

poetry by ***Anna Jaquiery***

The man who lost his job

He comes home a little late sometimes, his jacket icy cold after hours at the park watching pigeons fuss around a mad old woman. Bread falling like snowflakes around them, like it's Christmas.

Strides through the door
with a hearty hello, same as ever except maybe he's quicker with a drink.

He eats noisily, fills the room with the sounds of his eating and talking. Silence has a way of revealing things. Talks about his work more than he ever did, in infinite detail while she sits and fidgets, wondering what it is about him these days.

She resists the urge
to go over to him and straighten him like a painting hung askew.

At night her irritation turns to pity. She watches him sleep, curled away from her. In the dark he has no shape. Wide awake, she thinks about the empty bottles he hides in the kitchen cupboard,

like a child hides an empty cookie jar, lonely in his deception.

Even in the dark he is watchful, mindful of her perplexity. He sleeps fitfully, wakes to
make up tomorrow's stories, the ones he will fine tune while he sits on a bench watching
a lonely old lady feed the pigeons.

poetry by **John Grey**

Love Poem To the Number Seven

It's always been lucky for me:
seventh heaven, seven on the die,
seven seas, seven days in a week.
Well lucky for someone, that is.

And I've been looking for a situation
where life is pure calculation.
Twice something really is twice as good.
Three's a crowd
when only a crowd will do.

I'm alone, as always,
but what begins as a 1
soon bends its back,
elongates into a number
the Christian sacraments
would recognize,
likewise the sorrows
and the Catholic feasts.

I could live forever
counting dwarfs,
priests and trumpets
at Jericho's walls,
moon cycles,
angels, plagues and thunders.
I'd even give those sins
a run for their evil money.

My seven is a prime number,
isolated and virgin.
It's the day of my withdrawal from the world.
Alone with my seven,
it's comforting to know that, at least one of us,
vibrates to the inner rhythms of the universe.
And it's on a page.
I'm the only one who's trembling here.

poetry by *Alan Britt*

MIRABAI

Mirabai cuts
the impossible waves.

Patchouli eyes,
soul
of a blue whale,
which slows
her down
a bit.

Her bones
(which I love dearly)
are air,
ash,
intelligence.

Mirabai's eyes
into whose frozen waters
I launch my skiff.

Oh, yes, Mirabai
will love you
unconditionally.

That's proven.

But once you cross
her rickety bridge,
that lusty chasm
stretching your throat
between life & death,
I'd advise extreme caution
before caressing
the watery bones
of her silken waist.

poetry by **Pete Miller**

BOLLYWOOD DATE

for CTM

Whenever
sweetly together
to the cinema's sugar-wincing flicker,
they buy
those priciest
tickets,
far back,
under slow fans,

squint
through sticky eyelids at
each other on the screen as a dancing light

spilling across the spectrum's
repression-
warped desire to kiss

the rotten tooth back into place,
into that darkness where a chorus
readies to burst mango syrup-
swollen hearts
into these tart
synthesizers.

poetry by *K J Hays*

Bites

my nervy head bobs on the
chilly water that serenades
every furrow in my fallow
brow with creaming, pale,
inclement, bluish wavelets.

each tiny breaker veils one
leering, bloodshot fish-eye
lens fixed on my soft skull
that suspects the watchers
know my precise thoughts.

do they know i've gorged my
purple brain with frosted text,
schooled my pink tongue on
love dirges from the afterlife,
& polished my willowy lashes
on fulsome, odalisque breasts?

they must! & yet catches slosh by
as though i rest in a clean bowlful
of daft goldfish, wishing one would
swim closer to my putrescent lure
& nibble me gently until devoured.

poetry by *Nick DePascal*

After This

Fades into green,
black-eyed babies
singing...

Hellos & Goodbyes.

Audrey Hepburn
is living in a glass apartment
in New York City,
with an electronic chess game
and a pile of glamour magazines.

Audrey,
you were writing the Bible
when you died.
A Bible of sing-song limericks
and hymns to beauty,
and of sad hellos and goodbyes.

She lost a tennis match
To Cary Grant
With her left hand tied behind her back,
And a string of the whitest pearls
Around her neck, slowly tightening their grip.

Fading now, hardly visible,
a myth of hair and eyelashes,
black berets and red fingernails,
breakfasting in mid-air, floating,
I name you.
Audrey Hepburn singing to the black-eyed babies,
"Hello & Goodbye."

poetry by **James Adams**

Beaten Shadows

At the duck pond of
 the Jardins du Luxembourg
busts of the great philosophers were set
in a neat row.

The crowds crowded by
on their way to lunch their
way home their work to play with their
children in the boulevards with
the color clad
clowns.

Unthinking and noisily their feet kicked
the shadows of Socrates, Plato,
 Marcus Aurelius, Augustine,
Erasmus,
 Descartes, Rousseau.

poetry by **Luis Cuauhtemoc Berriozabal**

The Great River in The Sky

Originally appeared in the chapbook, *Garden of Rocks*, published by Kendra Steiner Editions

The great river in the sky,
where the smiling fish swim,
is heavy with souls
who give themselves away

for the beat of a heart heard
far and wide, long and loud
enough to shatter
the souls as they catch fire.

The trees fall out of the sky
into the great river,
crushing boats, leaving
the smiling fish frowning.

The days are harsh where the river
in the sky takes the blows
of the sun and moon,
and the falling stars which

dive into the infinite
arms of the great river
in the sky. The stars
break like glass, making small

ripples in the murmuring
waters, gold like the sun,
barely making a
sound as they disappear.

poetry by **Robert Laughlin**

Yellow Dwarf

Seen from a distance, it's not much
To look at in the lightless void.
Our yellow dwarf is just a speck
Beside the luminosity
Of giant stars like Deneb and
Canopus, less than that compared
To Rigel, Gemini, the Seven
Sisters—groups of major stars
All tethered by their gravity.
When seen up close, those stars would be
An even more majestic sight...
If there were anyone to see.
The giants burn their fuel and burn out
Long before the first of any
Planets can condense and cool.
A planet has but little chance
To hold an orbit round the pulls
Of rival stars, and if it could,
The fluctuating heat it gets
Would turn its medium of life
To steam and ice and steam again.
Our unimposing little star
Has kept a gentle, steady fire
For upwards of four billion years.
Its mass is just enough to pull in
Comets, bearers of the stuff
That life is made from, without pulling
Them into its blazing core;
Its glow enough to liquefy
Life's medium and spur the change
Inside evolving cells and make
Awareness of the many things
That are within and wait beyond
This right little, tight little solar system.

poetry by *Allison Thomas*

Surfing

Someone
Is walking by
My cubicle door.
Clip clop clip clop.
I minimize
The screen.
Clip clop.
No.
I am not
Surfing.
Clip
I
Clop
Am working.
Hi.
Have you seen—
Um.
Lean forward.
Pretend to be intent.
I'm not sure where she went.
Will you tell her I stopped by?
Of course.
Clip.
Maximize
Screen.
Clop.
Return
To the world
Clip clop.
Inside this box.

poetry by ***Nulty Lynch***

Platform

In the dark, mugging corner
of the subway station, life
moves in quickness when it
moves at all. Forced to the end
by the crowd, she stands alone.
Wrapped tight in heather
and tweed. Woolen and
unnecessary in the potential
heat. Hair died so black
it shimmers blue. Her hips sway
in the gloom, minutely and unconsciously.
The dance in her mind
now shared with the rats
and the shadows.

poetry by **Grant Loveys**

Salt

You sunk a pinch of salt
in your coffee
and I'd never seen someone do that before

Makes it better
you said
richer
full force in the mouth

looking down
at the cup
on the copper saucer
I thought of your tinroof eyes
and the pupils coffee black

I said alright
put the sugar down
gave it a shot

just a small pinch
a few grains
a labyrinth of edges and angles
whispered
into the dark

a few grains made
the difference
bitter like cut glass
burned on the tongue
which I later cooled
on the slopes of your body
when the salt began to leach
out of your creamed skin
and onto mine

poetry by **Brandon S. Roy**

Sleeping it off

The birds are drunk again -

The wine finally got to their heads
they try to flutter around
but can only flap one wing
they lost their coordination

One of them tried to soar
but crashed into the ground

Another stuck out his chest
to fight the wind
He lost

Finally their friend threw up
a green and yellow concoction
he was no good to anyone

The next day
they perched around a large cup of coffee
trying to piece the past night together

poetry by *Kane X. Faucher*

Psychotriage

Conventional persons we all become
where to medicate prevails over understanding,
everyone rallied by pioneers of unity,
their particulars autoclaved
sifted through grid-system diagnosis.

Like, like
burdened, carrying around
a stone in my mouth.
Prepare the splint for shame
and the unutterable things.
Diagnosed things.

Free-fall into the classification hive
to become another animal
Doctor Adam names.
A gruff imposition
played out on others
as I diagnose each and every one
of my personal objects,
secret assessment notes on their
condition.
Recommended treatment and
monitored dosage.

poetry by *Kane X. Faucher*

Photochop

Feeding water, lights dry.
Hate what sags in a smile,
stripsearch your computer for flattering shot,
flattened self six by nine.
An archive of digital fakes with no originals.
Ugly mushroom bevels itself from moist earth push,
so go ahead and pretend once more
that you are outside the helice procession,
quarantined genetics from and to nowhere,
like you did as a child.
Before we played connection for keeps.
I've run out of sound,
hank of flesh dangled for public tooth -
"that scrap is me" &
lighting is a hooker.

poetry by **Sandy Benitez**

The Bicycle

The metallic blue Schwinn bicycle
lingered in the middle of the garage
for days without moving; a wedding
anniversary gift. An answered wish.

It had been 29 years and some change
since I rode a bike. Felt the speed
beneath my body, the hard unisex
seat that punched my butte cheeks

upon each encounter with a piece
of gravel. But the bike was a beauty.
Slender and shiny as a newly painted
lamppost arching its body as pedestrians

walked by. Hands itching to touch,
feel something untainted by city grime.
But I was the only one who would become
acquainted as we explored hills, dirt

roads, and a bike trail leading me to
my childhood; a girl giggling with every
push of the pedals. Every rotation of
tires treading into the past.

poetry by **Steve Ramirez**

The Space In Between

Deer stand silent
They see us as we are
Invisible and camouflaged
From a world unforgiving
They do not run
Understanding
The space in between
Outside the madness
Away from the pain
Acceptance at last
Sitting silently upon the stone
Seeing the blossoms in the rain
A memory of past lives
A tent in the desert
It's you once more
Like finding one's self
A reflection of a spirit
Lost and then found
A pebble in the scree
Living and awake
The smell of morning coffee
The taste of cool white wine
Sunset at sea
A white flower in the stones
An embrace of desperation
A path known but not taken

poetry by **Larry D. Thomas**

Compost Heap in Autumn

On the fuel of ruin,
it revs its silent engine.
He tends it like a garden,
feeding it frequently
with manure, dead leaves,
and vegetables

kept too long in the bin
of his refrigerator.
Sometimes at dusk, he shovels
road kills from the blacktop,
interring them
mercifully in its depths.

From the rocker on his porch,
if he listens hard enough,
he can almost hear it
nourishing its warm heavens
with the soft, black stars
of their bodies.

poetry by *Larry D. Thomas*

Late Fall Frost

The wind has died,
but it's still a few
degrees below freezing.

Though coals crackle
on the hearth, their hands
are sides of white beef

swaying in a locker,
hanging from the hooks
of their wrists. For days

they've known that "cozy"
is a euphemism
for the feigning

of composure,
and they've felt
their ratlike minds

struggling in the bound
straitjackets
of their books.

poetry by *Larry D. Thomas*

After Twilight

for no
clear reason
in October,

from the boxes
of humble
cottages

aglow
with candles,
through windows

cracked
for fresh air,
the night,

with black,
gloved fingers,
is easing

the redolent
tissues
of nocturnes.

poetry by **Adrienne J. Odasso**

Eye for an Eye

1.

What I'll remember: the quiet of waves
breaking over and soothing me down
into sleep. What I know is that I have
in me some rare horror: brave, cool wonder
taken in wandering off this worn map
and into the deep, rippling under.

2.

Always your hand at
the small of my back.

I am not asking
for a miracle,

not expecting all
my sins forgiven.

I will leave you to
your healing, and then

we will be even.

3.

If only I loved you as much as this shade
loves the Other. If only I knew the way
back into waking. Then, I'd find you
and win your favor—

cross you Over.

poetry by ***Adrienne J. Odasso***

Bluff

Bend with the pain of it, double me down
with the name of it: such vibrant wanting

you've spun from me, strung and held me under
without shame. And I know that you're lying

when I cannot feel the ageless, vein-deep ache
of not belonging, for we are nothing

but what the blackest-played Ace of Spades
has made us. Bright with this stain, dash me down

into drowning: even the stars know better

than to shudder, so thrown

out of orbit.

Poetry

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