



BOUNDARY STREET

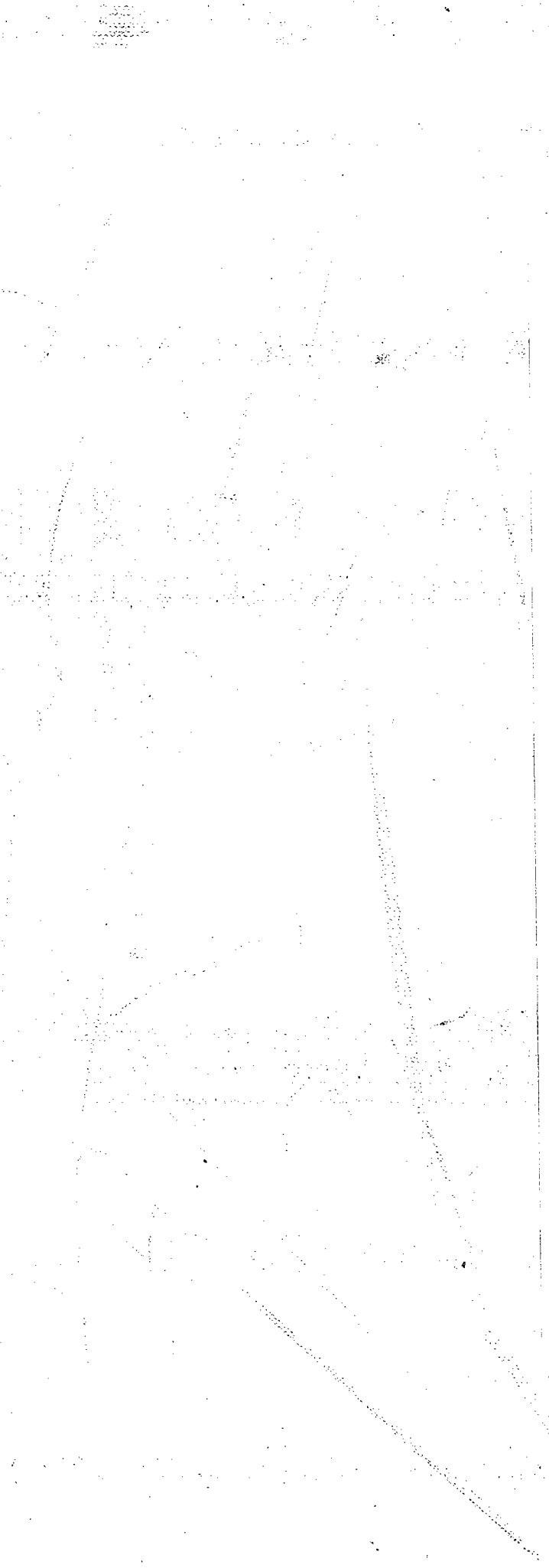
A Collaboration

Carnegie Mellon University

Pittsburgh High School

for the Creative and Performing Arts

CAPAMU



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Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts

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PREFACE

This chapbook is the result of a collaboration between students in the Advanced Poetry Workshop at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) and Literary Arts majors at The Pittsburgh High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA). Throughout the Spring 2000 semester, CMU students and CAPA students exchanged assignments and worked together on poems, meeting both at CMU and CAPA for workshop sessions and discussion. This collection of poems celebrates that collaboration. We all learned from each other, and we're all better writers, and teachers, because of this project. We hope you enjoy reading these poems as much as we enjoyed working together.

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BOUNDARY STREET

Anne Ray

WHAT THIS DOES TO ME

I started taking a class in weight training.
The weights leave soot and sweat
on my hands. Two and a half hours,
three times a week. We work in an
old gym, where the machines are tempered
black steel and there's a bucket of chalk
for your hands and a guy called
Coach who carries a clipboard.
I shouldn't be in this room, a concrete
bunker with a floor of black rubber. You have
to lie flat on your back to do that one. At first
I felt skinny and longhaired and pink next to these
boys—huge, lifting bricks of weight,
sweaty, and all that grunting. Now this place
sounds familiar. *Come on put it up*, the spotters say,
and *breathe breathe*, and *uh uh uhhhh hehehe*.
Sounds vaguely like a Lamaze class, I suppose,
but I've only heard Lamaze on television.
I like what this work does to me. I can feel muscles
under my skin, triangles and bulges, lines in my legs
that pull taut like cables. Not like these women who
lift a four-pound dumbbell and dab a cheek. Most days
I scrub my feet in the shower with soap and an
itchy washcloth. Most days I strive for Knighthood.
I like how the women's locker room

smells. I like a white towel over my orange-ish body. I like the roundness of my feet on the floor. My body is stretched out, except for my knees they're fat, as though they've been padded with dough, always swollen. I don't mind it when they can put up 220 on the leg press. The locker room smells a bit like a hospital, sterile. But a bit like someone poured rum on the floor, a smell that stings the nose. I remember that smell, I can taste that rum from somewhere, even over the soap that drips in my mouth.

Francesca DeAngelis

WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER FOREVER

We have been together forever, since junior high, it seems a lot longer doesn't it?
Yes, it does, but it is still my time to go.
Take me in your arms into the field of wild flowers near the countryside.
Because that is where I want to spend my last days alone with you.
I have loved you from day one, but death has caught up with me.
Please remember the way I was, when we were young, don't think about me sitting here

lying in my dark and scary deathbed.
The date where we went to the park and you pushed me on the wood swing hanging down from that old sickly tree and the swing broke but you lifted me from the ground and carried me all the way back home. I will always think about that.
You know that from my grave on my way up to heaven I will look down on you, I will be your guardian angel.
Children I love you,
Donny be a good husband to your new beautiful wife. She really does loves you, I can see it.
Ashley, my gorgeous grown-up daughter, be nice and kind to your young growing son.
And last but not least,
Bob, my wonderful, loving, caring husband, we have been together forever but it is my Time to go.
I will think about you always.

Katie Horowitz

THE DIRT OF DELHI

There is a pool in the center of the Jama Masjid
Mosque in Delhi, India
The stone is red and wet from rain
They say there are
Twenty five thousand praying here on holidays
All skinny as cats
Gristly men
And women with eyes that absorb everything

They wash their hands first
Wash their faces
Their babies' faces
The bottoms of their bare feet
Their teeth
Pour rainwater over skin thick with air
Bathe in thick holy water

3000 years ago
Droves of brown men
Bent over in the sticky sun for six years
Pounded rock
Laid marble
Pounded rock
Allah let it rain on the men when it got too hot
Let it rain on the men when their throats got dry

Let it rain on the stones when the men had gone
And filled the pool when it ran dry again and again

Gabriella is American
she drinks bottled water
and moos at cows when
we see them in the street
she carries around with her a bottle of
hand sanitizer
gelly chemical stuff
that she slides in the outer pocket of her purse
next to her toilet paper
her credit card
she has me turn on faucets for her
open doors
because they are dirty
when I am not around, she uses
hand sanitizer
rolls the stuff around in the
palms of her hands
so that she will not be infected by the
smell and
taste

I let dirt collect under my fingernails
Let the palms of my hands collect grime in the creases
because

1. the dirt makes my hands look darker
makes me feel less alien
2. Delhi smells like diesel fuel fumes and
burning dung
and rain, if it's the kind that floods rivers
and fire
and frying onions
and three thousand years of must and human
breath

When I finally wash my hands that night
In the marble sink in my
Hotel room
With the marble floors and
The mini bar
I don't use soap
I make sure that I am careful
To let water marry dirt
A thin mud that I rub over the tips of my fingers
before allowing the white of the sink to swirl
away 3000 years of healthy, dirty evolution

In Old Delhi
They are washing and praying for salvation
In the Jama Masjid Mosque they are walking barefoot
in the rain
Callused feet smacking sandstone
Rainwater splashing up to rinse away
Dander and sins and the urgency of progress

Eric Silverman

MY GRANDFATHER'S POCKETKNIFE

is not real Swiss Army. It's a Craftsman,
American made, with just a can opener and four-inch
blade.

He probably bought it at the Odd Job on
Astor Avenue when he got home after Japan surrendered.

Its shell the same leather brown color as his '74 Lincoln
that was totaled when a silver Toyota ran a red light
under the L-train. He gave the knife to me about a year
before he died, his fingers, thick from years as a plumber
stroking the four-inch length. If you were mechanically
inclined, he said, I have so many tools I could give you.

I keep it in my apartment by the park, a short
walk from the college campus. I keep it in a drawer
next to computer screws and a solar-powered calculator,
the blade rusting, can opener stiff, difficult to unfold.

Sarah Nalitz

PASSION

Acrylic splashes on black canvas
Portraying movement of figures, bodies.
Strokes of manifold reality
Dying and living
Breathing and choking.
Textured swirls and lines of movement, motion.
Painted tears and blood smeared on white. Tough
Canvas stretched beyond the frame of life.
Going beyond normal restraints
Motionless pulsating.

Shane Creepingbear

ODE TO ROUTE 66

Loosely large interstate symbol
The unmistakable misleading parallel
Of the soft forest floor
You've been twisted, and
The general public rides you like a flea rides a dog
Gripping and biting your every curve
Tied in knots throughout the world
Your transportation isn't down separate steel
Beams laid late 19th century
Flat and high, directing from north to south

East to west

Your unmistakable symbol is a structure
And architecture that lies next to you
Architecture that supports your bridges and body
You are the layers between bricks in walls
And you are the route of production

Jesse Kates

AN EARLY HOUR

Joggers trace
the hill. Pearls gleam

from the reflectors
on their backs to the sky,

still & black & open
to a Photoshop fill,

the Color Picker poised
on the deepest shade

of purple or grey,
the fading trails

of distant jets
or yellow,

the dotted arc
of destination.

You are sleeping.
Your belly is the missing moon.

On the floor below
I churn & chew,

pace & orbit
a wide, shining table.

The creaking stairs
announce your find:

a tangled vacancy
in the bed.

Angela Dickson

FIELDS OF RED

Walking through the field of strawberries,
holding hands and tasting the sticky, sugary nectar.
A rumbling airplane flew overhead,
diverting my attention towards the future,
not you and your meaningless ramblings.
I think about the future a lot,
because I don't know where I'm going to end up
or if I'll really be as successful as I want to be.

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I don't want my life to be boring.
Watching the stars overhead,
I think of making a wish,
like I've done so many times before.
Sometimes I wish for you.
Sometimes I don't.

Linnea Robison

ONCE UPON A TIME

So I married the prince...
I know that I was supposed to be the lucky one.
Sure, I married prince charming
or not-so-charming as it has turned out.
Yeah, so people wait on me
and I get what I want
everything I want
but I miss the days
when I could lie by the fireplace reading
and sing freely while doing the dishes.
Those were the days.
I still appreciate fairy god-mummy
but she is no piece of pie.
Now she is trying to mooch off of my glory
I told her to go back to the realm
where she belongs.
The dresses are nice, sure

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and so are the servants.
But I miss the old days
and I honestly miss my sisters.
And the prince, oh the prince!
I don't even want to go there...
handsome, sure
well-bred, definitely
but intelligence isn't his strong point.
Sure, I like him
but my advice to you:
never marry a guy after two dates.
I learned the hard way.

So I got the girl...
You're not going to hold that against me,
are you?
She looked all sweet and nice
quite a knockout in that blue silk dress.
But I tried to hide my disappointment
when she came down the stairs in those rags
and I found that it was her.
She told me about the fairy god-lady
and I believe it.
She gave her more than a dress,
believe you me.
She was stunning
floating on air
a queen to the fullest degree

she hasn't looked like that since
even in dresses far superior to
the one she wore that night.
I like her, sure
but maybe it was rushed
Maybe I even love her...
but she is no Marilyn Monroe.

So I was a Little Bit Mean...
that doesn't mean I deserve what I got!
I had a chance with the prince, I know it!
Now look at me
the beautiful wife of Phillipe,
the bloated duke from over the river.
I could have been a queen!
A Queen!
Now look at me, two lousy servants
a wardrobe the size of my pinky.
I deserve better!
So I wasn't the angel to her
that I am to everyone else
and the red carpet is just pulled
right out from beneath me
I would have looked
So Good
in royal blue
So Good!
I've only one conclusion:

that God hates me
he does, he does
either that or he just loves her.
I did nothing wrong
so maybe I teased her a bit—
sisterly love!
And that whole being our servant thing
was so totally mother's doing.
And now look at me
knockout wife to the debted Phillippe.
I hope he slips in pig manure
and dies!
I hope she does too!
That stupid cinder girl
a queen...
Why couldn't the prince
see the angel inside of me?

Lis Harvey

SAW A DEAD MAN, ONCE

His fingernails, the color of yellow celluloid,
were beginning to curve like bracelets of Bakelite.

That stuff, when rubbed with an excited finger
at the flea market, starts to smell like Wilbur,

the fetal pig who taught me where the thyroid is;
taught me to worry about a condition

that could grab me one day in my early forties,
make me wait in the doctor's office, while

the nurse calls upstairs for my spouse,
while I memorize the pink plastic model of an ear

and shiver in the blue paper smock
sliced down the back like a dead man's suit.

Carolyn Elliot

THINGS NEEDED FOR A BIRTHDAY PARTY
IN A CITY PARK

Downy blonde calves caked
with mud above
lacquered silver sequin stiletto heels

then four pieces of colored plastic
in red and green and purple and orange
elaborately faceted like crystals
and strewn like precious gems into said mud

then a blue silk blouse printed with
ads for French absinthe (drunk long ago)
spread on the grass for a picnic quilt

and finally a plucked pile of over-ripe
honeysuckles
all yellow and all evaporating
as fast as the sun can stain them.

Claire Schoyer

TO GRANDPA WHEN GRANDMA CRIED

Hey, I think
that after you left us
with thoughts
of *I am Glad I am Not Young Anymore*
and memories of your hands clutching our wrists
with glances that spoke the names you could not speak
you remembered Lizzy the invincible woman.
It took her twenty years
and a medical questionnaire at the doctor's,
to learn to cry,
cry over her mother.

The woman, your wife
who told you to sing along
because you knew the words.

I saw her cry,
as her grandchildren
your grandchildren
echoed your life
into the wood of the Unitarian Church
as Walter,
your friend Walter shook
next to Lizzy
who mumbled, afraid,
afraid of loss.

I knew Bets was right
as she possesses the wisdom you passed on to your
daughters.

You were swinging on the old Rope Bridge
watching the sky with
those eyes that could see Venus in the fog.
She is tough, your Lizzy,
maybe too tough.

Natalia Beylis

SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE
WORLD'S LARGEST GIFT STORE,
LAS VEGAS, USA

Everyone's sporting Elvis glasses, \$5.99 tinted lenses,
fake sideburns attached, sending them hip shaking
down the aisles. The James Dean night clerk
ignores them all.

He's got his hands stuffed into a \$24.89 red jacket,
trying to look so rebel as he chases a teeny blonde
bombshell

in a Marilyn Monroe wig. I wait for the rows of
snow globes

to melt in this dry heat, standing cool in my hot
green visor, tilted so low my eyes can make out the
glitter cursive of *Las Vegas*.

I've made it here in double-time, over blue marked,
even-numbered highways, coming from a California
daydream,

my car grill tattooed with mosquitoes. I stepped
into a blazing that I couldn't place as night or day,
knowing it was too bright for either.
I'm just here looking for a jackpot.

A 16-year-old cowboy strolls into the gift shop
and I Price-Is-Right guess the dollar tag of his look,

\$3.99 wind-burned cheeks, \$8.26 callused fingers,
a \$28 over-priced cowboy mosey walk. I follow him
thinking an outfit this good must be heading for gold.
But there's something about the tight fit of his Levi's,
the worn white wallet outline on his butt, the over-sized
hand-me-down tip of his Stetson. He's a genuine
off-the-rodeo-road real thing. I tiptoe past the nudeboy
playing cards and spy over the rims of aces shot glasses
wondering if I could cash all of my chips for a piece
of him.

Zach Harris

ODE TO CHINATOWN

Smells come from counters
wonton and pork and eggroll,
and the fish share their last breath
with the bottom of the plastic container.

The sidewalks are crowded; no one walks
in the streets here. Like salmon thrashing
upstream, people try to reach where
they should be. Small teapots sell next to
fat Buddhas with children clinging to their
earlobes, dripping from their heads
like wax from burning candles.

Small fountains trickling water over
smooth rocks echo in the silent
air of the shop.

The woman at the register is wrapping up
a small teal teapot for you in newspaper.
She asks where are you from,
and you say, "Pittsburgh."

People are talking, yelling to be heard
over the symphony of horns coming
from the ocean of cars and trucks
surging through the narrow streets.

Fake watches dangle on the walls, and
designer bags with stitched-on labels hang near them.
In the corner, they are selling pairs of
metal balls that relax and calm you when
rubbed together on your palm. Long paper dragon
bodies stretch out from paper cutouts of head
and tails, attached to thin wooden sticks.

Chinese words flow like water
from the lips of the counter workers.
You watch in curiosity, eyes glazing
over, this exchange, wondering what
the fluid language sings.

This place surrounds your senses,
overloading your nose and ears and mouth and eyes
and hands with its sheer number of sensations,
taking you away in a flurry
of newspaper and Chinese
characters.

Nestor Ramos

THE MIME

I called her the mime
when I wanted to piss her off.
She liked to be called the street-performer
or Alice, which was her name.
There is a lot of power attached
to the act of naming, she said,
and she was serious.

When I stopped giving her change on the street,
I knew I didn't love her anymore.
She had a voice that could crack walnuts
or lobster claws, and she stood
in the living room, working her way
around an imaginary box and carrying on
a telephone conversation in her staccato

whine, more than a little disconcerting.
She flooded my apartment with pillows
that said Love is Blind and Bless this Mess,
and I realized she spoke mostly in clichés,
talked about love as if it were something
we had to water and fertilize.
Maybe love and fertilizer do have something in common
and maybe that something is Bullshit.

We fought often. Are you a mime
because you never have anything interesting
to say? I asked. That was unforgivable,
but she quickly forgave me and made certain
that I knew we always hurt the ones we love,
and did I tell her that just because I hurt her
that didn't mean I loved her? No,
I did not. I giggled
to myself about how her tears looked like mime
tears, makeup perched on her cheek.
We kissed.

I'm getting good, she said, I can really feel
this box. She pressed her hands
against the air. Sweetheart, I said,
that box might be invisible,
but it sure as hell isn't imaginary.

Matt Stidle
PROGRESSION

A river is always changing,
burrowing deeper into the ground a little at a time.
The lazy inhabitants residing within change over time,
the topography surrounding ages.
The components, though, stay the same...
for it would not be a stream if it weren't composed of
water.
Water flows from multiple sources,
all tributaries that come into contact with the tide are
engulfed in it.
Progression is listed as a synonym for river.

Shalita-Marie "Starr" Gray
I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS
Dedicated to Maya Angelou

I know why the caged bird sings
I know why the caged bird sings

It's tired of being locked up
And caged in
Every direction that it turns to
Is another barrier
There are no exits

It wants to be free,
But it can't so,
Now all it can do is sing

It wants you to listen to its song
Because you might never hear it again
Its weary tweets
Tell you that it wants to be let out
Do you know what it's like to be locked up?

The only sun that it knows of is
The light on the ceiling
Why can't you let this bird out to
Get a fresh whisk of air

It wants you to listen,
But you won't because you don't
Understand why it's singing
You desire to hear it sing,
But as soon as it does
You close your ears
You expected its tweets to be
Gay and cheerful

It wants to be heard
But you still won't listen
You're a barrier
And a cage stopping it from escaping

Noah K McGee
LATE FALL FUGUE

Bach understood the intricacies
of love-making, a fugue
the most effective way of rehearsing
my body woven with yours, two
distinct melodies,

my violins darting
around your slow cello,
urged by the conductor's baton
not to labor on one
harmony.

Bach, all mechanics, sacrificed
the warmth of those notes,
just as autumn
does not pause
for summer's glories,

but trusts in the warmth
of two bodies,
when outside
the chill overtakes
lilacs late in bloom.

Kandise Long

A MEMORY

Her chest becomes tight as she runs
As fast as her nine-year-old legs can carry her
Her shoes spitting gravel mixed with dust
Down that old dirt road.

Her eyes awake with excitement
As she reaches the ancient house
Where Ms. Potter lived.

That woman, Ms. Potter
Hated by the neighborhood children
A moving antique in a flowered robe
Had it coming sooner or later.

The girl's legs stop
Her colorful beads jingle
As she scrunches down knees to face.

Her slender fingers sort through
The rocks, eyes searching intensely
Like a whale does for the sea.

The fingers delicately
Pick up a rock: gray and black
Turns it this way and that,
And circles it tight in her hand.

She stands
Kisses her rock
And heaves it toward the ancient house
This one's for Ms. Potter.

She watches in wonder
As the upstairs window shatters
And falls silently to the ground.

Rose Landesberg

HICKYBOTTOM

Going to visit Lizzy Pfaler,
driving the miles upon miles to Butler, PA;
along

 busy highways
 parkways
 cement roads past silos
 cobblestone past run-down churches
 the dirt road through a tunnel of looming trees.

Eventually
we would read the sign near the mailboxes,
proclaiming Hickybottom Farm.

We climbed out of the silver gray and rust Toyota
to be greeted by rain
sometimes Pouring and beating down on our heads in
thick sheets.

Sometimes Drizzling just enough to soak through
to our skin.

Lizzy ran down the hill from the house on skinny legs
barely missing the goldfish pond, with little Julie
tumbling after.

Ginny would stand on the porch
waving and avoiding rain drops,
Emmy, age 9, at her side to prove her maturity over
us children.

Hours spent playing away with Lizzy,
in a wet cobweb-scented playroom.

Anita, Ginny, and my Mother sat around
Talking, letting coffee go cold.

Leaping off bunk beds, tumbling down thick stairs,
and falling
into hay and manure,
all under a leaky roof.

Rena L Neumeyer

IT ENDED UP RAINING REALLY HARD ALL DAY

I walked out the door this morning
and down thirty-one stairs.

Only one drop hit my nose.

I pondered going back
and getting my red umbrella

but the sidewalk bore drops spread out
like cloudy-night stars.

I made it two blocks to the bus stop
without any more drops.

A second didn't even hit me
until the bus came barreling up.

I got on and noticed a few people
had umbrellas.

I found a seat next to an old woman
who was wearing a plastic babushka
and she had an umbrella.

Four stops later, Murray and Forward,
the driver flicked on the wipers.

I should have brought my umbrella.

At Murray and Forbes, two men got on
with umbrellas and one without.

His hair had collected a village of drops
and he wiped one that rolled down his cheek.

The bus driver turned up the wipers.
The lady in the babushka fell asleep.

I thought about taking her umbrella.
I wish I had.

Amy T. Garner

PAD COMMERCIAL

Those high TV officials said to make it blue,
A light, clear, happy, easy-going blue.
Make it look clean, refreshing,
Pour it thin and straight, pour it
On, too smoothly.
Make it blue.
Place them in a box with a white dove on it,
place them in a blue box.
Call it leaking.
Sugarcoat.
Make the commercial.
Use those bright-faced women to hold it
and tell them to pour blue in it.
Turn it over to show it's not
leaking.
Have the women dress in bright airy colors,
nothing darker than orange,
nothing redder than pink.
Have the women leap outside, spinning in the wind,
legs far apart.
Cut and print.
Those darn TV officials said smile and sigh,
the women smile and sigh then go to the bathroom
and wipe up that sloppy blue
mess.

Tony Rodgers

LUCIFER

You looked into
Your tyrant's eyes
Crying
Taking my hand
Telling me that you
See Purple Jesus
In my dilated pupils
Implying
That I would be the
Next GOD
But I have
To decline because
My wings are too
Flimsy from Heroin
And Hellfire

Sarah Dunn

JAY SPOHN STANDS
ON HIS PORCH IN LATE FALL,
MUSING ABOUT KILLING HIS WIFE

How many times can I say "the dappled light"—
how it strikes the Toshiba TV box in the yard,
the withered grass?

Jim Balzer

LEAVING

We mainly watch the river, shadows, wind.
For my family the Sun sets more than once
a day. I know the time in Spain, in France.
The distance out of here.

We are one simple
package. None of us acknowledging
regret. A door half open, four different
shades of blonde, for each of us two hundred
and seven sleepless nights.

That's us. Only
we're angry. I pack remembering each brick.
Lone bottles, smoke, bruised skin. My bag full
of empty cigarette cartons, tarnished rings,
splinters, dead bulbs and my blank face. Want to

hear a secret? Undertow is a bitch.
My brother thought he'd swim the river. Not
so much a secret, I know. My father
swam him back to land. My mother stayed on shore.
For me,

he would stay dry. I the easy child,
so good with waves. He knows I'd never drown.

Lara Hughes

FEMINIST

Aphrodite found herself
in New York City
barefoot and beaming
for her lovers
who found her nakedness
unattractive and rude
throwing her out
of their amaretto nutmeg havens
and into the sticky palms
of exotic pinup girls
who squirmed in between
the fists of rabid business suits
of black-tie affairs
and Aphrodite
screamed in revolt
wild-eyed and fervorous
she scratched through the press-on nails
bowing in her footsteps
she choked up gasoline and torched
grocery store aisles of Viagra
heaved molotov cocktails
into the laps of velvet sex shops
ripped earlobes off
G-string goddesses
clinging to stagepoles

shoved scalpels down the throats
of plastic surgeons
waving silicon implants
before them like virgin battle flags
and when she was finished
Aphrodite lay down
upon the glittering concrete
pretending she was a
luna moth
hung up in some giant mausoleum ...

Lisa Ferrugia

I KNOW HOW TO TIE MY APRON STRINGS

I lie spread eagle on the kitchen
floor, the linoleum cool and bumpy
under my arms. The tupperware in
the bottom cabinet beside me is
for me to play with. I know how to
tie the apron strings in a bow. I
know what the neighbor's trees
whisper after we've stopped
playing tag in the yard.

My father uses a book-rest when we
read on our stomachs in the living
room. The carpet leaves red marks

on my elbows. I'm not allowed to
touch the blinds on the sliding
glass doors. I stepped on a bee in
the cauliflower in our garden. I
know how to find cotton in the
seed pods by our fence. I know
where my mother hides Christmas
presents.

My mother makes me nap while
they're putting on a new roof, so
I don't get to see the sky through
our ceiling. My great-grandfather
went to heaven, but I was too late
to see his body float away. I know
how to cross my bedroom without
stepping on the wrong squares of
colored carpet. I know how to bat
my eyelashes to look pretty.

The little boy next door hates the
devil, but he gets in trouble
for saying it. The girl on the other
side says her house has a rainbow-
colored doorknob. The white cat
bites and Woodsy the Owl scares
me. The tie on my wine-colored hat
itches. I have to finish my

sandwich before my birthday party
can start.

My father knows to let me finish
my cry; my mother's hair is long
and silky.

Benjamin Czajkowski

WINTER

Naked trees shiver
as a crisp winter wind blows up their spines.
Dark green bushes are encrusted with white.
Towering pine trees are warm
in their green fur coats
as they gently sway in the breeze.
Deer dressed in brown fur and pitch-black hooves
stop to peel bark off a dormant cherry tree.
A white Chevy with a hubcap missing
and its whole front end smashed
whizzes by on the shimmering,
glassy street kicking up
dark, black, toxic sludge.
Windowpanes are frosted over, cold and dark.
A sad howl of a frozen basset hound
echoes in the distance.
A dark, ominous cloud appears on the horizon

like an army of black flies,
smelling of sub-zero temperatures
and six inches of bland white snow.
The deer run for cover,
heeding all warnings
of the quickly approaching winter storm.
Seconds later, huge snowflakes
pour from the heaven in sheets.
It covers the pea-green Toyota
parked in front of his house.
A new covering is added to the virgin one
that blankets the yellow-green lawn.
A dusting of the new snow snuggles onto the sidewalk
and swallows it up in seconds.
Winter storm advisories and warning
flash in blood red across the screen with their
annoying beeps.
He smiles as he sits on the window seat
warm and snug in his striped pajamas
sipping his savory hot chocolate
and watching the snow cover the world little by little.
The fir tree in his living room rocks gently
as the little fat tabby cat
crawls out from under the low branches.
Shimmering water drips from his graying whiskers
reflecting the rainbow colors of the Christmas lights
and vibrant bulbs, stumbling
into the red wrapped box with its green bow.

Suddenly the whole windowpane frosts over
and he is cut off from the white,
sleeping world.

He senses that at least a quarter of a foot
has fallen in the last ten minutes.

At this, he thinks,
all this snow
and he's stuck in the house with the flu.

Millie Gregor

ALLERGIES

clothes on the floor
forgetting it's green
that everything's green
but the tallest boy
is the only thing blue
he's unsafe in rooms of art
and watches me
as I stare out the window
knowing
if I leaned out far enough
I could fly
the boy in green
is caught in lights
watching his hands
move in front of his face

fearful

one day they'll be gone

words written on walls

are scrawled in

blood

but I'm never scared

not even when light

blinks drunkenly

on

and

off

and

on

and

recalling stories of children having seizures

from intense

cartoons and wondering

am I next?

Candice Amich

MISATTRIBUTION

I.

The summer of my fifth year I decided
romantic love was my mother receiving
my father's tongue into her mouth
in St. Elizabeth's parking lot.

II.

Later, my father picked a dandelion.
The pollen my mother blew
was a purer form of snow.

III.

An hour earlier he had slammed
her face against the passenger window.
Saint Teresa in Ecstasy, her eyes rolled
slow to the back of her head.

IV.

They both skipped Communion—
my father's hand shook as he smoothed
a loose strand of my mother's hair.

Nick Hall

PEELING HER

I swing open the fridge and palm an orange.
The naval pushes out of the curve like a belly
with child. I imagine a metastasizing evil inside.
And there are no other oranges.

I dig a thumbnail into the cold shell,
the passive fibers snapping
as it peels away in brittle chunks,

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leaving me a so-far-sweet core of crescents.

I pause my thumb at the lump's edge.
Then tear it off, revealing voluptuous health.
I examine the dismembered growth,
see the white inner tissue of the rind and toss it aside.

I spread the lush orange, parting tense, bare flesh.
Suddenly parched, I sink teeth into a half-sphere,
the skin gives and explodes, like screamed
pleasure,
gushing the citric liquor, sweet and fertile.

The juice's acid seems to sizzle on my chin.
I bite again, tilting my head as I part my teeth.
I swallow another gnashed mouthful
feeling savage and sticky.

Whitney Brady

PICTURE WITH THE EASTER BUNNY

Going to visit the Easter Bunny
At the local fire hall,
Was a tradition.

BONJOUR

Spread across my sister's purple shirt.

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We smiled and my hair
Was true blonde back then.

This Polaroid is old,
And the Easter bunny was real.

It had massive plastic eyes
Dyed pink cheeks
Large paws

I bet now he'd be about to take over the world
His smile never changed
Easter was a happy time.

I don't know what happened,
But people kept telling me I was cute.

Adam Caryl
WATCHING

there is a girl walking down the street
she has a bounce to her step
and her eyes are sparkling like the granite
in the sidewalk.

and I'm watching.

she is wearing loose, old blue jeans,

which are wearing thin, in all the places
old blue jeans do. A faded-red tank top
which has seen better years but still
fits its purpose, loose and comfortable
below her face which is creased in a
half-smile which looks as if it is seeping
out from within ...

and I'm watching.

she is turning her head, as she steps off the sidewalk
wearing old scuffed sneakers,
you can barely read the word VANS on one side,
and just above the black fabric of her left shoe,
the lace has been tied back together ...

she's looking the other way now, but her eyes
are far away, in a lover's embrace
or a friend's tinkling laughter.

and I'm watching.

she's reached the middle of the street now
her faded-red tank top hanging a little as she bends over
to pick up something from the ground, something
which reflects the light like a sunburst
something which must be a coin.

she doesn't see the blue Ford sedan
with the crack on the left side of the windshield.
she doesn't have time to notice the bent antenna,
or the dent in the bumper in the shape of a baseball,
or the man behind the wheel who is looking for
 something
on the floor...

I'm watching as she is lifted,
her body twisted without grace
one battered shoe off, and her eyes
no longer sparkling, but wide and blank.

I'm watching as she lands
blood raining lightly on the pavement
landing in oily drops,
and I can hear the scream of the tires
and see the strips of rubber that grate off
onto the asphalt.

and I see the driver of the Ford
with his battered black baseball cap
and his horn-rimmed glasses look through the
 back window
and then he's gone.

and someone is crying so loud it sounds like they're
 screaming
and someone is yelling to call the police
and the girl is trying to say something to me.

I'm trying to listen but I can't hear over the wind
and her eyes, go blank, and stop moving
and a trickle of blood runs down her cheek
falling to the pavement
next to her ear, which looks irritated,
as if newly pierced.

and I can hear the ambulance coming
and I want to know who she was going to see
and if they will wait for her very long, by the coffee shop
or on their front porch in the green swinging chair...
and she isn't going to tell me,
and she isn't going to say goodbye to them

and I'm watching.

Alejandro Soini

CANTERBURY FRANKENSTEIN

Carmody House sounds like classic rock,
feels like hell, smells like the broccoli piss someone took
in the laundry. This is the educational box
closing its dormitory lids on a bunch of crazies,
teaching them to be men by living and fighting together.

Canterbury—
blazers and ties and priests,
a wealthy education.

The dear ones went to Choate or Taft, maybe Gunnery,
but not here.

Dead leaves
then snow

Erin was a townie.

She made me friends,
wrote me notes,
came with me into CVS
where we would send armies of plastic wind up animals
waddling mechanically down the aisles until
they kicked us out.

They swayed side to side like people in line
for communion.

The day I told her I had a crush on her
she said one word. why.

Erin's in New York now. I convinced her
to move out of New Milford with her new man,
said it wasn't healthy to live here forever,
that she needed this—a healthy change of place.

Brianna Dunleavy
UNDENIED

Each syllable
hits my heart with its oh so
recognizable key.
Sometimes I think
it's the only constant
thing left
that I can trust in.

Your fingers run over me
like a little boy
returning home,
rejoicing at the familiarity
of it all.

Every ounce of energy
I possess
goes against my will
and wants you,
needs you,
loves you,
harder than I ever thought it could.

When I'm with you
I feel so vulnerable,
naked,
scared.

You know more about me
than even I know about myself.
I know you can see it.

My heart only knows
how to love you,
and you only.
You carry it in your teeth
like it's a toy.
You don't want to be
responsible for it
anymore,
but the only place
my love belongs
is in your heart.

There is no turning back
at this point.
How can I stop myself
from loving you
again,
knowing how absolutely
beautiful you are?

How can I stop myself
from being scared,
knowing you could
slip away.

I could lose it all
Again.

I swear
I'll deny you
nothing
if you finally give my heart
a place to stay.

Lori Horowitz
SHE MAKES ME WANNA DIE ...

Stooping down,
her hair falls.
Land in her eyes,
in her mouth.
The river of auburn tempts me,
makes me so envious.
Her self-destructive habits of
dancing on the moon
still reign over my inner being.
I stare into the depths
of her,
as I quietly puff on my cigarette.
The whispers
that seem a part of the background
are so silent,

but yet they deafen me.
Make me want to disappear
become nothing, no one.
She looks to herself for advice
on how to live, and love.
I give no guidance,
but I do know this:
She Makes Me Wanna Die.

Elizabeth Currid
ON RAINDROPS

I
Cumulus dancers
Tango across the sky.

II
Cohen's blue raincoat
Comes to life!

III
I am compelled to hold mother's
Hand underneath a polka dot umbrella.

IV
Pitter patter pitter patter
Across the sidewalk's sleep.

V
Rubber Wellingtons
Tease puddles and earthworms.

VI
Evan feels crisp universes
Shatter on his nose.

VII
It's a shame about the hair
Ringlets falling in defeat.

VIII
Please stop barraging the poor marigolds
Already their colors running awry.

IX
Look at that man! Using the Times
As a shield from your vitality!

X
Hear my own breathless gasp
Next to your quiet steadfast drum.

Diana Ngo

BLISTERS

I don't want to drink your spit back H2O
And tell me that it's sanitary
And die of army men
People getting high off cola,
When Pepsi tastes the best
The Peanuts are over
And Joe Cool isn't so cool anymore
Superwoman's head falls off the pez dispenser,
And makes the grownups cry,
And their skin turns to crust,
Kids eat them like pie
I was sure and you were sure,
Cause we ate it ourselves,
And asked for more
Our maryjanes don't fit anymore
Sidewalks are rough and sometimes hot,
And made our feet blistered
We used the body parts of grownups,
As shoes,
They sweat like they were crying
Or maybe that was me
And grownups,
They weren't around to say.