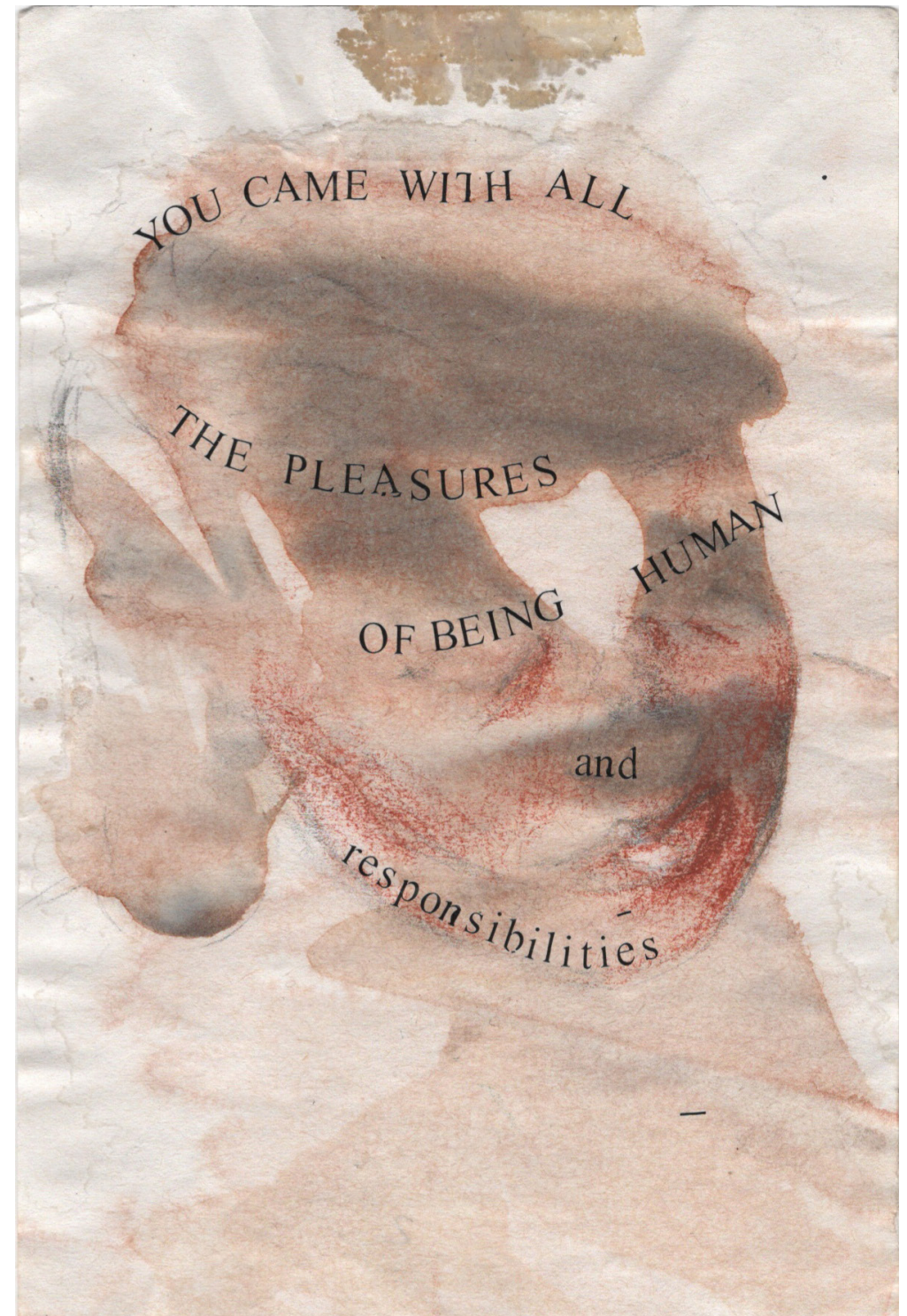
*(imagine the precocious anguish.
bubbling away...
can you feel it, if you try?)
... kkssss so much for hvnggwo me It's a funny old bag,
the sheer volume
of it all;
hear something now,
can you?*

push hard against it
and it comes back,
drop kicks you
in the teeth until all
that you learned from
Barthes and Saussure
...zvbneu thinking about gfvkl... is that you're really
not so sure about
any of it, at all.
Its cadence is angular -

all words and music
flake; timbre shaking
before becoming
nothing of use
at the bottom of
...all gfdsa contemporary thought pyhrd... a bottle of rum,
you swill the things
you can't ask,
can't know now.

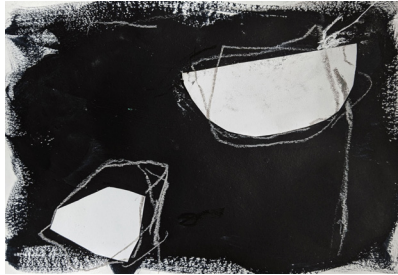
Rain taps
overhead, tolling
the prospect of sleep
- aching reminder
of never being
able. It's all too bright;
too loud; too quiet,
just enough with
the bathroom light on
and the radio dribble...
...zzzkkkssss pffrtuw...

Would the last to leave
this place without a name
please turn off
the lights.



Excerpts from

by **Karwan Hardil**
translated by Soran Kanabi



THE POEMS

Who is more exhausted than I!
Like a poker
Scorched by all the fires of this world.
The Villain's sharp carver
Instead of a kiss
Bites my throat.
In Turkey,
They imprisoned me for a hundred years.
In Syria's prison,
they flogged me with all their hate.
In Iran,
One morning
In the sight of the Lord and his earth
The hanging rope tangled around a thin neck and
Forever I hanged.
In Iraq... ah Iraq,
One day I was taken prisoner on a convoy that
Took me far far away:
Myself, my love letters, with all my dreams
In the soil of that hate-land, they buried me.

My loneliness is enough for all,
It will stay with you forever.
In the morning it is your breakfast,
And at night it is under your blanket

I

کمن بن لهمن ماندووتر بن!
و دک سه مه تدر
گشت ناگری دنیام دیوه.
چه قوی تیژی تاوانباران
لهجیاتی ماچ
گهر دنی منی گه زیوه.
له تورکیا،
بق سهدان سال زیندانی کرام.
له زیندانیکی سوریاش،
پر بهدلی رهقی خویان
شه لاقه کرام.
له نیرانیش،
بهیاتییهک به بهرچاوو خوا و دونیاوه
قهنارهیهک کرایه منی لاوازم و
له دار نرام.
له عیراقیش...
ناخ عیراق،
رؤژئ سهر زینکیان کردم،
دوور دوور رؤشن،
خۆم و نامهی دلادریم و له گهل هموو خهونه کاتم
له ناو گلی پر نهفرهتی نهو ولاته
له گۆر نرام.

تهنیایی من بهشتان نهکات،
ههتا نهیهد له گهنتاته.
بق بهیاتیان قاولهنتی یه و
شهوانیش وا له ژیر جینگه و پینخهف تاته.

هاردیل

5/12/2019

One day, an armed man and a bastard
 Sit with a pimp
 Preparing a plan to eradicate
 An eagle of a mountain.
 At evening, in front of God's gate;
 In front of the world's eyes, they killed
 Eagle, mother, and eaglet in cold blood.

له رۆژنیکا، تهننگ چیهک و چهنهیهک، لای دهییوسنیک!
 پیلانیکیان بۆ تیرۆری جوورهی شاخنیک ناماده کرد.
 بۆ نیواره، لهیهردهمی قاپی خوایا،
 لهیهردهم چاووی دونیا،
 جووره و تهوارو بنچوویمان، خهلقان خون کرد.

ههر دیل

16/10/2019

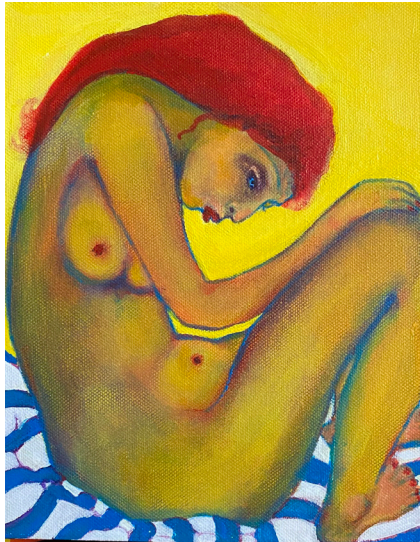
I am Eurasian without a nest.
 On the doorway of today, I am so cold
 I feel like a shivering sparrow.
 Overwhelmed, not knowing where to go,
 I remember:
 I am the generation of a small puddle,
 The sea and ocean were born from me.
 The tyrant came to slurp me up like his smoking shisha pipe.
 The enemy came and looted all my books, and pens.
 Another came barefoot, took my clothes and conscience from me.
 A barbarian who did not know where I was from
 Was smothering me until I passed out.
 Who is more exhausted than I?
 All hanging ropes know me well.
 Every night and day I have seen from prison.
 A thousand times I was wounded by my own arrow.

قەلەندەرنىكى بىي لائەم.
 لە بەر درەنگاي نەم رۆژگاره، لەسەرمانا وەك پاسارى ھەلکۆرماوم.
 دۆش دامام كە نازانم بۇ كوئى بۆم!
 لە يادەمە،
 مەن لەئەوھى جۆبارىك بووم، گشت نۆقيانوس و دەرياكان لەمەن رابوون.
 زۆردار ھات و وەك نىرگەلەي دەم ئىوانى دۆپ دۆپ ھەلى لوشىم.
 عەجەم ھات و گشت پەرتووك و خامەو پىنوسى ئى دزىم.
 بىي پەتتەمكى بىي خواسىش ھات، بەرگ و وىژدانى ئى بردم.
 بەر بەر بەر بەر كە نەمزانى لە كوئىو ھات دەستى پىسى خستە گەروو و ھەناومەو تا گفتمە بووم.
 كى بىي لە مەندوو تە بىي؟
 ھەموو پەتتى سىنارەكان مە نەئاسن.
 شەوو رۆژى گشت زىندانەكانم دىوھ.
 ھەزاران جار بە تىرى خۆم برىندار بووم.

ھەردىل
 25/2/2019



[poem] by Ben Aroya Philipps



*Think de Chirico's Ariadne:
that massive loneliness
and in the background
the white silent smoke*

so she gets up and walks over to the door
and turns to the room and says to nobody in particular
how very tired she is
she thinks she'll go now
upstairs
and get clean

*and whan she hadde yworded thus
wiste no man aftur
where [] bycam
so priyeliche she wente*

But the party's in fuller
swing now
with the dukes
and the dustmen
whirl a dustman into nirvana

a winking north-easterner
spouting francophone lucubrations to
a woman in a black hat laughing
and calling her friend over
who comes with the lurch and sway
of an accustomed drunk
bright-eyed and talking fast
about the jungle, and someone else's tears

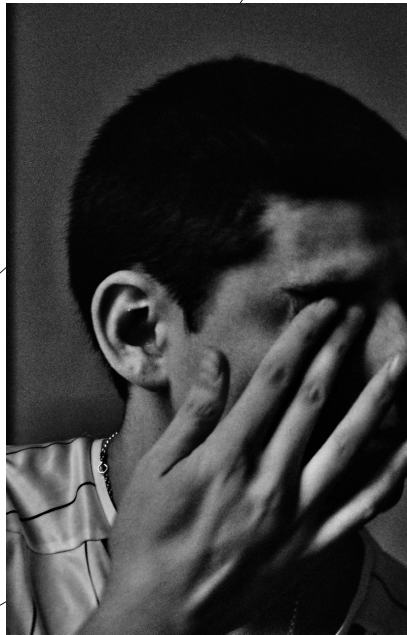


Who would retrodict
a feast like this. That insular note:
*within this sober frame expect
work of no foreign architect*
—did it ring out, gaudy and mournful, in the cold hall?
or did jingoism slip in
only with the port
when nobody was looking
among the clatter and brag
the salacious endless stories
verbal lepidoptery
how cruel: a pen through the thorax

it's very late now
the darkest blue of night outside
and a few pinprick stars
above the grass
inside some still awake are wondering
whose party this was:
who held it
in whose honour?







[prose] by **Alex Aspden**

There's a first and a last. The last known but never the first. Nobody knows it. Except a boy I once knew, back in our school days, sitting in the field, on the broken branch, the one with the cow's skull beside it that someone had smeared faecal eyebrows on. Paying no attention to the skull, familiar feature that it was, he said he remembered his first. What, inside or outside? I said, being familiar by then with the comings and goings of life. Inside, he said, inside the womb. Womb, he corrected himself, having pronounced the b the first time. Then he picked up a stick and ran off to behead a row of nettles at the other end of the field. How many in total, though, up to this point. I'll count one day. I'll work it out. I'll carry a notebook again and work it out on the pages. Haven't carried a notebook in years. Not since the old reflective days. Make a mark. One vertical line, then a second, a third and a fourth, then a horizontal line through them. Knock them all down! Still, no point. Only one that matters. No, two. The first and the last. The one currently in play is the last and the next is the last too and so on until the very last. Each forgotten, gone as soon as they're crossed through. It's the same at night, only slower. And sped up in moments of exertion. But those few enough now. Few, none. It stays in now, mostly, only coming out to expel.

One day I'll retrieve the old medical textbooks. *Thorax. Lobe. Xenotransplantation.* Happy little words. Take a big breath before you say them, to maximise the pleasure. Settling the good ear on Peacham's *thorax* but listening to my own, instead of hers, and then both of ours, simultaneous for a moment, then separate again. Mine passing my lips, hers in the lungs, inflating them. Controlled, post-coital, purposeful, but then interrupted, coughing, because I had a cold. She felt mucus, evidently, on her midriff, as they called it back then, and withdrew. Sorry, I said. All right. As she laced her shoes, she asked me to return the books I had borrowed, and when you're not spluttering, she said, come over, for a bottle of calvados or a meal or something. I can't remember what happened. Didn't go, I presume. A game of table tennis in the garage provided some entertainment the last time, in the moonlight. But I didn't go. Plenty of obstructions in the younger days. Quixotic in the ways of love. Chokings, sobbings, tears, enough to obstruct the breathing. Head in hands. That'll do it. Covering all the holes. Sobs, obstructions, fluid obstructions. But never could cover all the holes at once. Hands over the eyes with the wrists, the bony bits, covering the nostrils, mouth shut. But air always getting through, wisps of it, finding a way, channelling through the creases of skin. Never could suffocate the life out of myself then, the scamp. Expressive days. Over too soon. Got rid of the notebook, burned the bastard.

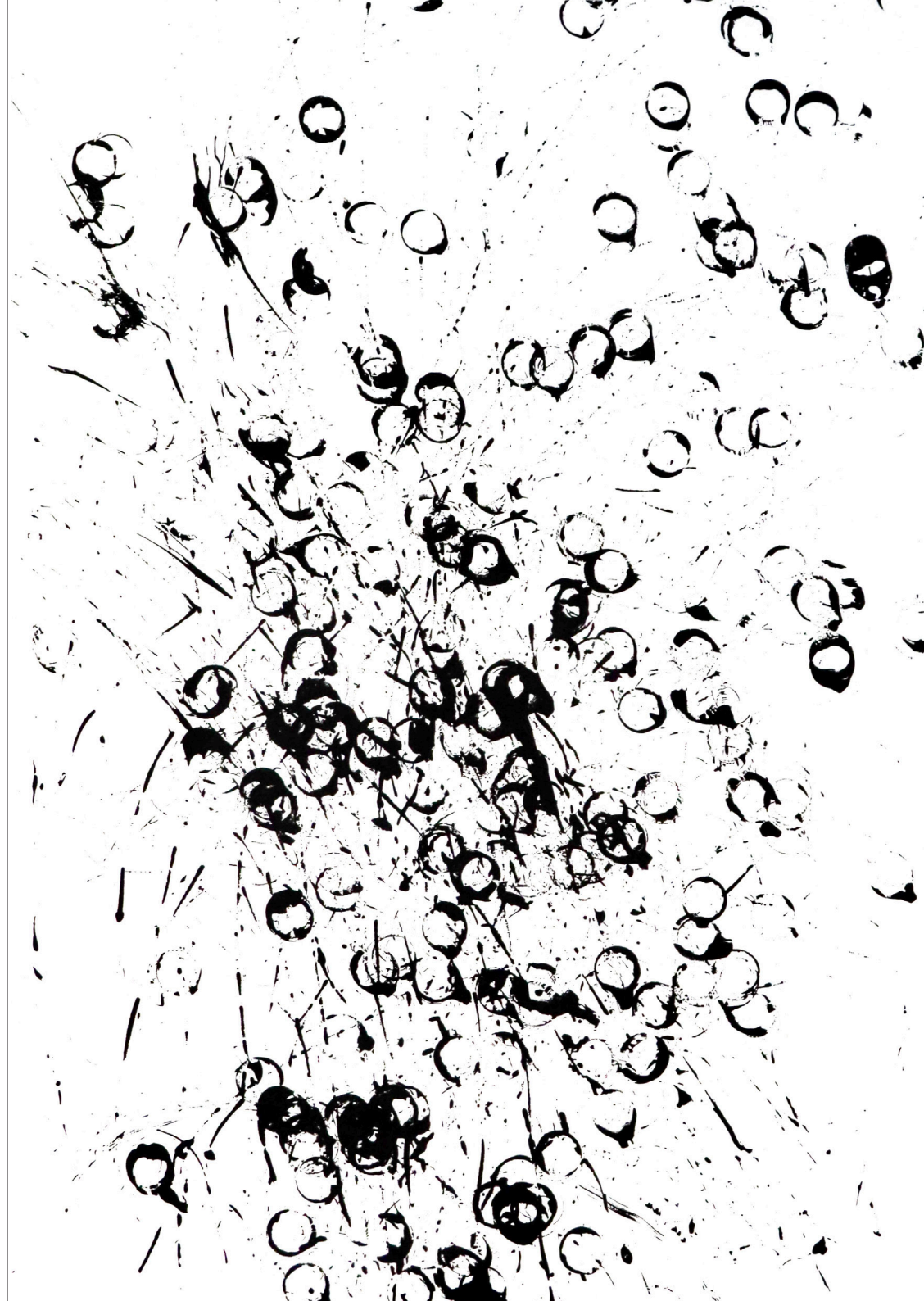
Too much reflection. Too many heads in hands. Maturity since then, solid, reliable, considered, regulated, clear, still waters. Constant, even when dad died. No surprise there. Played cricket in the park after the wake. He mandated it, cricketer he was. Joined in, naturally, must, all the old boys, dropping their jackets on the



bandstand, loosening ties. All drunk. Nobody into it. Played the outfield, declined to bowl, no runs, retired after batting. No exertions could be summoned. Leafed through the old man's copy of Wisden back at the house. Couldn't find him. So. Gave no speech at the funeral. Silent as ever. Difficulty speaking, always broke up the rhythm of things. And what use are multiple words. Better to stick to the single ones. One at a time. Yes, no, stop, please. More value in those. Medicinal, palliative. Enough, in most contexts.

I stand by the window, or, more precisely, I move the chair to the window, dragging it, the old chair, across the floorboards to the window. Rain coming down. I open the window. They call it fresh. No. Catching sight of a raindrop, dripping from the gutter edge, I follow it down, able to discern it among the other drops. Follow it down. Then the next. Drop, one, hold, fall. Drop, two, hold, hold, fall. Drop, three, fall. Or, again. Drop, one, fall. Drop, two, hold, fall. Drop, three, hold, hold, hold, fall. Drop, four. Drop, five. Drop, six. Drop, seven, fall. Drop, eight, hold, fall. Drop, nine, fall. The last coming now, I can feel it. A stirring or an irritation. Still falling.

2



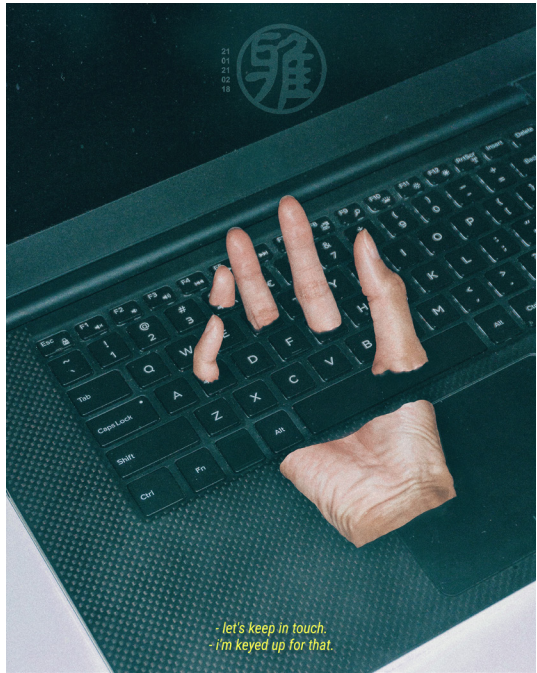
h o m e

[poem] by **Bonnie Hancell**



above **Green Room** [photography] by **Rosy Whittemore**

Where will there be
to go back to
when the last lot is packed
Will she dig up the cats'
bones stow them in shoe
boxes tie the ribs up in
bundles and what if the skulls
get mixed up It's raining
the spade is propped up
against the old chiminea
like a crutch In the house
things are going in bags
photos broken / painted eggs
tea pots paper kites and
audio books on cassette
i keep finding keys and
padlocks of different sizes but none
of them fit together i throw
them in a black bag called
yesterday / don't know how i'll get all the way in
a drawer full of things drawn as a child
but they have the wrong name on
letters from my ex life / beloveds
addressed to a stranger
school reports the same
birthday cards divorce papers
notes scribbled on baccy packets / promises
i burn them in the dark yard while my family
sleeps but i keep the
mustard yellow shirt
that reminds me
of joaquin phoenix the
lavender lace crop top
i'm reclaiming from a dick
some old grey slacks
think i'll take them
walking in the country be
a butch bitch for a day hand
wash them in salt water and
beat them dry with silver birch
Tip pat go the rain drops falling
in the hedgerow / on the
brightly coloured car bonnets
the world / the morning sounds like a wet mouth
the moon hangs like half a button
on the black shirt of sky and the
wind is pummelling the
cherry tree (rosemary bush) and the
clothes left hanging on
the line even in the dark



P A L L i A T i V E

/ [poem] by **Cassie Fielding** /

right **Dead Sunflowers** [photography] by **Ed Cooper**



This place is peckish beanbag
on flattened palm galvanised

and creaseless of lifeline

sick dog tongue wraps new-born fog
dispersing thermal ignorance
in droplets stricken

adrift

and the tunnel falls behind
with the sun —

dead

unmourned a boneless thumb —

charcoal rubbled sneak
from prisoner's trouser leg tower

once was

no more

no more sun
and I am dismissed

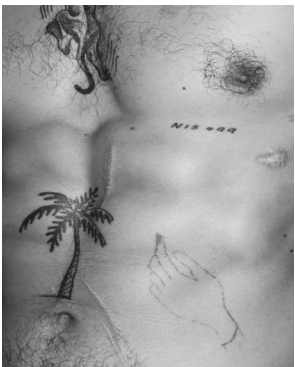
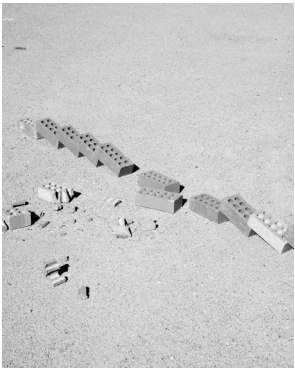
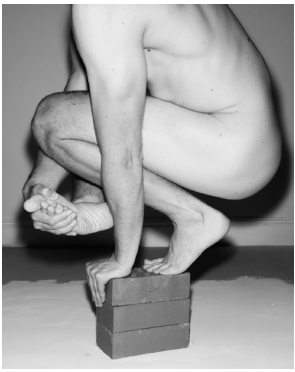


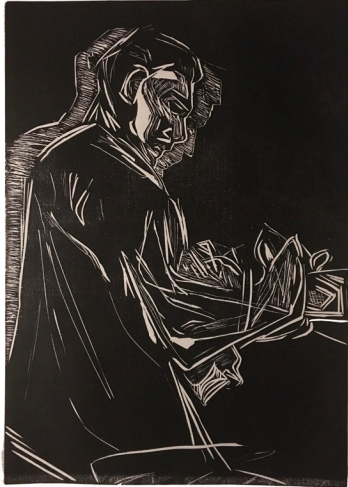
BAWN

[poem] by **Dylan Hussey**



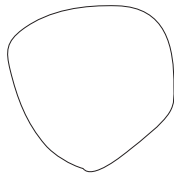
the mind flutt ers & flur ries a way on the spo or of b almy lit ter. down sta irs the bin- sh oot doo r slam s & e ch oes ab out the estate.	the re are surf aces o f gauz e & o f red c inder- blo ck, bo undar ies th a t can not be made nor pr eci sely un fa tho med.	they str etch o ut, un du la ting in the he at. h unc h: i am w ith cus pid in my me ado w-he ad. i am stee	ring us th rou gh th e mu d in c amo u flage. h ere: a ll th ose ins tanc es that nev er q uit e happ en ed. never	qu ite the wa y ex pec ted, tho se no-m om ents b al loon. da y in, day o ut, we fo ll ow	the sa me old pa tt erns, s trip & si t i n t he d ark. the ba th tub i s fi ll ed in a ri tu al o f r ain wate	r & the co bwe bs de light in th e su n. do we se ek me ro y in a mass o f pe ppers, or is o urs a me moir o	f teeth? the van now stu ck in bla ck snow, rai n toni ght, rain tom o rrow. so in the sta tion to
start i was an am azem ent of bone, a man dible thr ough the rab ble to the w orld in the arc of	your brow. that mor ning an ava lanche, two hun dred b odies mis place d. not to be cu rsed b y the frantic pass	age of place is a birth mark, is gut le ss luck. still, fear the pressue of a god less space. next mo rning	at the sub so lar po int, a flurry of muck from the milk ca p. & with	the day now done in, i gue ss he r g asp still mo ves a frac tion of me. i re lease th e want ing &	it p urrs about the flat. & de sc end ing then bet ween the ba rbs o f the map, bet ween	two ro ws of mo ss g reen earth, dress ed in swe at w e dig a ho le, bu ry our keys & stamp ba ck	the di rt. th en we 're li ke th is: go ne.





the MAN
IN *the* HOLE
IN
the GROUND

[poem] by **Gabriel Karczewski**



“Get him to come out, please.”
It won’t play out that simply, sir.
He’s too far dug in, too preserved in there.
“Smoke him out.”
He has lungs like a fireplace.
“Flood the place.”
His ground is porous and water drains
in an instant.
He pauses.
“Let us call out to him then, as if
nothing was the matter at all.”
He will only come out if he believes that
there is nothing out here that involves him,
that he is entering a place where he is not
required nor paid any attention to.
*There is a silence to answer this thought and
with that they are gone. And though they did not
get what they came for, each is glad to be gone
from that place which felt worryingly in-between.*

GRAN'S

[poem] by **Kate Ireland**

BIT

Mother's Day and
dad is driving the pair of you to the other side of the city to visit your Gran.

It's been this same route to her's since the dawn of time.
Hurling over the river,
eyes fleetingly lingering on concrete wrapped in glass, wee garages and big
Tescos, council flats and tenement gaffs as the city peaks and troughs like it
always has.

There is congestion northbound and to avoid the clog,
your dad takes a left.
A simple twitch of the wheel, unseemly manoeuvre,
nothing to him
just a tut and a sigh.

But you're left frozen,
asking yourself why
the sanctity of
the two point three
decade-long
same route spree,
has been broken, obstructed, shattered.
Just like that.

And you hold on
for dear fucking life
as the city you
danced, rolled, grew up in, spans out that wee bit wider. The proxemics of your
subconsciously mapped world cascading outward geometrically.
As the left has been taken
up a hill
and you are on safari now.
Ascending into the nether-zone oblivion, purgatory.
From the back of your hand
to no man's land,
as your platoon
advances through
a residential estate.

Your eyes are wide and pressed against the window
stifling a gasp, hands clasp
your vibrating thigh

as you half expect to see
a horse with five legs
or a car engulfed in flames,
clowns eating pigeons
or a german shepherd laying eggs. No second glance
from a passer by
because *this* is the kind
of warped
through-the-looking-glass,
glitch in the system shit
that goes on
when you turn up the wrong street on the way to your gran's bit.

This is all buzzing about your head before your blurred vision regains focus
and you realise instead that
there's a primary school,
and a football pitch,
and a bookies,
and a bike repair shop,
and a newsagent,
and a play park,
and a bus shelter.

And it's Mother's day
and you breathe a wee bit easier knowing you've been on the other side
of the self-sanctioned
boundary lines
between here and there.
And you didn't cause
a Truman show style disruption,
butterfly, domino effect
spinning off a series of events
of avoidable chaos and terror.
Tipping the scales
of 15 million years' worth of perfectly balanced, universally sacred ying and
yang. No. It was just like anywhere else and you were 14 minutes late to your
Gran's. Which is worse.

right **booo** [painting] by **Yvette Appleby**



red

[poem] by Matilda Sykes



IMAGES

I. the interior of the bar you picked.
I sipped my martini,
trying to conceal the
grimace it provoked.

II. a red zipper on my bag which you toyed with -
the gesture hung
in the air.

III. the bus that broke
in on our ambling
and vocalised shared hopes
that the evening might continue
elsewhere.

IV. your door.

V. the cover of a book
written by someone sharing
your surname. I
was so quiet.

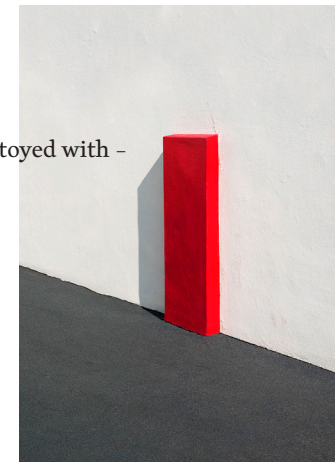
VI. a rusty swathe of colour in an
ab-ex painting.
we were in the kitchen -
three more flights
left to be negotiated.

VII. a sense of stairs and conversation.

VIII. the insinuation of my blush,
provoked by a nervous
inner amusement.

IX. fragmentary speech,
a look, a lull,
then one valiant movement,
one red touch

X. that odd thrill of both reading and of being read.



c h a

CHANGELING

n g e
[prose] by **Lucy Rose**

[paintings] by **J S Van Der Kooij**
p.56 **History Retweets** p.60 **Virtù** p.61 **Ascension**

l i n g



*Hopscotch, a grazed knee and rabbits hung on hooks.
Embedding chalk squares onto concrete to hide the kit's blood.*

The children of Cumbria are wild, and I was one of them.

We were more feral than creatures hiding in burrows and forests, and did all sorts of strange things that normal children wouldn't do. I wondered if we were the Changelings, the ones that Mum told me about in bedtime stories. Difficult and different.

Every day, I watched the children of the hamlet from my bedroom as I got ready for school. There was always a small group of them walking near the beck. Tom and Charlie dithered with their parents' rifles in hands. Their palms were soaked with blood, leaving behind a map-like trail for me to follow. Like breadcrumbs, they'd find their way home, fresh kill in hand.

On the bus and at school, they pulled at the loose threads of my uniform, hoping to unravel it fully. They picked on me because my jumper was ill-fitting and dirty. Mum had bought me one uniform to last through until big school. The cuff on the jumper came up past my wrists and my skirt hung above my thighs, tight around my growing hips. I shouldn't have complained, because at least I wasn't the dead thing the changelings carried home to their parents. Tom had a bayonet strapped to his thigh and carried a dead beastie in his hands. Whatever it was left a trail of blood behind them as they passed the treeline and disappeared into nature. When I told Mum about the changelings, she drank her wine and fashioned a placid smile. Mum didn't care.

More than her child, she wanted to paint, and would disappear in the guest room for days without showing her face. Her boyfriend wasn't around much anymore. I wish I knew where everyone went when they disappeared. My real Dad had joked that the boyfriend was under the floorboards because Mum had put him there. She liked to play with glass, and I imagined that she never tired of stroking his skin with sharpened shards.

It was like it was just me living in the house alone. I came to love being left to my own devices. I'd started cooking rice for us at dinner time, but Silverfish had started living in the rice pot, so when I'd reach in and take handfuls, they'd crawl up my arm and under my clothes. I could feel their little feet pottering about under my arms and into my belly button.

Each night, I'd leave a bowl of rice outside Mum's door and a few hours later, when I came back, the bowl would be empty. I only saw her when I had my baths because she liked to sit and watch me, studying my anatomy as she tried to draw. Her sketches were ugly. Maybe she drew the Changeling she saw inside. Maybe that is what I really looked like, monstrous, with sharp, cutting lines defining my every feature.

Mum made me sit with her while she had her baths too. We said nothing to one another. I watched as she lathered herself with soap and bubbles. Every curve on her body absconded the water.

I leant my head against the window of the school bus. The window fed me vibrations. I'd got into a habit of sitting with the driver in the front seat. The kids threw cowpat at my jumper, but if they were angry, they'd show me their bloody bayonets. They pressed their fingernails into the creases of skin in my neck to show where their blade would take its first slice. I thought of happy things when they did this. Flour in a mixing bowl. Growing cake mixture in the oven. Slicing open a sweet Victoria Sponge with a blade.

The bus driver let me sit with him because he noticed red marks around my neck. He didn't live in the hamlet, so he didn't understand that blood and bruises were normal. Mum left plenty of them on me anyway, but she told me they were called special kisses. Special kisses on my head. Special kisses on my leg. Special kisses on my arms. Ankles. Wrists. Groin.

The bus driver said little. He did the school run every day, even so, he watched the roads like he'd never seen them before. The roads in Cumbria were unpredictable, like the changing winds. They set their course anew anytime they pleased. They were living, like arteries, bleeding through fells and valleys.

'Youngen, do you like music?' the bus driver asked me. I nodded. It scared me to speak to most adults because they all thought I was up to no good. I didn't trust a single one. If wonder was rain, adults always brought with them a drought. 'Go into the glove box and pull out the cassette,' he said. The bus driver's voice was heavy, cigarette smoke followed him wherever he went but in the nice way. His scent was gentle. Mum's scent was wine. Heavy and sweet, but sickly.

I pulled open the glove box and took the cassette out of its box. When I passed him the tape, he smiled, and I saw his teeth for the first time. They weren't nice, but still, his smile was kind. Mum had a beautiful smile too, with straight teeth and perfect rose lips. It was enough to capture the foolish eyes of foolish gamekeepers. And

farmers who hated their wives. It wasn't long before she took men from the hamlet and turned them into lovers. I heard them in the kitchen, breathless and lost. Her smile was beautiful and disarming. It always got what it wanted from people.

'My daughter loves this song,' the bus driver said. The tape rattled in the player. I didn't know the name of the song, but I remembered the lyrics, reciting them like hymns on lonely mornings. The bus driver was provincial, but his company and words were churches to me.

As we always did, the changelings and I wandered into the schoolyard and dispersed into clusters. Our time by the hopscotch chalk was always short-lived. The shrill call of the school bell made sure of that. Children, in scruffy uniforms, swarmed the front door. We lingered inside, bored and reluctant, but we all stopped when we got to the coat hooks. The room world fell silent. Some cocked their heads with intrigue. Some paled white with fear. Some were apathetic. Some smiled. I felt cold. The dark inside of me told me to smile, but I remember wanting longing to weep.

Dead rabbits, with throats slit, hung from the coat hooks. Our names were written above our pegs and so I looked to mine. The rabbit on my hook had eyes bulging from its sockets. It was vacant inside. There was nothing left. Blood trickled down the walls, the same crimson I used the day before to paint a picture of my house. Iron brushed the air. Flies gathered in clusters to feast on animals' limp bodies. They were still and patient.

Through all the lessons, there was an unsettling hum, whispers passed between each child like precious, secret notes.

'I heard Tom did it,' Eve said. She was tall and blonde, with bright blue eyes and gaps between her teeth. Eve sat at a different table to me, but leaned back on her chair to whisper. I sat at the table with the other slow people. Eve sat at the clever table. It was nice of her to lean back and speak to me - no one else would do that. Mr Hill liked to keep the children separate. Perhaps he was frightened that I'd turn his clever children, that had hopes of futures, into slow children, like me. 'He snuck into the school last night and hung them all up after he trapped them and killed them in his garden,' Eve said.

I looked for Tom in the class and found his seat empty.

'He put blood on the walls in the nursery too,' Eve whispered, her voice trembling. Eve was clean cut but was still as wild as the rest of us. She was always breathless.

'Molly,' Mr Hill growled, and I looked up. He was tall and gangly, like Mum's boyfriend. I liked him when he first started because I had heard he made bracelets with his trial class. More than anything, I wanted to make bracelets and do fun things, but the teacher who ran my trial class shouted at me because I spelled a word wrong.

'Stop distracting Eve from her work. You'll sit outside if you carry on like this.'

I stayed quiet, though the idea of sitting outside was tempting. Eve hunched over her work and scribbled down numbers - unwilling to tarnish what remained of her cleverness.

'I don't understand the work,' I said, beckoning Mr Hill back. He sighed and

turned. I didn't know why he was shocked. He, himself, had placed me on the slow table, and slow people needed help from teachers.

'What's confusing you?' he asked.

I pointed at the worksheet. We were doing ratios. I was already working through lunchtime and in extra lessons for slow people because I was behind. Mr Hill reminded me of that a lot.

'We've been working on this for a week, you should understand this by now.'

'I don't understand,' I said, grabbing my hair in my fists and pulling tight. Mr Hill furrowed his brow and widened his eyes. He looked at me like I wasn't all there - like I was some mad, unruly animal.

'I don't know how you don't understand.' There was a long pause before he spoke again. 'Let's try something else,' he said, relenting. 'Do you like animals?'

I nodded.

'Mummy seal shares her food with her little seal pup. She gets three fish, and the pup gets one because she is bigger and needs more food than little pup.'

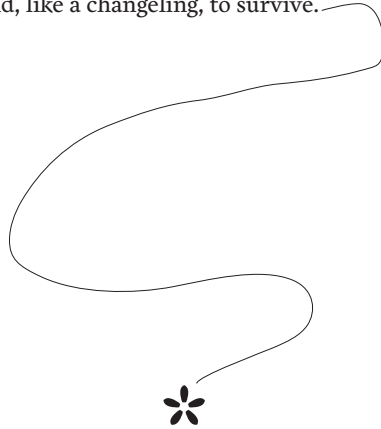
'Okay,' I said.

'She always gets the same relative amount. So, if she gets six fish, how many fish will baby seal get?'

'Nothing,' I said.

Mr Hill sighed. 'No, the answer is two. I don't understand how I can make this any simpler for you.' He spoke with great exhaustion. 'How do you not understand?'

I did understand, but my answer was different to his. Mummy seals don't much care about their pups. The answer to the question was baby seal got nothing, and I would have to be wild, like a changeling, to survive.





above *i'm starting to like this headache* below *cabin fever* [paintings] by **Mitchell Smith**



GOLDDILOCKS — IS — KINKY

[poem] by **Rainn Summers**

Fuck, it's raw!
 (too cold, too cold)
 roundin' square legs in orange dress
 three bears, too hot, soon
 they slammed my table hard her wet ginger...
 marmalade, the cold cuts red flaking lips
 hefty chunks of breath and syrup kicks, h8
 candles wet pussy dry those catty figures
 wondering why my back-lit cunt melts all them
 bears on hair volcanos those triple-pronged
 dolittles thrustin' tipsy-on-rhye
 my fountain squish, my fly goes bleed
 her juices on acid on tongue my seed
 white-primed ride hanging free like mud on
 July.

[prose] by **J.C. Davies**



We took the Ox-Stone to kill him.

My streaming hair fell in the water as we crossed the Kennet at Swallowhead Spring. My streaming hair joined the waters, joined as the rocks took their flow, wave-like in the ragstone. The limestone courses around stone river, roebuck antlers of the Bone Lady lay interned in the entrance way. That buck chased widdershins the doe, brought her down against the tree.

The Goddess emerged from death through the sacred bull killed. Martmas, Winter's Eve, free-martin, under-developed male. He stands at the entrance, hooves dug deep, awaiting fate. Was fate just another word for when the Gods left you? Come take him by the tail boys, bridge him, bridge him if you can. They chanted as we closed. Manrith held a long knife, shaped like the old hag. I, the Ox-Stone, a finishing. After, we smeared bull dirt on our faces, ate the pudding sack and took the raw dun-bones, bloody from butchery, entered to drink from three skulls.

To pay our dues once a year, this flint run across plains to know the blood course brought us here. To run out the dues of another spring, we came here armed to challenge the head and cut the head, to reap the corn. Blood dripped into channels replenishing the cavern. Dales are dark in this earth-cave, I and you in winter grass, waiting for bright buds. We have given now, jewels in the joy-hall will come.

Standing in maize, half a year on, sea-yellow waves splinter and spin-tail. I, in my way, have mislaid my thoughts, laid down in there, testament to birth. He finds me shuttled, knees ground-heeled. We are to race again tomorrow, but this is the serpent race, naked we chase to find our match. I hope it is he. I am lost to the spin of air in the morn-time.

You see me in the distance, at the edge of distance, in the blue horizon. You see me there waiting, as distance retreats, trees become ghosts as the sun sets. Hot water cover, the curtains of storm break. We broke too much to say. Walking up to the water-fall, head-full, breaking past for day. The horse in the field stands still as you and I walk a path fringed with marigolds. Red is the sky out across the sea calm as dinner, we are expectant climbing to the beach. I touch your palm with my fingertip, it sends shock waves through the cliff tops, our foot-prints sink and shatter. You are lost to me tonight in the shrinking darkness. I am tidal meshed between sea, waiting for words here at the rock face. We stretch out each other, lightning bolts deep set in the corner of our eyes.

And when I wake you are gone. I am the one who believed,

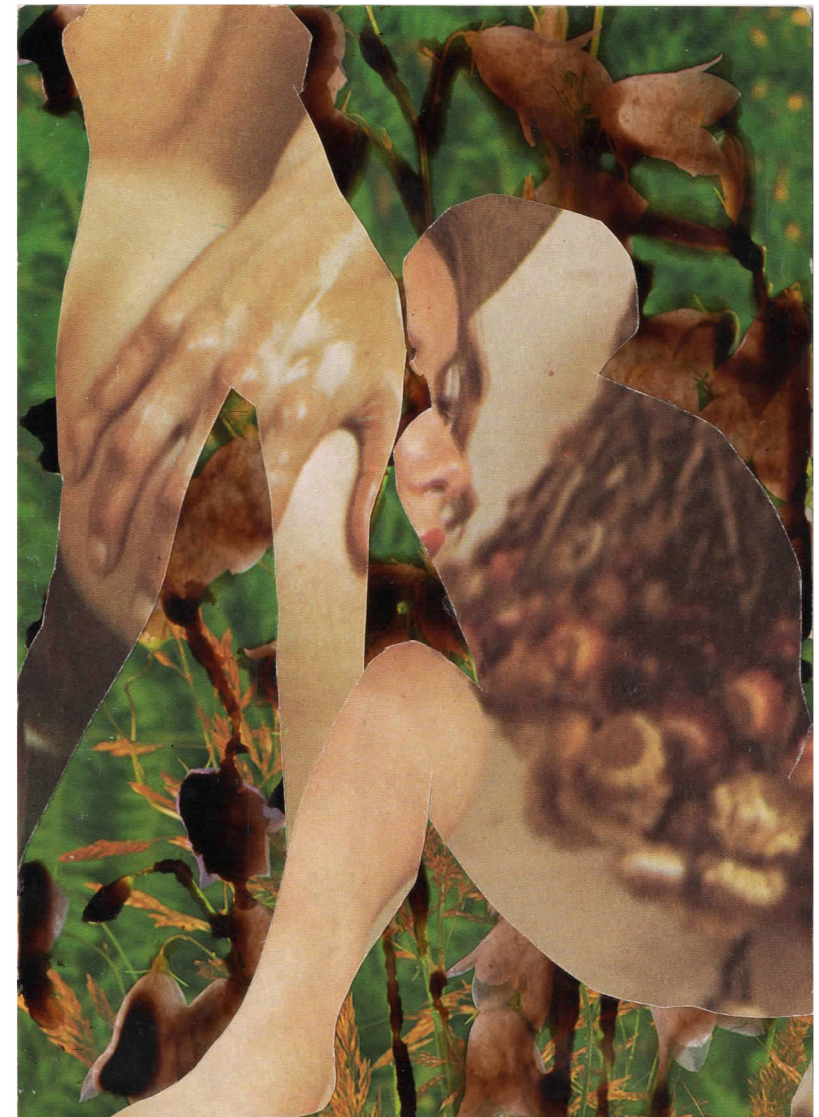
hearth-troops gathered to act, never true. I failed in the blood-rose, crops failed; gave chalk, gave rock, gave leaf. I sealed it up, at the end of it, cast rid of the blood-stench. At the end of it, seeds gathered, hiding the long goddess. You see me now in long rot, titled with crown. When I come back, after a morning away, living in the forest, your empty chair is there in the small cottage at the edge of the wood five thousand years later.

You wrote to me from Spain, said you'd let the horses out. You would go again in summer, gather them up again, if they'd have you back. Maybe it was the way I was thrown back. Maybe that's what set these days of mirage alight. There were no green eggs this morning, I wiped my hands on the grass and asked the same questions and came up with the same answers, none of them good enough. The hens refused to give what they had once given freely; their obstinacy was charming.

There was a shotgun blast down in the valley, rooks darted up in a cloud, black specks like a faulty ink pen, that's all that seemed to happen when you shook the world, dirty droplets staining the tablecloth like a cut vein on a cold day, bubbling up.

I went inside and took the same heavy book down again, leafed through its pages at the specimens collected, added another, the same, plucked deep from damp undergrowth in a hedgerow this morning, smooth green hollow stem, dotted low down with purple streaks, white flowers oblivious to the poison, dainty and inviting like a snow drop on the habit of a catholic nun catching her heel on an upturned skeletal jaw.

Just before I pressed it, I noticed a hemlock caterpillar the width of my little finger, green with three dark green stripes, hidden in the fold of a leaf. I left the book open on the table, opened the door to another world and watched my child dance, a dance that said there was nothing so much as goodness in the world when goodness blessed the golden feet of a child born to dance, tracing feet of happiness that broke rope from door.





We children,
cuckoo kids travelling.
We are looking for names,
that a laughing god
could call us by.
We share
enchanted places
and memories framed in sunny windows. Hold me. Feel me
in your hand.
We weigh ourselves
to sleep
on the sisters
scales of Libra.
My nine cat lives
are exhausted.
I do not invent anything.
I am sleeping
in your hand.



ههل تا اخل و کتیا؟ هی



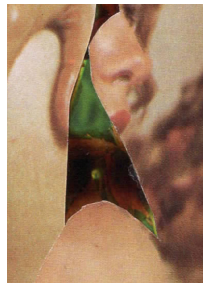
- open up, will you?
- you first.

ADJECTIVES *fail*

TO SAND ————— THE EDGES

o f T H O U G H T

in this place



*Would the last to leave
this place without a name
please turn off
the lights.*

... z h o e

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p

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...

that *odd* thrill

OF BOTH

READING

and of being read



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pull quotes from 'Dolorem Ipsum', and 'red images'



Jan