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E c u a d o r

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L o v e r s

Breaker Bar / Dave Hardin

Every now and then I get the urge to lift
the simple slender breaker bar in my hands,
snap a socket on the square pivot fitting

and go hunting for a big fat frozen bolt,
one that hasn't budged in ages, rust bound
threads that yearn to give held fast by a split

spiral washer, a tense marriage of wedge
to pent up tension, for no reason other
than to feel the sheer unbridled joy

that comes from applying Archimedes
Law of the Lever, set to deliver
a stunning verdict proclaimed with a sharp

dry crack that travels through my hands
my arms to light up some forgotten
constellation in a dark and dusty

corner of my brain, closing a circuit
that began with the simple slender
breaker bar bequeathed but rarely wielded,

a conjure stick to summon you back to
throw your weight around, tip the scales in my
favor, balanced absurdly on the business end.

Family Tree / Dave Hardin

They come from far and wide once a year
same time, same place to mingle and snack
on catered shrimp and make small talk

in the long line that snakes around the
room to the open bar besieged
five deep, the convivial beating

heart of the party until the string band
starts up and everyone heads for the
dance floor, long limbs loose, knees high,

hair down, heads thrown back with abandon,
jostling and spilling drinks. Of course there's
bound to be trouble, unavoidable

at these kind of things, generations of
farmers and drifters and rail men,
conscripts and schemers and failures

three times over, a profane
cacophony of native brogue and
broken English and long, lazy vowels

stretched to breaking. The men have my
nose, my forehead, the women your eyes,
your fortitude, but neither you or I

claim the loud cackle coming from a
skinny gal with electric hair or
the flat, vacant gaze of the fellow

in coveralls, hands like hay rakes,
yellow fingers clenched into fists. The bar
closes at twelve and they start to drift

away, arms draped, propping each other
up, telling the same old tearful tales,
the falls down wells, battle axes

to the head, starvation in alarming
numbers and the many iterations of
pox and croup, ague and catarrh,

bilious fever, dropsy and the flux,
melancholia, milk leg and screws,
a miserable game of one-upmanship

savored by all as they disappear
into the night, our fore-bearers, eyeing
us at the door, polite yet taciturn,

playing things close to the vest, mum
on the matter of the highest
branches of their family tree.

Letter in the Mail / Dave Hardin

Hauling water from
the creek, cutting
slab ice from the lake,
rending oil from a
whale, tapping keys
that strike the platen,
watching the hills
shed light for shadow,
committing to
memory every
line in her face
drawn in quick sketch on
a secret page,
waiting days for the
letter written
over hours on
milk white paper
stitched with lines that hide
a message in
between wrought, penned words.

DAVE HARDIN is a Michigan poet and artist with poems published in *3 Quarks Daily*, *Literary Kicks*, *Pocket Thoughts*, *The Drunken Boat*, and *Detroit Metro Times*. In 2012, he self-published *A Ruinous Thirst*, a collection of poems. He contributes work to Scrum, a blog of poetry and satire. <http://scrumsideup.blogspot.com>

Hack / Askold Skalsky

tonight the cough in my windpipe feels
like rust
like wiry cobwebs
like steel crumbs
disturbing my whole evening as I write

(this is how the dead must think of their shoes)

prompting anxious questions from my wife
as she brings the sweet juice of ripened pears
that makes me feel my age

even after the door closes
even after I cross out the passive verbs

Sweetheart Rag /

Askold Skalsky

She said our relationship
was geometric—
parallel hearts
that never meet.

I told her—yeah,
I think I love you but ...
got an ego like a 50-gallon storage bag
with zippered pockets
on the side.

And she said:
Whatever Lola wants, Lola gets.

And we were off
into our monochrome,
riding the green ribs of the sea,
engines in motion,
charged to the marrow bone.

And they said:
60 days
60 days
of obscure longings
sugary inflammations
and it's bye bye
Valentino.

Later even the dishes on the table
cracked in the midst of our illusions.

Still, no dress in the world
could have held those hips,
nipples like the cream-white swirls
of a Rumanian torte.

ASKOLD SKALSKY, originally from Ukraine, has appeared in numerous small press magazines and online publications in Canada, England, Ireland, and mainland Europe. He has received two Individual Artist Awards for poetry from the Maryland State Arts Council. His first book of poems, *The Ponies of Chuang Tzu*, was published by *Horizon Tracts* in New York City.

A Beginning's Beginning / Katie Ehling

Drunk drivers everywhere unite in unintended car
crashes.

God created us to create, so if we're not creating, then
what are we doing?

All I know is I miss you.

I'd like just once to run completely out of gas and see
where the hell I am.

Even then I don't think it'd matter.

The farmer's field is empty.

His crops haven't grown in years.

After the flood came, everything died.

Now this brown grass is just begging for water.

Ironic isn't it?

The narrower the winding path, the harder it is to find my
way,

But I don't stop striving.

I don't stop trying to find you.

I know you're here somewhere at the end of one of these
country roads.

And when I find you, we can ride off into the sunset
together,

Not stopping at stop signs,

Not worrying about how much gas we have in the gas
tank.

And the brake lights in front of us won't mean as much
Because every time I stop I'll be able to start up again.
Because with you there is no end, even once I'm there.
In every ending there is a new beginning.
I can't wait for this beginning's end so I can begin again
with you.

KATIE EHLING writes poetry at
<http://thetseliotofyourlovesong.tumblr.com/>

Open / Neila Mezynski

They might stand there. Just. Slightly, like that.
Arms full of possible. Away. Elbows bent. Palms
up. Slight. Some are not, like that. Close against
not away. Possible. None. Close the door policy.
Soft mouth not pressed hard wrinkles atop. Lip.
Comfortable with safe. Arms tight against.
Courageous one soft arm open away. For
possible. Slight.

NEILA MEZYNSKI is the author of *Glimpses* (Scrambler Books 2013), *Floater* (Nap Chapbook 2012), *Meticulous Man* (Mondo Bummer 2012), and *Yellow Fringe Dress* (Radioactive Moat Press 2011), as well as many other pamphlets, chapbooks, and e-chapbooks.

Osiris in Pieces / Thomas Zimmerman

Wet leaves like flesh beneath our shoes, we walk
in drippy, darkened woods, the dogs prick-eared
and snuffling all the dead among us. Talk
we must of nothing buried staying put—
but how we stamp it down, remember Dad,
his meerschaum pipe-bowl carved in hero's beard,
in fierce god's scowl and jutting brow, and how
his thumb would tamp the spiced tobacco. Sad
he's dead, we say, yet here he is. A bough
is creaking, shedding leaves. Osiris, torn
to pieces, bleeds himself into the soot
and silt so all the tribe can eat. The priests
that placed those hosts upon our tongues, the beasts
we loved as children, all are being born.

Note from Arachova / Thomas Zimmerman

The green and black Parnassus Mountains rise in hazy morning light above the roofs of orange tile. A dog barks twice. My head is clear. This is the farthest east I've been in forty years. Wood table-top is grained and stained as my own body is, but not as cursed and weathered as these mountains are. A church bell rings. A distant dog begins to bark. The mountains bloom to pink and beige in rising light. Dog barks again. Like me, he's waiting for an oracle to speak.

THOMAS ZIMMERMAN teaches English, directs the Writing Center, and edits two literary magazines at Washtenaw Community College in Ann Arbor, MI. His poems have appeared recently in *The Wayfarer* and *Leaves of Ink*. His chapbook *In Stereo* was published in 2012 by *The Camel Saloon Books on Blog*.
<http://thomaszimmerman.wordpress.com>

I Said / Garrett McColloch

that I still love you
and then you told me
to go fuck myself

GARRETT MCCOLLOCH enjoys art in all forms. He is a hopeless romantic who writes mostly from personal experience and observation.

No Biggie / Jill Long

I gutted myself for you
and instead of looking away
to ignore my sacrifice...
you picked up all my vitals,
smiling,
and offered them back to me
with your own attached.

My hands are full
with passions I cannot measure
but with the length of my fingers
and the breadth of my palms.

It smears everywhere
when I touch you.
I hope the weight of what
just happened
presses on your limbs,
bleeds all over you,
staunches the flow of thoughts,
holds you still,
and smears despite;
because it will not stop growing.

There's nothing we should do.

I retreat from you,
but it spans the empty spaces,
tugging harder
the further we separate.
So we decide not to.
As if we aren't drenched
and tethered to one another,
standing in it all.

It's so easy, isn't it?

Now we are inescapably mired
in the muck of our own Passions.
What a mess we're in.

We've made things too big again.

JILL LONG is a university student studying English Education. She hopes to teach English as a second language in an Asian country. In her spare time, she dabbles in poetry, prose, and break dancing.

<http://societyofdeadpoets.tumblr.com>

Phone Call from my Dead Father Crying

/ Corey Mesler

I do not think the sea talks
through conch shells.
I do not believe that when
you think about someone
they feel its vibrations.
I have found the music of
the spheres to be background
clatter nearly obliterated
by city-hum and brute howls.
Yet, I pick up the phone and
my dead father is crying.
I want so badly for him to
hear me. I shout into the phone.
Now I am crying, too,
as the line seems to be crying.
And the air is only the scar
of his tears and the static
which is hell, a kind extinction.

Honey / Corey Mesler

I thought
if I
sang well
enough

she would
show me
that secret
golden place

taste of
sweet butter.
I thought
if I
had the right
words

she would turn
once
and take me
like the man

I was
pretending to be.

Schooling Still / Corey Mesler

It was either in the Bhagavad Vita
or the new Voidoids album
that I heard about the black angel.
Now, we are intimates and
the room where I go for my blas-
phemy is lined with shadow.
I have to be careful what I read or
listen to. I cannot begin again, again.

COREY MESLER has published a dozen chapbooks of both poetry and prose, as well as six novels, two full length poetry collections, and three books of short stories. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize numerous times, and two of his poems have been chosen for Garrison Keillor's *Writer's Almanac*. With his wife, he runs Burke's Book Store in Memphis, one of the country's oldest independent bookstores.
<http://coreymesler.wordpress.com>

By the Bay / Joshua Lyon

Sitting on the pier
by a foam sprayed shore

I finish my bottle of bourbon
with pen and paper

I scribbled a message
corked you up

If you find yourself astray
please do not be afraid

I'll drop another bottle
to help you find your way

All the Love of the Universe / Joshua Lyon

私は宇を発汗しているモリーをポップ

وو التعرق أنا لمولي برزت

Изскочи Моли съм изпотяване уо

நான் ஓ வியர்வை நான் ஒரு மோலி தெரித்து

Binusa ng puta ako pagpapawis woo

Зашел Молли я потею Ву

אני מולי אני מוציא זיעה

એક મોલી પોપ હું વુ પરસેવો છું

Muncul gadis saya berpeluh woo

ನಾನು ವೂ ಬೆವರುವುದು ನಾನು ಒಂದು ಮೊಲಿ ಬೇರ್ಪಡಿಸಿದ

JOSHUA LYON was born in Daytona Beach, Florida in 1989. He served in the United States Navy from 2008 to 2012. He is currently a student at the University of North Florida and a diehard Gators fan.

Wordplay / Langston Powell

w o r d p l a y s
w o r d s p l a y
w o r l d s p a y
s w o r d p l a y
y a r d p l o w s
s a d o w l p r y
s l a p d r y o w
r a s p y o w l D
s l o w r a y P D
r a w s o y L P D
s o r a y W L P D
s o a r W L P Y D
o a r W L P Y S D
o r W L P A Y S D
o W L P R A Y S D
O W L P R A Y S D
O W L P R A Y S d

LANGSTON POWELL is a twenty-something college kid trying to make it through life. His mother named him after the poet. He spends much of his time letting his mind wander.

Glacier / John Grey

A world of creeping ice
slides and scrapes itself silently
into eternity.

No one leaves the faintest print
upon your glittering white.

Six months dark, six month light,
embalmed gray sky,
northern lights,
are all that pass for memories.

Cold-bound, time-free,
your voyage is infinitely in place -
no beginning, no end,
no intimates
nor reason.

On the Long Drive / John Grey

It's a flat, endless Midwestern road,
early morning, towns are yawning,
bustling farmhouses light up,
always someone in faded blue overalls
making tracks from house to shed.

The white wooden church is mandatory,
likewise the linseed mill,
long lean fences,
train tracks that so unimaginatively
run parallel to the road.

Haystacks are everywhere.
They're summer's way
of thumbing its nose at winter.

I'm listening to AM radio,
count five silos to a song.
I sing along roughly
but I drive smooth.

I'm not from here.
There's places to stop
but nowhere I could stay.

The car ahead of me
pulls onto a side road
as if to show
we're not all passing through.

JOHN GREY is an Australian born poet who works as a financial systems analyst. His work has recently appeared in *International Poetry Review*, *Tribeca Poetry Review*, and the horror anthology *What Fears Become*. He has work forthcoming in *Potomac Review*, *Hurricane Review*, and *Osiris*.

Stele / Robin Wyatt Dunn

The Face of Tzche hurts,
Even past the hypnosis brought by
The lapis eyes, curved south like daggers,
Lids colored bittersweet,
Lashes the sky,
Cerulean bleeding into the sclera.

The Face of Tzche is mounted,
We wind round it,
Stunned by the gravity of smile:
Inside each cheek a staircase winds,
Fettered in slave ink,
Warp, weft, warp, weft,
A thousand feet,
Ten thousand,
Warp, weft,
Can you feel the child's hands,
Warp, weft,
Stone on stone on memory on stone,
Into the cheek, into his mind,
We wind around.

I am the child,
I am the child,
I made him,
Do not kill me,
I made him,
I am lurking,
Inside,
Where I have smeared coquelicot onto my cheeks,
Coral in my nose,
I'm bleeding rust, auburn, salmon, grease.
Tzche is too big.
Too colored.
I am your soft edge!
Nudge me, Tzche,
Nudge me south,
Make my sinopia grey,
Make mahogany a darker wine,
Soften my breathing,
Weave me tighter to your heart.

ROBIN WYATT DUNN lives in The Town of the Queen of the Angels, El Pueblo de la Reina de Los Angeles, in Echo Park. He is 33 years old.
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We publish poetry

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