



Telepoem Booth® NMHU

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TELEPOEM BOOTH® NMHU FULL TEXT

Aronson, Rebecca

Dear Gravity [On the trampoline my son and I].....(505) 276-3327

Dear Gravity,

On the trampoline my son and I try to bounce each other over.
We throw ourselves up to come down hard. We soar
until we fall laughing and breathless to the surface. We fail
to defy you over and over and that is the game.
We are bodies making room for ourselves in space,
pushing the invisible curtain out of the way. Nitrogen
and oxygen and the other vapors ricocheting madly
as I suppose they must always do. Everything I want is here:
the breaths I take easily and the purposeful displacement of matter,
my body feeling itself work and doing alright. A boy whose cells
are also mine. We will never win the game. We are dying
of laughter, and the light is fading, and the birds have started up
their evening prattle that I think must have something to say
about their allegiance to air even as they land and settle on high branches.

Aronson, Rebecca

Fire Country (beginning with a line from Tarfia Faizullah).....(505) 276-3473

*Because the sky burned, I had to unhinge
my sooty eyes from their lingering.*

In the season of undoing, the tender heart-leaves
of the new are shredded

as soon as they arrive. Wind eats the view
and scalds a wrecked swath like a medieval dragon

as it moves across this land I've made
a home of. This is the land of the living,

despite what is buried here and the sand
with its urge toward erasure.

Everything is germinating,
and the horizon flares

with fires, distant and close, smoke

the color of sunglasses. I see

but my vision is skewed. Listen. I don't want
to sound such yearning but the wind howls too

and means nothing by it. The hills are on fire
and the desert is on fire and the air is thick

with other people's fires. And my own burning
is so small as to go unnoticed.

I am calling but the wind is busy
taking everything away.

Published in *Sugar House*

Aronson, Rebecca

***If This Were a Fairy Tale Which Daughter Would I Be?*.....(505) 276-4384**

I like to think I'd be the one
 who recognizes the value of salt. Not
angry in a too-tight corset or coveting shiny tokens
 by the dim light of a subway tunnel. My dress
would be simple, as I am prone to solid colors
 and resistant to florals. I wouldn't think about a golden crown
and how it would match everything though I normally wear silver
 and have hardly any earrings that would go. No one would let in the wolves
on purpose but they get in anyway and have taken off with the once-fine furniture,
 sold it or donated it and now it is somewhere
looking shabbier in unfamiliar light.

 In stories, each king raises a passel of children but only one heir
to receive the remains of fossilized insects, the tomes
 of spells no one uses anymore. No one is evil, really, unless
as some historians no doubt argue, indifference
 is evil. I moved away as instructed and here I am at a distance, watching.
The queen is dead. Long-live the queen. She wanders
 the labyrinthine hallways where inventive door-plaque illustrations
continue to surprise her with their ducklings and cheerful invocations
 of surnames. She is locked in her own tower. There is water-exercise
at eleven and bingo on Tuesday afternoons. There are therapy-cats
 taken door-to-door. Her king instructs her

where the pots and plates and checkbook go.

The eldest and rightful heir is a resentful scullery maid and also matriarch of her own vast realms. She drips

with shopping-network paraphernalia and eats only lettuce or grapefruit. I stuff myself with pulled pork and squares

of dark chocolate I break free one by one from the stash I keep hidden under bags of black rice in the pantry. I am no more generous

than a well-fed goose and she is no less saintly than a jar of artisanal olives. I wonder if I should busy myself

marching through forests, battling ogres or animate elms or whatever. Even here

where there are no bird feeders at all robins and sparrows circle and chirp songs

in the sparse hot foliage. I like to think I could come in singing and dance some order into this place

with my band of helpful rodents. But I am long gone, as unreachable as one of those princesses

who have fallen so deeply asleep.

Aronson, Rebecca

Shaving.....(505) 276-7428

There were years I refused the patriarchy by leaving the hair on my legs unmown.

My skin was light but my hair lighter, trichomes on the stems which held me up. My first friend to marry made orderly her bouquet of bridesmaids with nail color and brow arch defined, smooth legs under tan nylons, upswept hair.

All of us pinked and sleeked, pinned with spray roses.

Someone instructed me on the intricacies of lather, the direction for the razor's safest glide.

I shaved myself from armpit to toe top, so smooth for a day I glowed like marble, the reflected eyes of onlookers shiny and vague. Since then I have been a holly leaf, glossy, a little jagged to the touch.

baker, nv

Admissions.....(505) 225-2364

I've always been irreverent at exactly the smallest times

They call it an unkindness of ravens
or a conspiracy, a conspiracy of ravens
Drinking after a hangover
is tedious, maintenance drinking
between bouts of nausea and the subtext headaches
The hangover is a week old and I'm nursing it at a funeral
It's called a venue of vultures, when I was young I didn't know that
I can remember the first time I admitted to myself
that it is quite hard to be a good man and mean it
but that no one really quits the ape anyways
A wake of buzzards sounds somber but dignified
and I wonder every time I throw a bottle away
if I failed the world by never recycling
"He was a good man," we say
"I never knew anything was wrong, did you?"
"He was a brave man," we say
"You know, he didn't advertise his pain"

Published in *Hobart Pulp*

baker, nv

***The Cost of Indian Ink*.....(505) 225-2678**

Epistle pictures mnemonic
my discernment rendered
back that fallow rutted road
in colors of hoary lightning
and emberblown fire

indian blacks
a gloss of dead-lipped blues

I would lie abed my elder brother
my babysitter
and we would read
smelling campsmokes
hearing chants
and histories
and sweat lodges
pulsating in the inks

My brother would lie on his back
holding the comic aloft his hands
high enough for me too to see
I in the crook on his shoulder, quiet eyes
five of years, he was fifteen
I couldn't yet read
I would start in the Western corner
memorizing gesticulations of each panel
trace gutter through the good myths
going back, starting over,
until my brother finished reading
turned that page for us

In those moments I felt a taller calling
over-eaved by ruddy confusion
that seemed mine hermit
I brushed absolute zero
a feeling is pure
it can be marked by arthritic grasps
into negative space

I could forget, no explanations of pigskins
disremember the alligator father
the cannibal abuser, the drunk, the fickle child
to me an iota, a mote, the crest of firstwind
an atom discharged
to commune with common stardust
and I learned to move on
I learned to surrender with rage

We would read every night
My brother with a pint

or a beer, or a lenio
while my mother worked beautiful eyes
down to bare underhung sockets
That woman, she never slept
I think that she must have forgotten how
sometime before I knew of dreams
she with full-credited pursuit of hollow academia at day
nipping-bud duties as a nurse in the Stateliest of Nuthouses at night
and five baby nuts of her own
she, more than any of us, I think
bled her river to arroyo alone

She had forgotten how to love.
not generally, you understand
she was a saintmantle, festooned loose
and never did meet a person she couldn't love
take my father
and I think she loved me about the same
as anyone else
which was immense
a cheap little miracle, I was
the cost of ink and paper tucked deeply
within the shadows and nook of my brother
who held aloft a father with
lithe wrists and shaking hands

Published in *The Crab Creek Review*

baker, nv

A Love Letter to Denver.....(505) 225-5683

Denver, I have been inside of you for a while now. Not to be cruel, but you have grown tepid; I

feel no friction, no pulse. What used to be the bane of your diversity was the selfsame culture of homogenization. Now even that fallow acculturation process is being spiked thinner for the additive bleach. And although I love to lay among your monoliths, they have become porous grave markers, casting far shadows, naught growing that isn't hoared by dull mold. Have your sanctioned adventures then, wallow in the crowded ruts

of your noisy, metropolized forest trails, keep articulating your commonality with passion. I leave you to it. Blare the hymns of your Great White Middleground, call consistency a well-worn life. Ah, but Denver, know that I shall always remember you fondly and will henceforth refer to your general populace as the Mensa chapter of proud necrophiliacs.

baker, nv

The Old Country.....(505) 225-6532

It's empty around here. There's a lot of sky and stars, a mostly cadaverous silence except for the wind or coyotes, and a complete absence of trails snaking up the the trammeling mountains, which consist of precarious rocks and dense trees, a mean rise tipped by a sandstone jutt, the last vestiges of the old country.

The Old Country.

It's a beautiful place from a distance, the kind of place that allows you the freedom to shoot weaponry in your backyard without the fear of someone calling the police—and the people around here do enjoy a good blasting session. My neighbor's daughter likes to come up from the city on the weekends and shoot her shotgun about. The dogs really hate her.

It's a long drive and she's assured me that on the ride up she sticks to "just the road beers." Then after she pulls up at my neighbor's, her father's, she'll finish a 750ml of Jamo to feather the edges of the visit. She kills about a bottle a day, give or take a few fingers. She brings a lot of ammo and has her way with it too.

I don't think she has a particular target or anything she's aiming for; just shoots generally at the mountain, near as I can tell. That's where civilization stops, where the

elongating penumbra of the western face dips us into shade at an early hour.

Sometimes she'll shoot well into the night. It's a nice sound, the stretching echo. Keeps the dogs desperately curled at my feet.

Published in *Ruminate Magazine*

baker, nv

Winter Anger.....(505) 225-9468

I really enjoy the place
when it's like this
The streets are empty
The bars are less full
Everyone is for once
not trying to meet
against each other
because there is snow
behind the glass
of an old TV set
who today feels
its good ol' bones.

Published in *Hobart Pulp*

Barnes, Jessica R.

In Touch.....(928) 227-4686

My mobile phone
keeps me in touch
with the fact
that no one's calling.

Battson, Jill

The Buried Arrow.....(505) 228-2874

The garden's ground is still cold, but no longer winter frozen
we sweat, the large man and I, over fork and shovel
falling confetti of pear blossoms stick to our humid flesh
the earth unhealthy and compacted, resists effort
clods surrender to dust as we till and turn

- you, upstairs in the cool studio, are no stranger to servants

we haul the composter to upright against its logged bulk
dark dense odour of leaves and coffee grounds
heave the sodden decomposing muck into the earth
transplant sharp irises and periwinkle
and dig a deep hole for the garden's second corpse

- in that dark place I saw you poleaxed by panic

the large man hauls flagstones and brick
and we move the cast iron bench,
its lichen-slick seat bowed and cracked from the rains,
back it up against the studio doors
to make a secluded reflection under climbing rhododendron

- not once do you offer your help or support

in the garage I pull the blue recycling bag from the freezer
carry it to the garden, gently place it on the earth
inside, the cat is wrapped in a light blue towel
frozen, since February, in anticipation of burial
the small pink tongue extends between teeth

- the night he died, you screamed at me : it's your fault

I go into the studio and call up to you
call you twice until you begrudgingly appear
irritated at my question : do you want to say goodbye?
the large man leans on his shovel, I lay the cat in the hole
and you snap a photo before running back

- what can be more important that the honouring of memories?

Arrow's grey and orange striped coat
gradually covered by gently shoveled earth
till he is visible no more, returned to the pear tree's shade
the large man's blue eyes, set in crinkled, happy skin
meet mine, he says : that was hardly very Buddhist

*- later you say : I'll never be able to open the studio door with that bench
there*

Battson, Jill

Mi Niño.....(505) 228-6464

YELLOW

*Your letter, my sweet, came yesterday, it is so beautiful, so tender, that I
have no words to tell you what a joy it gave me.*

In the washed-flaxen desert

we fall into the unlikeliest of situations

last night the dope leached out of you

in soaking night sweats

your body's damp outline on the sheets

like dichromate sensitized carbon tissue

an image of what is left of the dead

a hot-head from Hungarian roots, a puzzled, serious girl

on a shared journey of firsts, beginning with the Gemini eclipse
it is a Thursday afternoon in May. Tucson, Arizona

I adore you my love, believe me, like I never loved anyone

MAGENTA

Of course, there is an art museum
 exemplar of our future shared experience
in the cool interior we marvel at images
Nickolas Muray's love - made visible
the photographs' colours pulse and bloom within the frames
 and we wonder aloud
 if these photographs are hand coloured
reds pop and Frida is there in her full radiance
 could her cheeks possibly have been that pink
 is the blue of her dress overblown
we examine the plane of the photograph
from left and right, straight ahead
each image holds a slight bas relief, a variety of texture

I miss you with all my heart and my blood

CYAN

Gelatin tissue, bathed in a salted solution and then dried.
masked by a negative, exposed to ultraviolet light, the gelatin hardens.
the tissue is soaked,
water washes away the softer gelatin,
gradually, an image appears

yellow, magenta, cyan – colours overlaid on a support material
with time, all perception is altered

*I love you my Nick. I am so happy to think I love you – to think you wait for
me – you love me*

BLACK

*I want to go back to you. I miss every movement of your being, your voice,
your eyes, your hands, your beautiful mouth, your laugh so clear and
honest. YOU.*

Battson, Jill

***Your Mind Is Read While Your Pockets Are Picked*.....(505) 228-9687**

we are cultured people in this barren land
who are left of centre, or right of centre
with a weirdness not of our time
we hear the telepathic rumblings of farmers' minds
the screaming indifference of trapped wives
and the crowded questions floating above heads

we are cast into the carnival, drawing a card of fate
a missed step, genetic disruption or sticky egg connection
our gifts are many, we know the nap of brocade
the tapped clear ring of crystal, the aroma of frankincense
but not the tumble of earth or the patterns of clouds
or how to tell the fortune of weather by the bend of a cow's back

night after night we place ourselves under scrutiny
of people frighteningly more strange than ourselves
from the safety of their Sunday best they gawp at us

makes it easy to take that extra dollar they can't afford
as the stage that separates them from we sideshow freaks dissolves
and we reap our own kind of wheat, trade our only goods

as the full darkness of night is realized
they turn from the blurred jeweled lights
and trudge home disheveled, sweaty, disturbed
we twist another bottle neck of whiskey
drape ourselves in silk and velvet dressing gowns
and tell the continuing stories of our trapped lives
in our trailers until the sun comes up

Battson, Jill

Touch..... (505) 228-8682

We travel our existence
along timelines of love, loss, the quantity of years
halcyon days of childhood, always sunlit,
we are lifted - by the hands of our parents -
over puddles and seashore cresting waves
the days speed their golden light toward chaos
in youth, we resemble happy, unknowing dogs

take my hand, then, let your hand warm the ache away
unnerved by circumstance and loves who have departed
we repeat an incantation of hope to each other
our fingers trace manifest stories on temple, cheek
our hands knead open the gravity-altered body
and we slowly push the medieval clock forward
using the ragged lifeline of our touch

we negotiate the timelines hand over hand -
hand in hand - creating an evolution of trust
each of us has no knowledge of our lives' last trajectory
we are unfettered of the finality of decisions
let us soar over the surprise with the grace of the airborne
the confidence of the protected child
and the wisdom of the old.

Box, Kevin

Peace of Paper(505) 269-7322

The peace of paper transforms tastefully
like clouds caressing cre8tivity.

Folds form mountains,
creases cre8 valleys,
thoughts become things.

Transparently tracing the imagination,
our want becomes our wings,
like pages turning,
hoping,
wanting,
for nothing
but the productivity of peace.

Camp, Lauren

Accidental Singing(505) 226-2224

All my tremolos rise past midnight
and I carry them down
the hill to my foggy

little corner where I store
some of my disorder. Standing
on the periphery

of light like this, I am able
to think we go on
from our addresses, absorbed

into what is less like confinement
and more our frail
territories. We're glad

to be reminded to succeed
in our staying. To sing
the inevitable echoes.

Such an album of prayers
I've carried across
the country: from my lonely

New York into Boston
with its chosen darkness. Outside,
right now in the weighted

desert with its endless
edges, I arrange all my
histories, and the moon

is eternal. I wait for it
to become common, and while I wait
I whisper a song

I learned from a woman
in a slow office, 23rd floor—
a woman without features,

just a white head scarf.
She knew grief, but didn't know
she was teaching me

a guarantee for getting through
every next day: some words
in some order, those words

I could keep until I found
my way home. The sound
as steering, always beside me.

Published in *Radar*

Camp, Lauren

***At Echo Canyon*.....(505) 226-2832**

Abiquiu, New Mexico

Slick rock lost rock
sun on rock and piled rock
dominant rock sediment rock bedding rock
million year lithospheric sculpture of rock
firepit of rock
and us sitting in the curve of rock
each word bouncing against rock
a crooked rock trespassing through chasm of rock
the grand earth geologic process of rock
sorted into ambiguous rock
we keep placing our secrets in rock
rock cascade painted rock
transcendent rock smart rock thick rock solid rock
neighborly rock the last open rock
salt rock haunted rock
civilized rock outcropped rock
rock cove rough-skinned rock
and knobby knobby motionless
sun-scoured rock
drunken convoluted rock suffering rock
slipped rock tender rock baby rock
stuck rock
plain rock broken rock
untamed rock rock rushed from an old river
rock calendar middle-aged rock Medicaid rock
single rock parent rock
shy rock fixed rock disagreeing rock
ragged rock weary rock
resting rock sweet rock sensitive rock
rock drift depraved rock attentive rock
safe rock thinking rock
rock bluff walking rock original rock
mute rock meditating rock
rock bible holy rock rock world
constant rock companion rock clay rock
colored rock fossiled rock
lonely rock ready rock formal rock
lying rock

lying rock
sorry rock to forgiving rock

Published in *Untitled Country Review*

Camp, Lauren

A Colloquy on Water.....(505) 226-2655

We have brought you to the desert,
seven thousand feet above the sea, where the bare ground
seams itself to the unyielding sky.
You are in a region with its own definition of surface tension.
We ask you to understand that the earth is shallow here, unsweetened,
a thin veneer of sediment and below that, knotted clay.
This ground is voracious, but clogged. We do what we can.
We are a people of anticipated guilt, each seed, a mouth,
each flower, a confession. We collect each bead of water
like beggars after coins, and dole out our sum
on the few green corners of our land.
We are efficient and thorough; we chart each tree,
chart the chewable sounds of rain, our ears cunning
and satisfied when each drop, each small volume of liquid,
resonates on the metal roof, then gathers in the gutters,
and funnels down through dry grooves around our home.
We talk endlessly about prisms of sun on the land,
the dry air and wind. We discuss these things in the morning
and again when we pour coffee and make bread.
It is here that you learn about water, not in grottoes and ponds
or snow-glossed trails. This tangled earth, this withering...
Look here, where the wild olive lives, the berried sumac,
this earth, its tart face waiting, the crabapple weeping,
the honey locust, black currant, purple ash, the amurs
and cottonwoods standing, stiffening;
it is here that we draw maps from clouded dishwater
and the fertile remains of each shower,
the puddle of liquid we collect when we wash clothes.
In this place, where we constantly rescue water.

Published in *Manorborn*

Camp, Lauren

Lovebirds.....(505) 226-5683

I drive home to find
dove feathers

embossed on the plate glass
on the cheek of the house.

I sit
on the loose step

of the porch rocking back
and forth under the green-

leafed sky.
I didn't see

the two birds
who flew whole

and ecstatic
into the dazzling light

leaving only an outline
of their twinned bodies.

It takes a willing partner
to trade sun

for a sheet
of heaven as fast as that.

To my man I said
nothing

about attraction
but minutes later

we watched two
roadrunners jumping

on the breeze
of Love's crazy spells.

In these cantankerous days
we must find ways

to fling ourselves
into the right wounded world

opening doors of sky
inward and outward.

Published in *Red Lion Square*

Camp, Lauren

***This Morning A Wasp's Nest*.....(505) 226-8447**

This morning a wasp's nest kept me from my breakfast,
a nest the size of a fist, or a small heart, chambered and dark,
growing stingers stuck to the shadow of the porch near the door.

My narrow definition of today did not include this time
to study the holes the velvet ants are filling with their bodies,
or their new wings planted in the jail-space of each small cell.
But now I want to see each tiny hair on their thorax and abdomens,

their compound eyes, and hear the long dry bread of their silent breathing.
Sometime this spring while I was in the garden, the queen's spit mixed
with the edges of my plants to form a dull brown cradle for the eggs.

Here it is September and I am tormented by the summer
streaking past my window, unable to stop watching the remnant
of what is left: the jackrabbits, lizards, the hummingbirds.

This colony, maybe several thousand growing paper wasps,
and my stomach is broken and shuddering, but every day I will have to look,
to enter the rising cold to watch the sweet secretions
and the growing umbrella of their combs.

One day when I open the door, the rose-pink globe of earth
will be washed with the new wasps, their jointed bodies
entering the air in a sudden arc. I wonder

if I will be able to do the things I have decided to do that day, or
if I will have to sit on the porch in my winter coat and slippers,
waving them off as they leave.

First published in *This Business of Wisdom* (Edwin E. Smith Publishing, 2013)

Carrillo, Maríon

If I Find Peace.....(505) 227-4343

If I find peace 'fore the day I die
I'll hang my head and surely dry
It'll be a home with love and light
If I find peace 'fore the day I die

I know the man I want to be
I see him now and I believe
He's good and kind and proud and free
Yeah that's the man I want to be

And if I find peace 'fore the day I die
I'll hang my head and surely dry
It'll be a home with love and light
If I find peace 'fore the day I die

With a rambling soul I hope it's true
That I can love and still leave you
I feel lost when I try to stay
But my rambling soul it guides the way

And if I find peace 'fore the day I die
I'll hang my head and surely dry
It'll be a home with love and light
If I find peace 'fore the day I die

Yeah if I find peace 'fore the day I die
I'll rest my body by my lovers side
My soul will rest in shades of blue
If I find peace it will be with you
Yeah if I find peace it will be with you
If I find peace it will be with you

Carrillo, Maríon

Jaded Angel.....(505) 227-5233

Jaded Angel says she's got no time for romance
There's too much to do, she still needs to fix the door
And she can handle that so tell her, what's a man good for
She's a jaded Angel don't want love anymore

Long dark hair, sunken eyes
Drinks her share and at home she cries

I've her, every night when I'm at the bar
She's a jaded Angel, how'd it go this far

Her tattoos can tell the story of a love that came around
After 6 years and a black eye, he was gone
He left. Behind a child, and a cold truth with the dawn
Oh jaded Angel, your years are getting on

Long dark hair, sunken eyes
Drinks her share and at home she cries
I've her, every night when I'm at the bar
She's a jaded Angel, how'd it go this far

Jaded Angel says she's got some place to go
Got a meeting with some stranger at a place just down the street
I can see it in her eyes she doesn't want to tell me, I know she's feeling defeat
Oh jaded Angel you've always been a hero to me

Long dark hair, sunken eyes
Drinks her share and at home she cries
I've her, every night when I'm at the bar
She's a jaded Angel, how'd it go this far

Jaded Angel tells me she's changing her life for good
Poured the bottle down the sink, chopped off all her hair today
Her little boy is starting school and I can see it now, her hair is turning grey
Oh jaded Angel there's nothing standing in your way

Short grey hair, brightened eyes
He tells a joke and she laughs till she cries
The little boy has made her nothing but a smiling fool
Oh jaded Angel I'm hoping the best for you
Yeah jaded Angel I'm hoping the best for you

Carrillo, Maríon

The Kind of Love I'll Be.....(505) 227-5463

You can say that I was lost, I've been running free
You don't know what kind of love I'll be
And my hearts been pumping a mile a minute, Oh I am scared you see
And you don't know what kind of love I'll be

I've never met someone like you
I've never met one who could see past my bad

I'll never know why you do
But god you love me
Where you found me was miles away
All face down and turned blue
If you fall down you know I'll carry you

You can say that I was lost, I've been running free
You don't know what kind of love I'll be
And my hearts been pumping a mile a minute, Oh I am scared you see
And you don't know what kind of love I'll be

A love like this cost next to nothing
No paperwork no fee
And I don't know why so many people
Lose happiness for greed
All I know is my hearts pumping out
Love and it's free
And you don't know what kind of love I'll be

You can say that I was lost, I've been running free
You don't know what kind of love I'll be
And my hearts been pumping a mile a minute, Oh I am scared you see
And you don't know what kind of love I'll be

Carrillo, Maríon

My Greatest Enemy.....(505) 227-4732

Capo 2 Am - C - F - C

Am C F
My greatest enemy is the bastard in the back
Cold dead eyes and always dressed in black
Crooked teeth and a smile that can kill
I try my best not to see him but he knows I will

Hes charming and coercive like theres nothing I can do
He tells me stories and they always ring true
He knows my weakness and he aims it like a gun
Like Im just a target and you know that he's just having fun

Cause that bastard in the back is a child at heart
He's mean and cruel trying to pull me apart
I dont know why oh tell me cant you see
After all these years together he's my greatest enemy

Everywhere I go he has his say
And whenever I see him it feels like a wasted day
I know I could lose him if I could learn to forgive
He's the weight that I carry and I just, I wanna live

He's all my doubts and all my fears
He's every mistake I've made over so many years
Hes the voice in my head saying its not use
I dont know what I'd be without his, his abuse

Cause that bastard in the back is a child at heart
Hes mean and cruel trying to pull me apart
And I dont know why oh tell me cant you see
After all these years together he's my greatest enemy

My greatest enemy looks like me
Cold dead eyes are all I see
With crooked teeth and a smile I can kill
I try my best not to see him but I know I will

Cause that bastard in the back is a child at heart
Hes mean and cruel trying to pull me apart
And I dont know why oh tell me cant you see
My greatest enemy
Oh my greatest enemy
My greatest enemy looks like me

Carrillo, Maríon

Since You Left Me Behind *(505) 227-7462

Well I didn't know how fast, The last four months would go
But they rolled on past my front door steps like a muddy river flow
And I haven't been home in all that time cause you booted my ass and you left me
behind
Now I'm paying for a room on my own dime
In a dirty, super 8

Well for 16 weeks I have climbed these walls
With hookers and dealers running down my halls
But now power tools are waking me up at dawn
And I don't have to give a damn about my lawn
Yeah we made it to London, and we made it to France
We made it to Spain where we learned how to dance

But now, without you baby I'm taking my chances in a dirty, super 8

Cause this motel life is the life for me it's everything that I could dream
Yeah no, salesmen are knocking at my door and it ain't my job to clean
There's no nosy neighbors, no HOA Just the sounds of petty crime
No I don't miss a goddamn thing since you left me behind

Well 112 but hey who's counting days, no baby that ain't the way
For me to move in well I just need a distraction, oh hey their opening up the pool
Now baby I know that you didn't mean to open up the car when the windows were
steamed
And hey I know what you saw and I know what you believe
And there ain't no point in saying that it wasn't me

But if we're being honest, you know what I think
This is why I never put my name in ink
Yeah I'll take shot up walls and a leaky kitchen sink
In my dirty, super 8

Cause this motel life is the life for me it's everything that I could dream
Yeah no, salesmen are knocking at my door and it ain't my job to clean
There's no nosy neighbors, no HOA Just the sounds of petty crime
No I don't miss a goddamn thing since you left me behind

Cause this motel life is the life for me it's everything that I could dream
Yeah no, salesmen are knocking at my door and it ain't my job to clean
There's no nosy neighbors, no HOA Just the sounds of petty crime
No I don't miss a goddamn thing since you left me behind
Hey I don't miss a goddamn thing since you left me behind
No I don't miss a single goddamn thing since you left me behind

Cisper, Mary

Albedo.....(505) 247-2523

- ¹ Reflectivity is like reading to an empty room or
- ² coming upon Koons' glossy Michael Jackson sculpture
- ³ (truth is, I don't want to look at it)
- ⁴ so unlike a lake's "locally specular" light (i.e., a rakish source)

5 seducing like an interlude
6 —absorption asks for silence—
7 whereas snow and desert look directly at the sun
8 (see *histogram*, see *oil-shine*).
9 This is only a paper whiteness bouncing possibility
10 but what doesn't alter the receiver.
11 Am I too optimistic imagining (always the first step)
12 the fogginess of fog
13 promotes dune flower auras
14 (when what I really hope is roof gardens).

From *Dark Tussock Moth* (Trio House Press)

Cisper, Mary

***Considering 'The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa'*.....(505) 247-2667**

Perhaps the space in it
is a studio with a block of marble.
Each morning Bernini sharpens his tools.

Or it's the way inside out
becomes a courtyard off which
dim rooms sit, visited by sunlight.

Of course, some of the approaches
are asymptotic, pear blossom
becoming pear. The tenants

hardly notice the arched foot,
the silk trembling.
Light penetrates marble a few millimeters

before scattering back out.
Hence, that waxy look
standing in for flesh.

Bernini sculpts a group of observers
who argue among themselves—
the body of bliss, erotic horizons.

“I felt such infinite sweetness
I wished the pain to last forever,” Teresa wrote.
Like a pilgrim

some of the meanings are dusty.
Pears cling to the tree in the courtyard.
Unpack the tent, a clean white shirt.

From *Dark Tussock Moth* (Trio House Press)

Cisper, Mary

Vase of Red Tulips.....(505) 247-8273

Because of the inside spin being maytag—
dirty sky, color of labcoat

eroded bank, bruise of a river
I never looked this way at you

Tulips, don't deny you're hungry—

Stiletto grommet worn like a mouth
make this dress rodeo

No don't be sylvia
tulips can't afford to catwalk—

Shoeing for a run past the velvet stamens
never have the coyotes looked so

newspaper blood sniffing my argument

Cottonwoods
peeling the wearable from flame—

Burning it themselves the tulips whisper

Published in *Newfound*

Davis, Jon

Anthem.....(505) 328-2684

Cadillacs & catalexis. Burdens. Graces.

Jimi in the billowing, the blazon & hiss.

Black jeans, black boots. Lean as a stork.

Shades, circa Dylan '64.

Powder blue Strat lashed to his back.

Destiny wants him, wants pick slash,

shimmer & sweep, hammer-on,

elision & *crunk*. Wants hip thrust, amp hump,

tongue in the crease. The guitar's

lather & moan. Blue flames, dapple of headlights,

emergency whine & *blatt*. Long black fingers

on the maple neck. The banner, blood-spangled,

riven & shorn. *Home of the grave*. Then:

Blackout. Whipped free, that Strat,

in amplight & droning flung. Hazards, vexed

amplitudes, all of it, sputtering with avarice & shame.

Published in Improbable Creatures (Grid Books, 2017)

Davis, Jon

Empire.....(505) 328-3674

A sizeable hog

snoozing beside
the rusted abattoir.

Published in :terrain.org and Improbable Creatures (Grid Books, 2017)

Davis, Jon

***The Gropingest Grope of All Gropers*.....(505) 328-4767**

Was a gringo, a gamer, a guppy-lush geegaw,
who stole in the night to the wine bar askew.

His hat was all flimflam, his mouth half-aghast,
awash in st-stammer and thrust. His parry,

a party, a partly-posh soiree, a glimpse and a gush
and a slap on the butt. His hands wandered wary

for wary was he, that tentacled tit-monger and
kisser to boot. Brute boot, to be sure, hallowed

and hollowed and power-mad, too. Who adores
a fascist abhors a boor. His lingua was franca,

his linguine, al dente, and paired with vin gris,
for the gropingest grope of all gropers was he.

Davis, Jon

***Solstice*.....(505) 328-7657**

I would like to say this
night is annunciation,
that the waning moon floats
the winter sky, a wafer of light
on a tongue of darkness,
or tell you how my father
once, legend has it, pissed
in the gas tank of a '39 Ford
and rattled the last miles home,
but who knows where this
particular darkness will take us,
smuggling us in a willow basket
across the snowy fields
while Orion grabs, with one
strong arm, three rabbits by the ears,
with the other hoists

an armful of kindling, and plods
steadily across the sky. I meant
to tell you to breathe deeply,
meant to say I'll be back,
in darkness or light, meant
to say we'll lay a fire, roast
these mealy rabbits and sing
at the end of this short day a song
about light, how it comes again,
untended, regardless, hands out
in supplication, asking
forgiveness for being itself,
for being a disturbance of air
between the wings of night,
for promising us so much
that darkness finally delivers.

Published in *Taos Journal of International Poetry & Art*

Friedman, Jerry

Hermetic Poem.....(505) 374-4376

I fear, if you ask who dwell
In the house I see in dreams...
Sh...

I cannot tell
Whatever secret streams
From mountain caves so deep,
Nor what birds land there, drink,
And sing of nothing.

I heap
These lines to guard the brink
Of silence, and don't reveal,
When spotted hands pluck rosehips,
What gum wells up to seal
My lips.

Published in *Santa Fe Literary Review*

González, Manuel

POEM TEXT UNAVAILABLE

Green, Chris

A Kind of Calvary.....(847) 473-2668

O.K., Jesus walks into this ATM vestibule
at City Bank on Michigan Avenue.
Jesus Christ, carrying an actual cross
a bit longer than he is tall,
and wearing a real crown of thorns
punches in his secret code
and then turns to me as disbelieving
as anyone at a cash machine might be
and says, "I hate this fucking thing."

Unable to speak I strain to see
what his balance might be, hoping
that he's been saving. The machine
gives nothing away, careful to postpone
judgment for another day: *Sorry.*
Your request cannot be processed at this time.

Lost, he seems to search
himself for a pocket, first his naked chest
then the rags around his waist. Pissed,
he presses the meaningless receipt
into his palm, picks up his cross
and carries himself back into the street.

Green, Chris

The Soul Swims in Mexico.....(847) 473-7685

In a blue-painted pool sponsored by Corona & Sol,
It's hard to see the larger ocean. Picture a lonely dolphin
Waiting to get paid. His forced smile, his blow hole opening
For coins. They call him Chuy, a Mexican nickname for Jesus.
He takes his fish lazily from the trainer, & you know,
If he could walk backwards from here to the sea, he would.
We are his 2:30.

Standing in life vests, all grouped in the shallow end like Baptists,
We're told to stroke him, but carefully. We're warned to avoid
His pinhole ears that hear what we cannot, also his blowhole,
A second mouth that speaks an ocean tongue of shrieks & clicks.
I can see by the trainer's caution, our innocence is dangerous.
He says if Chuy takes a hand in his mouth, sometimes he's curious,

We should not pull, but let him release us. Also, it's a myth
Dolphins push drowning swimmers to shore. To a dolphin,
All humans look to be drowning. Besides, their instinct would be
To push us out to sea, to safety.

Looking close, I see his wet grey eyes have a child's knowing buoyancy.
I feel an intimacy, like he might turn to me in some small café & say,
"I think there is something you should know."
He's not as slippery as I thought. And his skin, just like the moon
Shining back, that still silver, is cool to the touch, the exact temperature
Of the water. We take turns in a strange communion touching
His forehead, laying small bloodless fish on a big blue tongue.
We are educated people, but I sense among us a competition
For whom Chuy likes best. We command cheap tricks & he jumps—
First circling, gaining inhuman momentum. He fears for his job.
He works. His back bent as to a desk holding his breath.
And there's nothing you can do to make him love you.

Suddenly, he leaps above me—hangs a perpetual curve.
In the wild, dolphins refuse to jump even the simplest nets
& so die, refusing to dignify any aggression with escape.
Before I leave, I pay extra for a kiss, for the picture of a dolphin's grin
On my lips. I kneel. He pecks my cheek. I'm told to wave & away
Playfully he leaps—pure muscle, no bones—Jesus the way we wish him
To be, nosing a blue-green ball, his fins not quite fingers or feet.

Hausman, Gerald

Deer Season.....(239) 428-3337

They found him frozen:
Body curled in fetal crouch,
Hugging his gun.
That ice-cracking night;
What doe at dawn
Sniffed the air
And tiptoed on.

Hausman, Gerald

El Porvenir..... (239) 428-7683

Sun on Hermit's Peak
White aspens
Clicking in the wind.
Last year's stickers

Stuck to our pants.
Flowers spilled the fields
Like purple water.
Today
Two winter-coated horses
Drink from the brook.
A cold jay
Complains
In the evergreens.
We walk in cloud shadows
Thinking of the spring before.

Hausman, Gerald

Rociada.....(239) 428-7624

She dared
I peeled pants,
shirt, shoes –
jumped in.
White body
in trout brown
wintry water.
Hopped out –
dog shake
in sun glare.
Fumbled last button
as two old trappers
rode by and waved.

Hausman, Gerald

Spring Thaw in Montezuma.....(239) 428-7774

Along a bone bright creek
Sudden rattles stab the air:
I imagine a mountainful
Of baby diamondbacks –
Find only scrub oaks
Making old October talk.

Hellstern, Elizabeth

Come to Me, My Grace.....(928) 435-2663

I pen and stamp
an expression of regret

to my dying auntie. How much grace
do I still need?

To measure myself I cross-out
expletives, teaspoon my fits,
measure my rage

I'd rather rise before the sun to greet it;

I'd rather hug eight times a day;

I'd rather braid than upbraid;

I'd rather not eat the maggots out my mouth,
unpleasant lying things that feast
on death.

How much grace? and where?

I send the letter and she writes a return that day.
I read it after her death,
Yes, there is peace between us before I die.
Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Hellstern, Elizabeth

High Desert.....(928) 435-4444

The cacti grab at my skin, needy,
hoping someone will love them
Their fuchsia-bloom is beautiful

The flies rise in spring
Irritating, maybe
but alive. For such a very short time

The land has new buildings scattered
The bulldozed branches are piled on the side
of the human tracks that mar the desert

Every day an exquisite sunset,
the sun's requisite farewell
to the harsh of Ortiz Mountains

The night then
pulls the clouds in
the lightest of eiderdowns

Raven circle in blue
Desert life is true and slow
there's no room for waste

Its beauty is spare
and unexpected. Death
is always here--a constant guest

This desert has flogged me,
whipped me
cracked me over its knee

Like the snag piñon tree
Only to cast me aside
my wood bleached to silver

The wind is my mirror
a reflection of constant change
I am split open to the sky

In the stone circle above the arroyo bed
I spiral like a pendulum
regulate the energy's clock mechanism

Raise my vigor and directly address
the gods and the fae
Make offerings and ask for their aid

Peel away the bark
eat the surface, like a twisting beetle track
Oh land, may you accept me yet!

I seek the rain and then the chalice
And bowls of ancestral pottery spill
like lucid dreams from the pillow

Hellstern, Elizabeth

Kissing Zinnias.....(928) 435-5477

[An excursion out of the group home and into a greenhouse--inside the broken brain which houses my mother]

The psychic doors sense her approach and open
to a field trip on the universe-- *Your skin is hungry for sunshine*

--explorer from a wheeled carriage, the matriarch
watches the world as she rolls by. We are draped in matching scarves
my father brought back from his solo trip abroad--
*Our heraldry from another country
allow us passage*

We continue towards the orderly rows of greenery.
it's a scene.
Everyone acts so nice; nobody looks in our eyes.
A *giggle*-- fuels my push *reaching, at last*, the beginning
where seeds are sown. *Deep rich earth.*

Her quaking fingertips wish to caress but her muscles can't reach
Flowers wave at her. They are rooted in place,
filling plastic vessels under the sun.

The queen awaits homage from the petals.
She kisses her zinnias, *anoints* her nose with pollen.

Happy- sad. Death- life. End. Begin.

Hellstern, Elizabeth

My Mom Dreams.....(928) 435-6966

My mom dreams of dogs in grocery stores
Her pigtails tight, she's conquered her fear
Of the yappers on their leashes guarding their grass patches
That she passed on her way to 2nd grade.

My mom dreams of slipping into the private honeymoon pool
with her tired, slim honeymoon body, surfaced next to a man again.
Her quim that just learned French

My mom dreams of brightly colored scarves flashing
Tickling her face like an infant.

She likes it when I float them over her, like a parachute in preschool,
Dancing around her hospital bed, googling my eyes upside down
in-between my legs, breaking through the wall of the brain-injured stare

Oh yes, I dream, she says.

Hellstern, Elizabeth

***Tornado Summer in Iowa*.....(928) 435-8676**

Tornado-summer in Iowa
We'd walk to the water tower
Where teenagers graffitied their lovers names and
I longed for that kind of devotion
When I had just learned to ride my bike
I pedaled that lilac banana seat in circles around the driveway
Until I scraped my cheek
on the hard curve

And my mom's hair was a present of soft 80s curls framing her face
Our house was the Executive Model
The bathroom had dust angels that I could watch
We would bury Stars Wars figures and fiery demon fingers would steal them from the
sandbox
I took that lilac banana seat everywhere,
My wheels of freedom letting me be
Alone. Finally.

On those heavy days of tornado-summer
My brother sat at the western window, watching for twisters
Birds shat but I thought it was rain
And the air was thick and it pushed me
Down the hill, on the lilac banana seat
That was my throne of liberty

In those weighty days of tornado-summer,
My brother watching in fear
Me pedaling as hard as childhood
My moms 90s frosted hair a check in the mail
I smell the memory of who we
were becoming; anxious, striving, running.

I'm still on that lilac banana seat
Still curious and able, my own legs taking me where I will go.

Hellstern, Elizabeth

Waterwheel Turning.....(928) 435-9283

for *Telephone Ringing (W.S. Merwin)*

I cannot resist
the way the wheel turns as it follows
how I use the waterwheel force
to hammer-strike filth rags into pages
or grist-mill the grain for our bread
one for soul and other for sustenance
circling, if I knew how to circle fully round
the apex to dunk deep beneath, holding my breath
and the middle days where we just continue
about our lives and their same rotation
while we transform without knowing, we are
discarded linens, pounded into a fine mold with deckle-edge
the wheel we can't slow or speed
as the water's nature is to be its own master
and we are simply the paper
with our own words upon it

Ireland, Eileen Aronson

From the Roof Edge.....(505) 473-3766

looking *close*
from the roof edge
of a tenement
birdcages...clotheslines...chimneys...
... *one can....almost...*

looking *out*
windy with airplanes...
sprung pigeons...smoke...
buildings poking clouds...
... *almost...fly...*

looking *back*
finds the stairway
to lives hived
in cubicles
buzzing in *tongues*

looking *in*
singing...*Sum..mer time*
and the liv.. ing...*was not easy*
to lull the child *you still are*
with dreams that are not lies

Ireland, Eileen Aronson

***The Surfer Knows*.....(505) 473-7873**

our life-long web
hasn't gigabytes enough
screens wide enough or
touchable to charge
the drives we *flash*
the faces we copy and paste
the secrets we encrypt
browsing intimate links
always *malware* risked
surfing stained glass
Windows to become
Hackers of our own
archive toolbars games
our own *word shop*
streaming selves into ART
until Refresh *freezes*
Homepage *blanks* until
the ***Crash***

Published in *SpotLit Magazine*

Ireland, Eileen Aronson

***WAR, the Ironies*.....(505) 473-9278**

WAR cranks Jobs and
WAR cranks Debt
Gobs and Gobs and Gobs of Jobs
But don't forget
that Debt chokes Jobs
in its taxing net
to our deficit

And *who* cranks WAR
and When and Why
Republican Democrat You or I?

Or scheming despot terrorist bigot
Or President in name
who swings *Autocrat*
to his shame

Or cloners of democracy
bleeding to flourish it
in tribal sand or haunted sod

where *theocracy* and *Jihad*
despise to nourish it

Or breeders of the greedy lie
who trade the young to be maimed or die?

Published in *SpotLit Magazine*

Ireland, Eileen Aronson

You Resound.....(505) 473-9687

You resound

beneath the surface of my day
infusing memories

Even kissing a child's cheek
murmurs waters we share

as vortex
as music
you touch me
I touch you

You resound

in fathoms of my night
to the source of poetry
touching
everywhere

Jacobson, Elizabeth

The Cows.....(505) 522-2697

Now that I have read this story about the cows
I think of them at night when I cannot sleep,
how they are so still in their grassy field,
seemingly suspended like animations of themselves.
Even though there are only 3, I count them over and over,
envision them as if I were floating above their pasture,
observe the different stances they choose:
the 3 of them standing bottom to bottom, or
head to head,
sometimes in a row, one behind the other
sometimes side by side.
They stand where they want and nurse their calves.
They lie down in their field when they feel like it.
If the farmer wants to kill one, and it won't get in the truck
he gives up and lets it live.
If the farmer wants to sell one, and it won't get in the truck
he gives up and lets it stay.
I am glad I read this story by Lydia Davis.
I like to think of how she stood in her window and watched these cows.
I imagine how she may have moved from inside her house to outside her house,
depending on the weather, to stand and watch these cows,
month after month,
and although the details of their days are rather plain
she wrote a very essential story.
Right before I fall asleep I think about how there are no cows where I live
but there are mountains,
and I watch them move in this same way.
They open and close, depending on the weather
and like these 3 cows, these mountains are a few of the things left
that get to live exactly as they must.

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Jacobson, Elizabeth

Curator of Insects(505) 522-2872

I started asking questions about how human bodies held together.
Already I was a certain age,

and not seeing any usual patterns.
My mind had become fuzzier,

mirroring the now fuzzier vision of my eyes.
I read about hymenoptera vision,

how paper wasps and honeybees
can remember the characteristics of a human face.

And since a dragonfly had remembered me,
I knew that this is true for them as well.

Some insects live only a few hours
or a few weeks,

30 days for a fruit fly,
2 months for a horse fly.

I saw the age of the body
might never again match the stretch of its will,

and like Keats, who remarked on the fading animation of his hand
at the end of his life,

there grew a sadness for this former vivacity,
yet unlike Keats, I had joy in its release.

Some of the things I do seem to move backwards.
Others feel as if they have a spherical momentum.

As I grow older, it all appears to taper,
yet there is also a broadening,

and although this is illogical,
this is what happens to people.

The dropping away leaves space,
which quickly floods with small things

like the blue-eyed dragonfly in flight,
facing me in the early morning,

or saving an ant from drowning
in a puddle of warm rainwater.

I cultivate flowers and trees for a small variety of bees,
offer them aspen and willow for when they are ailing.

They scrape the resin off the leaves
and secure it to their back legs.

A box elder bug has been resting on the base of the desk lamp for days,
his tender black limbs secured around the cord.

He is close to death, and waiting.
*All my life, I tell him, I have been told I should not see the things I see,
the way I see them.
It is too late for all that now.*

He turns his head and thorax toward my voice,
his opaque bead eyes red with inquiry.

Published in *The American Journal of Poetry*
From *Not into the Blossoms and Not into the Air* used with permission,
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Jacobson, Elizabeth

Hottest Year on Record(505) 522-4688

I had a box full of pennies and nickels, a few dimes, from many years of putting change in a dish on the dresser, and then from the dish into a decorative box, and then from the decorative box into a children's shoe box. It was heavy, maybe 15 pounds. I took the box of money to Flamingo park and offered it to a man called Whitey who sat all day and night on a bench by the basketball courts. His eyeballs were in a constant flutter upward so only the whites of his eyes showed. But Whitey didn't want it. He shooed me away like a wasp. I carried the box of money a few blocks over and offered it to a woman who lives on the street, in an alcove next to the Bank of America. She was sitting up on her cardboard bed, rolling a cigarette, and said that it was too muggy to deal with a box of money. Across from the bank a guy had set up a card table and was selling two styles of tee shirts. One tee shirt was of a dog with pants on its back legs. The other tee shirt had the same dog but with pants on all four legs. The man said it was a famous question, to decide which you think is correct, a dog in pants with two legs, or a dog in pants with four legs. He offered to trade a tee shirt for the box of money, so I choose the dog with the pants on four legs. I went home and read about a storm that was coming in a few days which would cause the temperature of the North Pole to rise from 20 below zero to +35 degrees Fahrenheit, and then who knew what would happen with all the ice caps and glaciers and various frozen stuff that was holding our world in place. I sunk further into

the soft beige foam cushions of my couch, taking no comfort from the cool air circulating around the room while my trouser-less dog panted in the famous heat.

Published in *SoFloPoJo*
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Jacobson, Elizabeth

***Next to You, Permanence*.....(505) 522-6398**

I wrapped the corpse of a juvenile bull snake I found on the road
around a slender branch of a young aspen tree,
coiling it into three even loops. The fluid
from the snake’s body collected in its head,
which swelled to many times its normal size.
The next day, flies covered the body so thickly
I could not tell a snake was what they clung to.
On the third day, the snake hung like jerky from its branch,
the coils undone,
the skin split in places where delicate white bones pushed through.
This is what I was hoping for,
skin dropping away without a scent,
a helix of bones to set on my desk,
next to phantasms of you.
On the fourth day, when the snake began to move,
bulges under its desiccated skin rippled
like small hearts toward a new home
and I saw what was dead about the snake
had become the maggots of new life—
that the span from a seed, to the echo of what does
not change— is unbearable.

Published in *Orion Magazine*
From *Not into the Blossoms and Not into the Air* used with permission,
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Jacobson, Elizabeth

***On Foot*..... (505) 522-6636**

I was staying at a farmhouse with no doors on the door openings, no windows on the window openings. Every night I slid a dresser behind the curtains hanging in the bedroom door frame, then rolled the heavy oil filled space heater behind that.

This was near the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge, and most days I went to stand on the

pedestrian walkway. Crisis hotline boxes had been installed at every pylon with signs: ***There Is Hope Make The Call.*** Underneath the signs were big red buttons which lit up at night. It is tempting to push a big red button when you see one! I put my fingertip on it and circled the circumference. At the Gorge Bridge, the barrier is low and it would be easy to hop up on a cross rail and dive over. I thought of my friend who wrote a poem about standing at the spot on the famous bridge in Minneapolis where a celebrated poet had leapt into the Mississippi. When I travel a bridge on foot, I always consider jumping, even if it is a low bridge and I simply want to cool my feet.

I know two individuals who jumped from the Gorge Bridge. One was a friend of a friend who left a note saying he could not find another way up. The other, a seventeen-year-old, called his mother from the bridge to tell her he was going to jump. He waited the two hours it took for her to drive there, and as she ran pleading from her car, he leapt. Now she is trying to get the county to raise the railings, but I don't see how it matters. Anyone can walk to the rocky ledge of the gorge and soar into the ravine.

Getting back into the car, I remembered what my friend told me about that poet who dove to his death from the Minneapolis bridge. At the instant of his descent, he caught the eye of someone driving by, and he smiled, and he waved.

Published in *The Laurel Review*
From *Not into the Blossoms and Not into the Air* used with permission,
(Parlor Press, 2019)

June, Lyla

And God is the Water.....(575) 586-4634

When I close my eyes at night
I can feel the rock being cut open
by water.

I hear a grandfather song
and it sounds like
sand
walking down
the river bottom.

In this song they talk about how even
the mighty canyon walls are formed
by meandering streams.

Beneath the gentle waters there are people.

Not people like you and I.

Stone people.

When I close my eyes at night
I am one of them
and God is the water.

Over lifetimes
She runs over me
until I am polished
and smooth.

She teaches me
about patience and commitment.
She teaches me
How to be gentle yet persistent,

When I close my eyes
she speaks to me
in a language of
trickles and bubbles.

She says:

“Journeys.
Take them.
But try to remember
who you are
along the way.

I have nothing for you
but these words.

Take them with you
and I will see you again
when you arrive
at the ocean’s throne
as one million kernels of
sand.”

Her voice
hums in my blood
quiet as a stream in the night

and it is a song about how
we are all
just
so loved.

The eagles dip their talons into Her soft body
and pull from it
a fish
a fleshmeal
for their children.

They sing this grandfather song with her
and it sounds like feathers
cutting into the sky.

In this song they talk about how
even hatred surrenders to wonder!

She is breaking my heart apart like
a stubborn, granite puzzle of problems.

Even the hardest
doubts and sorrows
give way to
Her infinite grace.

And who knew that sometimes
grace can come from
standing in the raging river
until everything we think we own
is ripped away from us
and replaced with a weightlessness
so profound that
we can't not cry
tears of absolute praise
and run all around the
river banks shouting
to the cattails
and the minnows
and the willows
about the truth of beauty!?

About the truth of a God that breathes
through the trees;

The truth of a God that weaves
winter from water and night;
The truth of a God that weaves
bodies from dust and light;
and carries us down the river of life
over and over
and over again
until we finally understand the meaning
of forever.

Forever.

In the language of the stones
there is no word for regret.

Only the *complete* understanding of what it
means to be a beloved son
or daughter.

We are the rock
and God, She is the water.

June, Lyla

Hozhó.....(575) 586-4694

("zh" pronounced the same
As the "sh" in cashmere
Or the "j" in Taj Mahal)

It is dawn.

The sun is conquering the sky
And my grandmother and I
Are heaving our prayers at the horizon.

"Show me something
Unbeautiful," she says, "Try it."

I could not.

This morning she is teaching me the meaning of Hozhó.

Although there is no direct
Translation from Diné Bizaad
Into English

Every living being knows what Hozhó means.

Hozhó is
Every drop of rain
Every eyelash
Every leaf on every tree
Every feather on the bluebird's wing

Hozhó is undeniable beauty.

It *is* every breath that we give to the trees.
And every breath they give to us in return.

Hozhó is reciprocity.

And my grandmother knows this well
For she speaks a language that grew out of the desert floors
Like red sandstone monoliths
Like arms out of the earth that reach into the sky
Praising creation for all its brilliance.

Hozhó is remembering that you are a part of this brilliance.

It is finally accepting that
(Yes)
You are a sacred song that brings the Diyin Dine'é
(The gods)
To their knees in an almost
Unbearable
Ecstasy.

Hozhó is re-membering your own beauty.

And my grandmother knows this well
For she speaks the language of a Lukachukai snowstorm
The sound of hooves hitting the earth on birthdays
For my grandmother is a midwife and would
Gallop to the women in labor
And she is fluent in the
Language of suffering mothers
Of joyful mothers
Of handing glowing newborns to their creator.

Hozhó is an experience.

But it is not something you can experience on your own
The eagles tell us
As they lock talons in the stratosphere
And fall to the earth as one.

Hozhó is interbeauty.

And my grandmother knows this well
For she speaks the language of the Male Rain
Which shoots lightning boys through the sky
Pummels the green corn children
And huddles the horses against cliff sides
In the early afternoon.

She also speaks the language of the Female Rain
Which sends the scent of dust and sage into our hoghans
And casts rainbows in the sky.

Us Diné, we know what Hozhó means!
And you!
You know what Hozhó means!

And deep down we know what Hozhó does not mean...

Like the days we walk in sadness.
The days we live for money.
The days we live for fame.

Like the day the conquistadors came
Climbed down from their horses and asked us
If they could buy
The mountains.

We knew this was not Hozhó
Because we knew
You could not own a mountain.

But we knew we could make it Hozhó once again!

So we took their swords
And we took their silver coins
And we melted them
With fire and buffalo hide bellows

And recast them into beautiful
Squash blossom jewelry pieces
And strung it around their necks!

We took the helmets straight off their heads
And transformed it into
A fearless beauty.

Hozhó is the healing of broken bones.

Hozhó is the prayer that carried us
Through genocide and disease.

It is the prayer that will carry us through global warming
And through this global fear
That pitches shadows in our minds.

This morning my grandmother is teaching me something
Very important.

She is teaching me that the easiest
(And most elegant)
Way to defeat an army of hatred
Is to sing it beautiful songs

Until it falls to its knees

And surrenders.

It will do this, she says, because it has finally
Found a sweeter fire than revenge.
It has found heaven.
It has found HOZHÓ.

And so my grandmother is talking
To the colors of the sky at dawn
And she is saying:

hózhónáházdíí'
hózhónáházdíí'
hózhónáházdíí'
Beauty is restored again...

It is dawn, my friends.

Wake up.

The night is over.

Kalogeros-Chattan, Charlie

Down the Rabbit Hole.....(505) 525-3696

her life slips by, an untethered design
counted in tea leaves, brewed loose in a pot—
but what does the March Hare care about time?

black sand flows down, to the bottom, benign
onto cactus blooms, which show signs of rot—
but what does the March Hare care about time?

her father's days measured, a kind of crime
in jiggers of gin, until he got caught—
his life passed quickly, unholy design

tumble weeds on the road wait to collide
with the prairie rattler coiled on a rock—
but what does the March Hare care about time?

planets, in retrograde, will not align
as she hears the tick of the antique clock—
her life passes fast, unwelcomed design

despite the warning of the hand-stitched sign,
the Hurrier She Went, the Behinder She Got—
her life went quickly, but not by design
and what does the March Hare care about time?

Kalogeros-Chattan, Charlie

Narrow Gauge.....(505) 525-6277

When revolution comes, we do not make
trivial conversation. Aureate moon
and full truth rise from the shivering lake
that chips at August shores, where spotted loon
seeks a mate, a Lancelot. The first mile
slips by saffron aspen, your Navajo
bracelet shining in the wind, your smile
smoking like a spent shell. Row on row

of telephone poles twist and topple, then catch
on vines in a slow-motion sprawl. The new age
needs no wires. Renitent sentries, we watch
as the caboose clears the curve, narrow gauge
rail spinning out past the horizon, traces
of soot smeared on our triumphant faces.

Kalogeros-Chattan, Charlie

Words of Judea.....(505) 525-9673

in the beginning were the words, and the words were
pewter and petroleum
and thus began the capture of the human experience
in actual images
a turn away from the airbrush of pigment and poppy seed oil

we are taught the first words spoken over the telephone
(Mr. Watson come here I want to see you)
but what of the first photograph—
was it of his mother? a simple rose?
perhaps a staged still life: peaches close to rot on a plate, the juice oozing over and into
the piano bench staining the dog-eared Clementi

what survives is the view from a window of buildings and the landscape beyond
a view from on high that gives a sense of surveilling the manor
or maybe of having been abducted and held in a secure tower
very removed from Syria with its bitumen bubbling up out of rocky bogs
erupting from pressure points deep in the earth
seeping out near the Euphrates collected and made part of the photographic process

what moves us to render?
what moves us to ask others
to see the world through our lens?

Kalogeros-Chattan, Charlie

You Cannot Embargo the Wind.....(505) 525-9632

Cresting smoldering mountains, flooded plains,
bald eagles hiss. I embody the script.
The poor rot in prison, rattling chains
that bind them to me, adrift in my crypt.
Called forth, I smell gangrenous wounds, apply
rag dressings, choke on stagnation—the curse
of reflection. I can no longer lie,

sing sibilant anthems, push to rehearse
my own reaction.

The price of relief?

We can gather the wind, harvest our star,
enlarge our tribe, cast aside the chief,
coming together to throw off the bar;
spill our perpetually pulsing blood,
and soak the ground where our ancestors stood.

King, Ivan

I'm OK With the Moonlight.....(917) 546-4665

Not again, Sun!

Oh look, it's the first star of the day!

I want to hug the sunlight!

Summer is like a hot breeze, like a somersault.

Mom can I go outside and conduct music?

Let go of your phone and dance!

The wind is getting thick! Hold tight!

The Wind Makes Me Feel So Fearless

Mom I have something to tell you. The trees and plants are beautiful here and I bet they
have hot chocolate machines in this town.

When I walk in the summer rain clouds, they rest me.

Clouds are made of daydreams

You Need Purple To Make A Rainbow Smile

We're all just trying to get past our shadows.

I am made of nighttime

I want to kiss your teeth and your eyeglasses and your cute heart!

That's too many kisses mom, just one at a time!

You're a strong dad, mom.

We're not poor we have bank.

Heaven Is Fixing My Grandma. She's Not Old There Anymore

We all just need to sit down and focus on the letter A

The important part is laughing and smiling

I'm going to keep my hat here until it gets lost.

Picking my nose is one of my favorite ballet dances

I feel blue, because I was feeling red and got tired of that.

I don't want to get to a man. I don't want to get any bigger! I just want to stay how I is!

That's too hard to do. It's not for boys to do. Only ballet girls.

When the bath water is too hot I forget everything

The dream catcher didn't catch my dreams. They're too big!

Do you remember when I saw you when you were my age

It's going to be Christmas soon. We can eat tricycles!

Now we're back where we started. Let's go back to where we didn't start

That picture has a ghost and bats and moonlight. I'm scared of ghosts and bats. I'm ok with the moonlight though.

King, Katie

I Think I Know How The World Works.....(917) 546-4844

I think it works in phases.
And colors.
I think it matters which shoes you wear.
I think it can follow deadlines – in a pinch.

I also know that it is only one world.
This world.
And there may be more.

I don't know how those other worlds work at all.
That's for sure.

In this world there is downtime, where you can draw lazily on the ceilings of tents of wasted time and not one person will give a damn because it happened, in a downtime, after all.

There are things that need to be paid attention to more than others.
Like when things happen twice.
Or in pairs.
Or only very rarely.
Or when you least expect it.
Pay attention especially when things happen fourteen times.

In this world there are Omens and Amens and Amends and Assholes.

In this world there is reason.
In this world there are shades.
In this world there are shades of reason.

In this world there are tinier worlds that open and close.
Which means that certain things can be opened
And certain things can be closed.

Like your hand, or your heart. Or your big toe.
Don't ask.

I think we all know that the world doesn't really always work, well.
But you see that it IS—working, in a mechanical way at least—since my thought
touched my typing fingers touched your ears or eyes before they closed before they
opened in whatever reasonable shade they display themselves.

Grey, Green, Brown, Blue, Hazel

I think I know how the world works even when it doesn't
He said
As I handed him his second black coffee of the day.

It didn't spill
And I didn't charge him.

If it had spilled,
I would have charged him.
Since I think I know how the world works too.

Laflamme-Childs, Michelle

46 *Not to swear in the name of an idol*.....(505) 523-4660

Your roots are black,
like a stand of Aspen after
a ground fire—a symbol

of your surrender. My skin
sags under your weight,
even though it was a gift
from you, packaged in pink
and gold—now saved

for my own. Dead
leaves gather, a mirror
of native grasses—roots

weave my dirt below
your small feet.

Laflamme-Childs, Michelle

241 *To leave gleanings for the poor*.....(505) 523-2418

Fourteen rooms in which to sing and shuttle around the singular aspect of the yellow
light cleaning. My mother drops the cloud bowl and sings to me of the bluest blue my
while my sky grasps at drifting dust and dialogue. Outside, pebble laden traffic feet

dance in the heat and my mother drifts. The bigness of it blooms for it is unaware.
Gleam and glower drag at her heels and mine are stuck in the cellar where the spiders,
jarred off firewood, climb my pillars. It's been twenty-seven years and fourteen rooms
and her singing still calls them. The weaker voice, far stronger for the replaying of it,
crumbles the foundations.

The insulated glass eats itself in the manmade darkness and leaves no chance to see
the elderly.

The time to sift the gleaning is now; the time to trample the monuments has waned.

Logghe, Joan

Dressing Down for Love..... (505) 564-3737

Put on your love dress.
Take off your other garments
the ones that cost you most.
Wear your heart out.
Become a transvestite
for love. Cross dress
as a heart.
Establish a municipality
with eyes you meet on the street. Enter the election
for Darling. Let kindness
reign. Put on no airs. Be plain as feet which also may carry you away along the Love
Highway. Hello.
What is your name?
I have forgotten. Remind me.

Published in *Unpunctuated Awe* (Tres Chicas Books)

Logghe, Joan

How to Improvise Rain.....(505) 564-4698

Take a shower and sing about rain.
Know that rain and grace are the same
Word in some Middle Eastern languages.

Say grace, then water the lawn
With a Rain Bird Sprinkler. Play Coltrane,
The Grateful Dead, or Ella Fitzgerald to your lawn.

Talk to the grass. Say, "La, la, la."
Pour dishwater on rosebushes.

Deconstruct the word *drought*.

Ought. Draft beer. Drama. Ouch.
Examine the sky for sky-looms, where rain
In the distance never hits the ground.

Make weather predictions.
Devise a theory about rain. Make life grainy
Through slow, long exposures.

Develop black-and-white
Film from a storm. Chant in Sanskrit
About the River Ganges.

Hand churn rain-flavored ice cream.
Wear ozone perfume. Klay a kettledrum
Softly. Do not waste tears.

But cry. Go to sad movies. Find a man
Who cries. Marry for moisture not money.
Make love on a roof. Have wet children.

Go to the Rainbow Dance at Santa Clara and love
Children holding painted rainbows in their hands.
Watch the backdrop of clouds darken, wince at lightening.

But a pass to the local pool. Hang Laundry.
Wash a car as sacrifice. Put on white slacks and walk
Along Paseo de Peralta. Improvise grace.

Save bathwater and send it to the apple.
Learn a song in the Tewa language.
Dance till you sweat to "The River of Babylon."

Petition Saint Jude.
Read these words outside.
Name your son Noah.

Published in *Blessed Resistance* (Mariposa Printing and Pub. Co.)

Logghe, Joan

Rain Business.....(505) 564-7246

The rain is not busy being rain
it is in business, raining , but not

busy. The rain falls on the cupola
I am sitting dry under rain.

Today I realized I am in dread
of weather. I drove the highway north
when fire exploded by Tesuque.
I drove south when the Jemez erupted.

Fire has a busy life, torching trees.
It is amoral. It is not altruistic.
It hates to be personified. Yo Fire
it never says to another flame.

I am busy worrying and obsessing.
Today's topics include arroyo flood
lightning when I drove to the pool
turned around and drove home unswum.

I am worrying about Republicans
and deficits. The Serenity Prayer is fine
but I am supporting the economy by worry.
I cannot do anything, but I can obsess

which is something. The rain doesn't default.
it stops. It just does its dew point, cloud
thing. I don't pay attention to history
but I obsess about weather. If rain were busier

the drought might end. It needs a day-planner,
it needs a wake-up call from the concierge of rain.
Wash your car, go to opera, hang out
lingerie hand washed.

Water the plants by hand, by dishwasher.
Rain is not vain, but try placing mirrors
in the yard to reflect sky. If I could be tidy,
not slacker but efficient, if I could be rain.

I thought it would take all our tears.
I thought we would assemble teacups
in a row. I thought we would be leisurely
weave hammocks of wind and light.

If all the sky looms in the west finally touched

the ground. Rain would fall. Sweet rain
with its gray leisure suit. Solid rain, clapping
for an encore. Dervish rain in white robes and turban,

and weather would not be the enemy.
Gratitude to the stunning relaxed rain.
trooping over the parched hills, good soldiers
of water, peace-making force against dusty armies.

Published in *Unpunctuated Awe* (Tres Chicas Books)

Logghe, Joan

Singing Down.....(505) 564-7464

I'm coming. Down out of the clouds
into the rain. I hope I'm coming straight
and clear. I hope I'm falling on holy ground,
That the people catching me are sure and loving.

I hope the people bringing me to earth
have said their evening prayers and their morning prayers,
because where I'm coming from is made of prayers and leaves.
Silk spun from mulberry is fine but where I'm coming from is finer still.

You know those shape singers with notes so bright
they drop, note by note, into your body?
That's how I'm singing down into a woman
dressed in gauzy skirts next to a man whistling

to hold up. I'm the one calling down the lullabies.
I'm yours. I am your DNA gone wild with love,
I am the split second the angels take to connect us
to God, my spine the ladder up and back.

My feet haven't yet touched down
so learn the old songs for me
because I'll come out dazed and start forgetting.
My eyes will gaze at you and I'll lose

My angel sense. Sing me to ease
With an anthem from my dazzling alma mater.

Published in *The Singing Bowl* (New Mexico Press)

Logghe, Joan

Something Like Marriage.....(505) 564-7663

I'm engaged to New Mexico. I've been engaged for 18 years.

I've worn its ring of rainbow set with a mica shard. I've given my dowry already, my skin texture, my hair moisture.

I've given New Mexico my back-East manners, my eyesight, the arches of my feet. New Mexico's a difficult fiancée. I learned the word *chamisa*, and the plant takes an alias, I plant trees for it, carry water to them. At

first New Mexico plays hard to get, says: "Learn Spanish. Study adobe making. Make hammered tin light fixtures for the house."

I'm engaged to New Mexico, but I don't want to marry New Mexico.

It's too large. It burps when it drinks beer. It leaves the toilet seat up. It likes beans cooked with lard and chile so hot that even people born here and nursed on a chile can't take the heat.

I tell it, "I'll date you, but I don't want to marry you."

"You promised," it whines, "it's been 18 years." But I was younger.

Now I'm not ready to commit. I've been to Chicago. I've seen Manhattan next to a man I love. I've dined on Thai food in Boulder, Colorado. My mother tells me, "You could do better. New Mexico's not good enough for you." I tell her, but we're engaged. It gave me these cuticles, these dust devil eyes, and my Bar-None brand. But I have to admit, even to mom, that I don't love it anymore. Truth to tell,

it was infatuation, never should have gone on so long.
I bought rhinestones, and it threw them to the stars. I bought
velvet, and it made velvet paintings of coyotes.
I want to leave New Mexico, but it acts like it owns me.
I only wear red and black, the secret state colors, I dream
New Mexico license plates on all the cars in eternity. It
follows me everywhere like mesquite cologne. Calls me
senorita in a loud voice in public.
I love New Mexico in the dark, but I don't want its kisses,
full of prickly pear and rattler. I want an ocean voyage.
I want a real state like Massachusetts, full of Pilgrims,
lots of grief and headlines. I want back my youth.
I'm flirting with Alaska. I've got a bad crush on Wyoming.
I'm even pining for my old love, Pennsylvania. My hope chest
is full of turquoise and Chimayo weavings. There are all
dusty and creased with years of waiting.
Dear New Mexico, I write. Meet me in Espanola at Ranch O'Casados
at 5 pm on Saturday. We have to talk.
It rides into Espanola on an Appaloosa. It carries a
lariat and ropes me in the Big Rock parking lot.
"Kiss me, darling," it drawls. Its spurs reverberate.
See what I'm up against?

Published in *Blessed Resistance* (Mariposa Printing and Pub. Co.)

Lombardi, Tamara

Learning to Swim.....(505) 566-5327

Wet hair hangs over gorgeous brown eyes
Scared small steps into a watery place
Clinging to his loved one's back
Completely trusting
A gift only young hearts conduct
The warm breeze kisses his face
He smiles with appreciation for his Mother
Splashing
Laughing
The playfulness of youth
Enjoying pleasures that only summer bring

Lombardi, Tamara

Not an Insomniac Tonight.....(505) 566-6682

The waves of sleep splash over my body
Lingering clouds hang in the air
Slowly
Softly
Dissipating
Cosmic visions fill the heavy lids of my eyes
Inviting
Intoxicating feeling
Breathing
Heart beating
Under tepid cover
Absorption into the oblivion of rest

Lombardi, Tamara

Second Chance.....(505) 566-7326

Here in this place where the time never flows
Where all this stuff happens but it passes by slow
Here in this place where you're locked behind every door
Where all you want is to go home but no, ten hours more
Here in this place where no one remembers your name
Where every room is playing its version of the same game
Here in this place where no one cherishes their lives
Is a community full of lost souls smushed into metal bee hives
Here in this place where the sun always shines
But by the time you go outside it's the darkness that reminds

Here in this place where you wonder why they came
Where you hear all these stories and they're all exactly the same
Here in this place where every man is innocent
But say the wrong thing and witness where their mind is sent
Here in this place where the time never flows
Where all this stuff happens but it passes by real slow.

Lombardi, Tamara

Watery Euphoria.....(505) 566-9283

Your face flashes before my eyes as I fall asleep.
We meet in the place where the water is always warm
Where the mist seeps
All around us rainbows form
Exotic flowers bloom
Leaving aromatic fragrances hanging in the air
Dragonflies frolicking around without a single care
Water washes over the rocks in every direction
Soft green moss springs out of every available crevice and crack
This place is the epitome of my affection
Here everything is perfect...
This place contains everything reality lacks
You and I lay in serenity
Your hair sprawled across my body
My arms around you....
Tranquility
I wish to stop time and keep this place of impenetrability

Lujan, Jonathan

Jealousy.....(505) 585-5325

I'm jealous of a couple things, where should I start?
Maybe with those damn files and charts
And the way she tightly holds them in her arms
As if to protect and keep them warm
From a desk they gaze up towards her beautiful face
As her fingers study, caress, and trace
In a slightly seductive and gentle way
These files and charts that are her work for the day
When it's cold outside, I really envy her coat
It wraps around her and holds her close
Ties a knot as if it refuses to let go
All the while hoping the sun never defeats the snow
Sometimes it's frigid and the coat never meets her chair

All day touching her skin and enjoying the curl in her hair
Quite frankly, I find none of that fair
Yes, I'm jealous of a coat and I don't care
She comes to see me and puts down those files
Unties her coat and gives me that radiant smile
I grab her and embrace her for just a while
And that's when the files, charts, and jacket envy me
They don't like how I hold her & lift her off her feet
Or how we look into each other's eyes when we speak
But she leaves, and the files, charts, and coat go with her
Sweet lips make me forget about being jealous & bitter

Lujan, Jonathan

Ode to New Mexico.....(505) 585-6338

I left your dry climate
The east coast, I'll try it
Humidity, I might die in it
Take that sweaty head and dry it
Oh New Mexico, how I miss thee
My eyes and pits get misty
Thoughts of your dryness, uplifting
I'm enchanted but you're missing

Lujan, Jonathan

Otoño in New Mexico.....(505) 585-6866

Autumn aspen appear as lit candles
Cocaine clouds get high in the sky
Lost souls get restless and ramble
A chill moonwalks down my spine

Winds whisper then roar displeasure
Song birds bid farewell to adoring crowds
Gold litters the streets like discarded treasure
Orange orbs sit & smile stupidly proud

Ristras hang like old Vegas goons
Leña is peddled in parking lots
Brujas prepare their favorite brooms
And then stir holiday chilé in a pot

Dirty penny hued leaves pile like regrets

Days and nights become more frigid
Soon fall gives in to winter's threats
But departs with a roundtrip ticket

Lujan, Jonathan

When it Rains.....(505) 585-9436

They say when it rains it pours
And this umbrella can take no more
Flooded from the ceilings to the floors
Water coming out the cabinets and drawers
No escape, for someone has stolen my oars
My ego in shambles and my soul is sore
In pieces like old love letters I tore
Not sure what I have a heart for
Or what a future with you has in store
In anger I have wildly thrashed and roared
There isn't a drug around I haven't scored
A saint, god, or devil I'm yet to implore
Only to have my pleas dismissed & ignored
A refugee unable to find a welcoming shore
Fumbling keys to many an unlocked door
Seems as if life is all obstacles and chores
It may be a bitch but it will never be a bore

Lyon, Mandy

El Huevón Trabaja Dos Veces.....(505) 596-4838

I must have been about 8 years old when my Grandma Belia told me for the first time, "*El huevon trabaja dos veces! Ay que hacer las cosas bien la primera vez, para no hacerlo dos veces.*" In English this means the lazy one works two times. "Make sure you do things right the first time, you won't have to do it twice."

Grandma Belia always made sure to teach me how to serve, and clean correctly. She also taught me how to eat correctly. I was a young lady in training and never to become a *huevo*, so I'm told. To be a *huevo* was a *pecado*! *Pecado* means sin- becoming *huevo* is something bad and a terrible thing to become in our family as compared to a sin.

But what did *huevo* mean to me? The word rang in my head with echoes following the silence of trying to answer my question. I thought if I ate too many eggs, surely I would become a *huevo*. You see the root word of *huevo* is *huevo*-eggs. But I love eggs, I thought to myself. I like them *ruevitos* with cheese, jalapeños *curtidos* and a

burnt flour tortilla. Yum! I like hard-boiled eggs during Easter, finding them, and enjoy eating them.

So for a brief time I decided not to eat eggs. I did not want to become a *huevo* or disappoint my Grandma in any way. I knew *un día* I had to face my biggest fear and that was facing my Grandma about me not eating *huevos* anymore.

One morning Grandma Belia made me *huevos revueltos* with cheese. She served me it on a pink plate, at the white *matel* covered kitchen table. My *corazón* was pounding in the inside!

I looked down on my plate and it looked and smelled delicious. Grandma told me, “you better eat, and it will give you strength for the day.” I looked up at her and told her *no puedo*. I told her, “Eggs make you *huevo*!” She stared at me with her hazel eyes, and gave me a big smile that always comforts me. She then put her warm hand on mine and told me, “*Mija* eggs don’t make you lazy. Only you make yourself lazy.” She moved her head back, put her hand on her forehead and gave out an explosive laugh. Then she gave me a great big hug, easing my worries about eating *huevos*.

I will never forget that day because when I finished eating breakfast and Grandma Belia told me to throw my paper napkin into the trash. I crumpled it up, tossed it toward the trashcan and missed. Getting up from my seat to retrieve it, Grandma Belia couldn’t resist an opportunity for another lesson, a parting shot, with those famous words, *ves que te dije*, “*El huevo trabaja dos veces!*”

Martinez, Jessey R.

Butterfly Bookmark.....(505) 627-2888

Am I just a butterfly bookmark?

Only searched for when things seem stark?

When you need a place holder and remember where I was left...

Like those old mountain trails, that lead you to The Sangre de Cristos crest.

I am more than a forgotten trail you happen to know by heart,

I am the chile rojo simmering above my abuelitas hearth.

I am the smell of Frankincense in those old wooden pews,

I am the wild mustang that wants to be tame but will always refuse.

I am the sound of native flutes that call to your soul,

Like the flickering of an ocote fire, sweet smelling and out of control.

Remembering me from time to time only hurts you more,

For I am in the carvings on the aspen trees and in the wind and when the low clouds of thunder roar.

I am more than just a butterfly bookmark stuck between two pages...

I am the blackberry brandy in your flask and the love you'll search for throughout the ages.

Martínez, Valerie

Mid-High, 1976.....(505) 627-6434

Where Mayor Coss and Marge sit now, the present-day city hall, was once the nurse's office, the principal's, half a classroom, maybe a textbook storage room in the old Mid-High. If I look hard, it slowly reappears.

Like a half-way house between junior high and high school most ninth graders in the city got a ride or bused there for one year as the mercilessness of puberty waned and adulthood began. At lunchtime, they let us out

onto the downtown streets and we'd walk down Lincoln to the old Woolworth's for a fifty-cent Frito pie then plant ourselves on the plaza and make lists of every boy or girl we loved, who ignored us, and just who said she was going to break up with him after he pretended he didn't know her.

The year before they shut down Mid-High my father taught ninth grade, and I went there. It was bad enough to be the daughter of one of the strictest teachers. Worse, we drove to school in his beloved Chevy '56, a monstrous white behemoth among sleek yellow Mustangs and Corvettes. I imagined the eyes of everyone were on us as arrived

so I took to pretending to tie my shoes on the approach, then waited for the first bell to slink out. My father didn't even comment. At 14 the world is one big eyeball staring at and through as if to shrink you to pebble-size so I used to finger the globe in history class, whisper all the countries I'd slip into silently, a radio journalist,

a bodiless voice over the airwaves, safe. About mid-year some glitch in the electrical system made the Chevy honk when Dad turned right. Each morning we drove St. Francis to Paseo de Peralta with an obligatory wide right turn around the post office to our parking space. For three weeks, we wailed our approach from 500 feet off and everyone

turned to laugh. Dad got out, apologized, and the crowd waited till after the bell to see me finally lift my head, grab the passenger door handle and slide out. Every day

was imminent death. Then, one Friday, a boy I worshipped,
who never noticed me, walked up to the car, shifted his books,
and said, *This car is bitchin', aren't you in my English class,*

*my mom has a broken-down Impala, that honking thing
I think my uncle can fix, don't be embarrassed,
someday you'll probably tell everyone about this.*

from *And They Called it Horizon: Santa Fe Poems*,
Sunstone Press (2010). Used with permission

Martínez, Valerie

El Mundo Al Mundo.....(505) 627-6863

un sueño

Descubro el Buda en el traspatio,
pintura negra en la madera,
la cabeza inclinó, la sonrisa tan tranquilo.
Entonces, los muertos me vienen
a través del césped, las piedras del jardín,
una cama de flores, sin el sonido,
las bocas silenciosas como bajo-la-tierra.
No necesitamos cuquieraas palabras,
los muertos y yo. Solamente imágenes,
el mensaje *ellos vienen*,
el pasaje secreto bajo la pared,
la criaturas que suben,
el cielo sobre las nubes sobre el aire sobre la tierra,
mundo al mundo, esta tarde,
alguien yo soy, alguien yo supe,
las capas debajo las capas.

from *And They Called it Horizon: Santa Fe Poems*,
Sunstone Press (2010). Used with permission.

Martínez, Valerie

Santa Fe Sestina.....(505) 627-7268

Late autumn blows leaves into women's hair. On the plaza,
Lydia feeds the pigeons—iridescent feathers gone blue
in the tangerine sun. It is afternoon and adobe,
crush of pueblo-style hotel rooms against a sky
that holds them steady. Her skirt is wound in ribbons,
gathered in ruffles, wind-flipped velvet, black and silver.

Merrymakers tumble from the doors of La Fonda, blue
windbreakers and cowboy hats. Spun from adobe,
they rush by Lydia like a tornado. A glance at the sky
stuns them, for a moment, then they're a ribbon
of raucous laughter. Sunlight descends in silver,
travels the metal rain gutters, trimming the plaza

in a membrane of liquid light. Like the gold (not adobe)
the Spaniards thought they saw, coffers as wide as sky
over Seven Cities. Lydia pulls on her coat, pushes on ribbon,
remembers there's jewelry to be sold, turquoise and silver
flashing like eye-lets along the streets of the plaza.
These days, under the shade of the portal, there's the blue

of lapis and sapphire, too. All the colors of sky
remind Lydia of dawn, on the mesa, digging. Ribbons
of pale blue embedded in rock and aching for silver.
Now the stone-cold cuff on her wrist jolts her back to the plaza,
the bracelets for show and sell, cupped in the pale blue
of a tourist's cashmere gloves. Not unlike adobe

cast into bricks and walls, hugging windows ribboned
in Virgin Mary ultramarine. Bells swing and ring the silver-
toned song of the cathedral. It's a late Mass, the nave a plaza
of bowed heads. Where Lydia prays, the vault is a blue
arc from mountain to mesa, over the endless adobe
earth. Lydia knows it as the one, limitless sky

that cradles everyone from above—the caricaturist, silver-
haired, at his booth, the Mexican girls skipping in the plaza,
the santero wrapping up Saint Agnes in crisp blue
tissue paper. It's October. The day feels old as adobe,
new as the drugstore's loopy neon sign (sky-
high and glowing), fluid as the clouds' unruly ribbons.

*My hair is silver, thinks Lydia, the veins in my hands are large
and blue; my legs are earth-bound adobe. The plaza floats
on time's swirling ribbons. I'm swaddled; I'm half-swallowed in sky.*

from *And They Called it Horizon: Santa Fe Poems*,
Sunstone Press (2010). Used with permission

Martínez, Valerie

Sestina de Santa Fe.....(505) 627-7378

Otoño sopla hojas en el pelo de mujeres. En la plaza,
Lydia alimenta las palomas—plumas iridiscentes y azules
debajo el sol mandarina. Es la tarde y adobe,
los hoteles estilo-pueblo aplastan contra un cielo
que los aguanta y estabiliza. Su falda es rodeada de cintas,
doblada en pliegues—terciopelo, negro y plata.

Los fiesteros caen de las puertas de La Fonda, azules
rompevientos y sombreros de vaqueros. Desenrollar del adobe,
ellos corren por delante de Lydia como un tornado. El cielo
los aturde, por un momento, y se hacen una cinta
de risas estridentes. La luz del sol desciende en plata,
viaja por los canales metálicos, envolviendo la plaza

en una membrana de luz líquida. Como el oro (no el adobe)
que los españoles que creían ver, los cofres llenas, como el cielo
sobre las Siete Ciudades. Lydia tira de su abrigo, empuja cintas,
recuerda que hay joyas que vender, turquesa y plata
que destellan como espejos en las calles de la plaza.
Estos días, bajo la sombra del portico, hay azul

de lapislázuli y zafiro, también. Todos los colores de cielo
hacer que Lydia se acuerde del alba, en la mesa, cavando. Las cintas
azul pálido empotradas en la piedra, llamando a plata.
Ahora el brazalete frío en su muñeca la trae de subitito a la plaza,
las pulseras para ver y vender, ahuecada en el azul
de los guantes cachemira de un turista. Similar al adobe

moldeado en ladrillos y paredes, abrazándose a las ventanas encintadas
en el ultramino de la Virgen Bendita. Las campanas de plata
de la catedral tañen y cantan. Es una Misa tardia, la nave una plaza
de cabezas inclinadas. Dónde Lydia ora, la bóveda es un arco azul
de montaña a mesa, sobre la tierra interminable de adobe.
Lydia sabe que éste es el unico, ilimitado cielo

que acuna a todos desde arriba—el caricaturists con pelo de plata
en su puesto, las chicas mexicanas que saltan en la plaza,
el santero que envuelve a Santo Agnes en papel azul
crujiente. Es octubre. El día se siente vieja como el adobe,
nuevo como el anuncio de neón rojo de la farmacia (cielo-
alto y resplandeciente), fluido como las nubes, revoltosas cintas.

Mi pelo es plata, piensa Lydia, las venas en mis manos son grandes y azules; mis piernas son adobes de la tierra. Esta plaza flota en las cintas del tiempo. Estoy envuelta; estoy medio-tragada en cielo.

from *And They Called it Horizon: Santa Fe Poems*,
Sunstone Press (2010). Used with permission

Mills, Tyler

To the Students.....(505) 645-8684

In celebration of New Mexico Highlands University's 125th Anniversary

When the sunflowers extend their lion manes
along the railroad tracks near the Hotel Castañada
and the earth gushes obsidian swirls
steaming from the hot springs by Montezuma
to warm the wind of late-summer afternoons,

we welcome you: back from a hunt,
from your grandmother's ranch,
from your road trip down south
where you sang the song (you know the one) you can't get out of
your head—windows down to tufts of piñon

offering their fruit to the pattern of your breath
as you blurred by. We welcome you
back from the feast days where you danced
the steps your family taught you
so the movements braid into wool threads

extending behind and in front of you into time's design.
We welcome you back from Southern California,
Chicago, Arizona, Mexico, from Africa,
from Vietnam, from Charlie's
where you just might have written

your name in pencil under the table
of your favorite booth before you scooped green chilé
from a chicken enchilada onto your tongue
while your friends told a joke and the sun
bathed the trucks outside in buttery light.

We welcome you back from babysitting your niece and nephew—

how you taught them to swim in the Pecos River
that glitters in the wind.
Back from starlit dawns sharing chips and hot fries,
back from work

at Dairy Queen where your twists looked like perfect helmets,
back from training for softball, football, wrestling, soccer,
baseball, basketball, cross country, volleyball, track and field,
or rugby where you worked your muscles until they burned
so now they feel like smooth stones

tucked under your skin.
Back from the room you grew up in—
the adobe house or brick house or second floor
walk-up where you took your first steps,
where your daughter or son took their first steps.

We welcome you back from a first try, a second try,
an internship, a break,
the purple notebook on your lap
shiny with a silver “H” you outline with your finger:
home. Highlands. We welcome you, welcome you

back from giving birth, from serving your country
on a ship on a distant shore,
back from LA or the Plaza Hotel
where you played an extra on TV,
back from chasing a dream, from living a dream,

from bringing the cattle in—the calf that learned
to jump the fence. We welcome you here
into the poem, into the lab, the play, the studio,
the discussion, and into the song
to make, do, think, and remember.

And our walls have withstood fire
and the storms that come and go
like thunderheads in monsoon season:
sometimes the arroyo runs with rainwater,
and sometimes you can walk the path

with your dog and watch lizards scurrying away.
And what we say on this day,
this 125th anniversary, this special time, is we were we

Far from the slap of shifting water
High on this mountain of stone
We're just waiting for the rising tide to reach us
Me and the boats of old Jerome

Dust devils go a'dancing cross the valley
A sailboat slumbers in the shade
I close my eyes and think of turquoise waters
And every bad call that I've made
We're all looking at a vanishing horizon
Trying to see where all the years have gone
We're just waiting for the high tide on the desert
Me and the boats of old Jerome

Nyquist, Jules

***Behind the Volcanoes*.....(505) 697-2344**

Behind the volcanoes
there are grassy knolls
and dark emeralds.

Behind the volcanoes
lie the backsides of everything.

Broken condoms, needles, trash
of adolescent escape
long dead eruptions.

Behind the volcanoes
sits a small local airport,
with cattle grazing.

East of the Mississippi
there has been no recent
volcanic activity.

A scientist hiked to the rim of one
of our Three Sisters and proclaimed
they were not extinct, just dormant.

On a spring day I drive
the road behind the volcanoes.

From *Behind the Volcanoes* (Beatlick Press)

Nyquist, Jules

Brewery.....(505) 697-2739

one soul
ventures out
to meet
for a beer
and a band
Jesse the sound
man makes sounds
groove to soul
music, the Broken Rule band
plays too loud; out-
casts, we are. no beer
for her, she meets
him by the bar, meets
to get away from sounds.
orders 2 root beers
texts another soul
to embark out-
side to see this band,
it's worth at least a band-
width, a molecule meets
another homonuclear couple, out
where the sounds
are gathering oxygen, souls
talking, ordering beers,
but it's not about the beer
or the background band
it's about the souls
gliding in to meet
a perfect rhythm of sound
bytes, coming out
on the dance floor out
with strangers, a beer
cannot be sent through sound
waves into a band
on his finger to meet
his other half, a soul
mate, out with the band
where a beer meets a nucleus
soundlessly in the palm of a soul.

From *Rolling Sixes Sestinas* (Beatlick Press)

Nyquist, Jules

Greenies.....(505) 697-4733

At Tony Jaro’s River Garden in the middle of the afternoon, we slide into a narrow booth to escape into a dream of sweetness. “Two greenies please,” we tell the waitress, and she brings our lime-and-vodka concoctions to nurse us through the state of the world. We talk about the Lowry Avenue Bridge which will soon be demolished. They say it’s not safe anymore, another closed crossing. I think it’s another way to you that has been blocked. We are the only ones here except for two old men in the bar drinking Grain Belt and watching hockey on TV. Let me look into your eyes, let us talk about who we know in common and why we don’t want to be here. The waitress brings us two more greenies to keep our buzz on and we count the days until the bridge implodes.

Published in *Appetites* (Beatlick Press)

Nyquist, Jules

Joe the Poet in Las Vegas.....(505) 697-5638

Joe sees her in the library, the big old Carnegie with pillars and an acre or more of green space; what a library should be, what she should be to him, he wonders as she steps into the sunlight, sunglasses hiding her eyes but he knows intuitively this is not the swirly carpets or drug-induced trip with a suicidal alcoholic, nor the fear and loathing journey into someone else’s American Dream; this is the old Las Vegas, with a real working railroad from 1879 nestled in mountains bearing the Blood of Christ where the likes of Jesse James, Billy the Kid, Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and Hoodoo Brown slept; this is a Vegas both a city and a town with a Plaza Hotel waiting with a full size bed and a full moon to wish on for blue impossibles, this is New Mexico where anything can happen.

From *Appetites* (Beatlick Press)

Nyquist, Jules

Roses.....(505) 697-7673

(a sestina)

Dad picks roses
for Mom from
the garden to put
in a vase on her table
but by end of April the snow
swept up the cornstalks

the latest anyone with corn

had seen snow, the roses
covered the doorstep the snow
didn't get to and from
Dad's parent's kitchen table
he looked out at his dad putting

the stalks upright, he put
the yellowed leaves of stalks
that would come back, tabled
around after the sun rose
again blooming, going from
spring and planting to snow

within a week of snow
it melted and the corn was off, put
back on track from
seasons into growing corn
knee-high by July 4th, rising
up for glory, tables

of produce, sweet corn tabled
under melting snow
but we can't eat roses
we can only put
them out as a memorial to lost corn,
lost names, lost graves from

one city to the next, from
moving the family farmhouse table
moving the whole house surrounded by corn-
fields where little boys grow up to shovel snow
and fix semi-trucks, work construction, put
food on the table with a vase of roses

in the middle for Mom, covered from snow
her table set for guests that never came, put
out the corn, the butter, the salt, the roses

From *Homesick, Then* (Beatlick Press)

Nyquist, Jules

Track.....(505) 697-8722

Ballooning we hover
over train tracks at sunset, out by Laguna.
BNSF half-mile long, cars hauling uranium.

Just me and the pilot landing in the casino parking lot.
Mostly old people (but some young ones)
where money is traded for dreams.

Six thousand dollars is counted out to one woman
in cash, hundreds.
Time to get out of here.

City lights a distant flicker on the horizon
we float east and the train is still there, motionless.
I think of my parents;, they would like this adventure.

They sleep three states away, distant.
Dreams so deep they won't remember
the journey when they wake up in their room.

The pilot gives us a shot of propane.
We rise, reaching
content to drift,
silent at sunrise.

From *Behind the Volcanoes* (Beatlick Press)

Oak Baker, Jia

Liberation.....(702) 625-5423

A twenty-something barista at Lux slips me
a note with my coffee. He must think I am as young
as he. His jeans hang slack from the studded belt
that keeps them up. And his full-grown beard—
it makes him a man the way *barista* sounds
like a Chilean freedom fighter, the way wedding rings
make their way into pockets, the way you can believe
I love you during sex. He knows nothing
beyond himself, only a cappuccino cup of want.

I could ignore the cat and mouse cartoons.

Could try to make myself forget he is closer
in age to my son than to me. Or I could forget
he scribbled: *Can I buy you another cup? I get off
in thirty*. But no. I want to head out to his place.
Drink. Laugh. Talk. Wake up hung over
in a different world fashioned by revolution,
by oppressed Chileans everywhere. What anyone
could do in a dimly lit café—with skinny jeans,
coffee beans, and desire handwritten in hope.

Used by LECTORES COFFEE and in The Good Men Project

Oak Baker, Jia

You Who Are Getting Obliterated in the Dancing Swarm of Fireflies.....
.....(702) 625-9689

had best not feel too much. The night train rushes
through the meadow, and its two-step rumbling reminds you

you are alone. When the room begins to spin, it forms
a union with the light. One unceasing streak turned circle.

And you, surrounded by mirrors, go vertigo
in the immense empty between one minute

and the next. Fireflies expand into stars. Who are we
to find in infinite spaces but ourselves? Call it an ostinato,

a vamp. The unchanging refrain of beginnings and endings,
starts and stops, resonates in time like steel on steel,

and we know it. Somewhere, deep in the tall grass,
my hands are still fastened to his, holding fast.

You Who Are Getting Obliterated in the Dancing Swarm of Fireflies, 2005
by Yayoi Kusama

Mixed media installation with LED lights
Phoenix Art Museum, Permanent Collection

Published in *Thin Air Magazine* and *Prose and Poetry* for the Phoenix Art Museum

Oak Baker, Jia

Coyote.....(702) 625-2696

I hit him with my right bumper

driving past the last dry creek bed before town,
 and I thought I heard him yelp a quick cry.
 He was still breathing.
 His eyes, open, looked like any dog's,
 and his muzzle, parted, did too,
 but the teeth and ears were sharper triangles.
 His body, torqued due to force,
 rested rooted in the asphalt
 as his breaths came quick and shallow.
 The gash on his shoulder appeared not to gush blood
 but was split open like a crack in the road,
 and his fur, filled with desert scourge—
 thistles and thorns turned brown and brittle—
 seemed never to have bothered him at all.
 I reached out and touched his front paw,
 the pads worn to a thick smoothness,
 the claw rasped down to a nub.
 The sky darkened in increments like a bruise,
 the sun lowering behind West Wing mountain.
 I looked in his eyes as his breaths grew shorter;
 he stared toward the car—the door still open,
 the dome light on, the dinging announcing
 what I had forgotten.

Published in *Mohave River Review*

okpik, dg

Drum.....(505) 657-3786

Fossil Fuel Embers.....(505) 657-3677

POEM TEXT UNAVAILABLE

okpik, dg

Hollow Hands.....(505) 657-4655

You dig with hollow hands,
 with hammer & tongs
 carve-out my wrists:
 metacarpals, fingers & thumb.

At times my song muffles--as if,
 snapping your knuckles were deep.
 The foot of the falcon is a hand.
 The bird takes flight with messages

carried: Under Erasure. Nihilism.

All poems from *Thaw*

Otero, Michelle

The Cheerleaders.....(505) 683-2433

November 1960
federal marshals drove a six-year-old
girl to school
in New Orleans.

That morning and afternoon
and every morning and afternoon,
the road to first grade was lined with
women waving Bibles and placards
like pom-poms.

At first glance, the girl
thinks
it must be
Mardi Gras.

The cheerleaders
they called themselves
stood behind barricades. One carried
a black doll
in a wooden coffin.

Looking back, Ruby
Bridges says, "They never saw
a child."

April 2014
morning in Nogales
or Brownsville,
a six-year-old wakes on concrete
in a heap of other boys, dark
limbs tangled in Red Cross
blankets and donated sheets.

The boys from Guatemala City, Tegucigalpa, San Salvador board
buses to Murrieta,
to Dallas,

to Birmingham,
New Orleans,
Las Cruces,
St. Louis,
Springfield—it doesn't matter
where they go. The cheerleaders
block the buses
wave American flags, as if to say
"Welcome."

Otero, Michelle

Little House 4 Sale.....(505) 683-5488

A particleboard sign leans against the Tuff Shed
Johnny flipped to a loft,
letters spray-painted red,
 Little House
 4 Sale
 \$7000

This is home, inside the bent elbow of a road
without sidewalks, the remains of land
divided and subdivided. March through
October the acequia runs behind him,
his dad's house next door, close enough to hit
with butts flicked off his porch.

One afternoon the cleanest white
truck Johnny ever saw pulled
up and parked, so close he could touch
the grill from where he sat on a kitchen chair
on the concrete stoop of his. He
smoked American Legends while a woman ran
an electric razor over his neck hairs.

¿Y esa mujer? Skin the color of Crown Royal poured into tight jeans,
she walks the road with no sidewalks to Casa Liquors, the corner
store, the tire shops on Bridge. Her hips sway like a cobra under
a charmer's spell, her hips the cobra and the spell.

He'd never seen the driver but could tell
he was all official y todo
from the logo on the door, the words
Bernalillo County, State of New Mexico
made a circle around a blue sky
that matched the vato's button shirt. A zia sun

warmed white sheep on a green field
or maybe they're cows?
in two lines like they're marching to a matanza
why don't they eat the grass?
The vato closed the truck door,
pulled a tape measure off his belt. Johnny asked,
"Hey bro, you gonna put us some sidewalks?"

By the time the truck pulled away,
Johnny had six months to move. Turns out
he's squatting on county land. To think
they never would have noticed, if
his dad hadn't pitched a roof
without a permit
on his cinderblock casita, blocking the neighbors'
mountain view, neighbors from the street with green
grass and coyote fences, nice people who retire in a
fixer-upper that a from-here family can't afford
to keep

or maybe they could, but why when
you get more house on the west side
and it's new?

Those neighbors spent
a year battling permits and zoning
just to build a higher fence separating their acre
from the likes of Johnny and his shed.

On land that isn't really his, he turned
a clothesline post into a chin-up bar,
made a fence of elm trunks the Army Corps
tagged orange for removal from the bosque
they didn't mean removal by him.
Warm afternoons he sits on the trunk, waves
at passing cars, flags down La Cobra for a cigarette
or smack or some
other favorcito.

He wears track pants and chanclas
with worn heels. He wears loose tank tops
that hang over his belly. He wears
a rhinestone cross on a gold chain.
Johnny, a close cut fade,
as much gray as black now,
his face always shiny. He's
not bad looking. Not really. Dark

eyes, full cheeks and lips,
the scab in his brow hardening,
like mud he could wash
with spit and his finger. Not
fat, no pués... He should
eat better. He should stop
smoking. He should take
the meds they gave him
at the clinic.

He hasn't held a job since
Social Security declared him disabled,
his body strong, but the mind
flies in strange directions. He forgets
which pill to take when. He shouldn't drink.
He fills prescriptions with what's flowing
at the confluence of acequia and pavement,
miniatures from Casa Liqueurs, spice at
the head shop on Bridge and La Vega, and chiva
delivered to your door.

For a season he harvests rainbow
chard, yellow pear
tomatoes and golden beets
at a neighbor's farm. His boss grew
up on the same ditch, wears diamond
stud earrings, a barbed wire tattoo on
his bicep. The farm is a back yard and
fallow fields turned a generation ago
from beans and chile to alfalfa and sorghum
more money, less work feeding animals than people.
Johnny says, Eeeee, I never ate so many vegetables.
The tank top hangs lower
as his belly shrinks. Maybe he can stop
taking metformin. Maybe he can get off
the lurasidone. Maybe when he gets paid
he'll take his nephew crawdad
fishing on the ditch. Maybe someday
buy himself a little scooter
you know, just to get around.
Maybe one Saturday at the market
he'll find him a nice lady.

At sunrise the farmers pull up

in the boss's pickup, diesel gurgling.
Horn honks for Johnny to take his place
in back with the tiller, the boss's
sheepdog, and Freddy from Lake Street
who can't drive no more 'cause he drinks
too much in his car. No answer. Shed
door locked. Sign facedown
in the dirt. Cell goes straight
to voicemail.

On the third day Johnny
steps outside, tank top ripped, stubble,
cold sweat, scabs in his brow picked
and pulpy, stink
 stale beer, fried weenies, burnt metal, and shame.
The demons came.

This is not Milagro. Our Johnny did not inherit
a field of beans. In this plot
 setting: South Valley, 'Burque, USA
the hero lives off the land
 in a trailer park
 a halfway house
 a shed.

His grandpa kept a small plot, enough to grow
corn, beans, squash.
 The three sisters don't mind sharing a room.

Johnny's dad wanted better
for his kids, yanked the shovel
from young Johnny's hands, said, Go
to school, get a good job
with the City. Like your cousin.

Some on the margins never leave. They pitch a shed on a triangle of dirt
and the boundaries shift. Put their knees to the earth, the whole world
in a squash blossom, look up to find the two sisters ran off
with gabachos, sold out to developers, Daddy's land
is an apartment complex.

This state hit one hundred years. We still
don't speak American. No value,
but in things.

Johnny says, When I sell the house, I'm gonna buy me a trailer. I'm gonna buy me some land. Maybe out there in the mountains.

One year later, the sign still leans against the shed, the price dropped from seven thousand to five. Johnny smokes on the stoop. Guess he figured out a way to stay. Guess the county forgot him. These things never go according to plan.

Published in *Malpais Review*

Otero, Michelle

***The Poem Remembers*.....(505) 683-7636**

for The Alzheimer's Poetry Project

The poem remembers
that pair of Oxfords
he and sister shared
for dances. His Friday
he'd pull out pages of Sears
catalog she'd crumple
in the toes to shrink
the distance between
their feet. Laces loose,
he'd walk the ditch to
the dance hall on Atrisco,
shake the farm from his feet
at the door, and step toward
the sawdust sprinkled floor.
A soldier coming home, he'd
cross that no man's land
from crew cuts to bare legs
to ask for a jitterbug.

Squatting by his wheelchair,
I take his hands. Clouds blue
his hazel eyes. "Say a poem
with me?" I ask. He smiles,
squeezes my fingers. Maybe
he sees that girl
from the dance, nylon lines

drawn up the backs of her
legs with eyebrow pencil. Maybe
I am the sister who wore
his shoes, the wife dead
all these years, oldest daughter
grown and gone.
“I remember.
Say it with me.”
“I remember.”

The poem remembers
her hands, fingers long
as grace, her laugh
like a waterfall. She
painted landscapes, bred
English roses, prayed
crystal beads for souls
in Purgatory. Shadows
wound her fingers into
buds she touches to my lips.
“Say a poem with me.”
Words are Christ
on the roof of her mouth. She
chews. Nothing comes.
I ask, “If you were a bird,
where would you fly
and what would you see?”
She scrapes blunt nails
against the thighs of
powder blue sweatpants, says
“I would go
where things
are smooth.”
I remember.

The poem remembers
a house full of children,
cast iron stove, a bed
she shared with brother and sister.
She tells a story, her voice
hatchet falls on the stump
where Poppa chopped wood.
“I guess
I’m still a

child
because
now I
sleep
with a
giraffe. I
pretend
he's real
and I
protect
him from
giraffes
that might kill him.”
She bursts out laughing, points
out the daycare window to a
wooden house only she can see.
“And Mary’s just
the same. She
sleeps
with a zebra.”

The poem remembers when yesterday was yesterday.
Today is today.
In this moment, it is all the same.
We are all the same. We are the poem.
We remember.

From *Dementia Arts: Celebrating Creativity in Elder Care*, Gary Glazner. (Health Professions Press)

Otero, Michelle

Quinto Sol.....(505) 683-7846

All grants of land made by the Mexican government...shall be respected as valid...

—ARTICLE X, Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed by representatives of Mexican and U.S. governments in February 1848; stricken from treaty ratified by US Congress in May 1848

“Our people were kings,” your father would whisper after handing over the day’s corn and *chile verde* to *El Lagartijo*, a man with one polished star to hold up his pants

and another to cover his heart. A man whose boots were never dusty, even when he sat at a table in the fields, a scale beside him, the harvest stacked in burlap behind him, a ledger opened before him, the *curandera* holding an umbrella over him. A man with thick hands and skin so clear you could almost see his blood run. It made him seem more real, more alive somehow, than you, your father or any of the Mexicans on the new border.

Now you must ask permission to pull *chile verde* or tomatoes from the vines. So many for them. Sometimes there is enough for you.

El Lagartijo's doctor opens your father's mouth, tapping his teeth with a silver spike, the way your father once inspected horses. "This one can work," he says.

One day the *curandera* is gone. Before *Lagartijo* and his doctor, the people paid her to heal. She was the first to hold you as the afterbirth and too much blood gushed from between your mother's legs. Your father gave her the calf he'd smoked in a desert pit, eggs to cleanse your blood and spirit, rosemary to sweep away *el susto*. *Susto*. A fright so great it sends the soul into hiding. Now the calves belong to the company—a mine, a railroad, a ranch. The eggs and even the herbs belong to the town, which is just another name for mine or railroad or ranch.

You imagine the *curandera* becomes wind.

El Lagartijo will take you one night. His boys will take your daughters. You are property here. *This one can work*.

They make your father sign a parchment littered with a language he can't read, and the next day they come to collect. You learn a new phrase that day. *Water rights*. You never knew a man could own what so clearly belongs to the earth.

You will sign with an X, the only letter you write, the same in either language, on either side.

Now there are sides. Us. Them. (And you don't know which you are.) Up. Down. Here. There. They will come up here from down there. They won't stop. No matter how many fences, how many Rangers tracking them through crosshairs, how hot the sun that spirits of dead mothers blow across the sky. No matter how strong *la migra*, how many signs on this side reading "No dogs or Mexicans allowed."

They will come.

You bury your father on the plot set aside for "you people," mark his grave with an agate you place face-down and lift only in those silent moments when you whisper to him, squatting on what must be his feet. Tracing your dark finger along concentric bands of color, you imagine a heart cracked open must look the same way.

Our people were kings.

You will forget that your people built Paquimé and Tenochtitlán. You will never climb the steps leading to the moon at Teotihuacán. Your children will learn half of two languages and that will never equal one. This new country will hand them uniforms—soldier, miner, waitress, mechanic. Their names stitched in red over their hearts, your children will wander across these lands, thirsting beneath the Fifth Sun.

Published in *Brevity*

Otero, Michelle

Where the Border is Not a Metaphor.....(505) 683-9437

A poet on my Borderlands panel says when he was a boy he thought the lines dividing countries were real, thought he could touch them if he crossed one side to the next. I think of my older brother who, as kids, told me the stars pinning capital cities to maps were visible from airplanes. That's how they know where to land. He said the lines between states were dotted so we could drive across them. The lines between countries were solid. We needed permission to cross. That's why there were guards. From the kitchen, my mom, lesson plans and first-grade writing sheets fanned around her, called out, "Stop telling her those things! She believes you." We were born north of that solid line dividing New Mexico from her older sister, the one who just couldn't get it together, where Customs asked each time we crossed back from the dentist, the Pink Store, the eye doctor, the pharmacy for penicillin without a prescription, "US citizens?" On the Borderlands panel the poet invites me to enter the borderless realm of the imagination. I recall junior year when our Wildcat marching band paraded the main road of Palomas. I played a trumpet solo, America the Beautiful, while school kids in green uniforms waved Mexican and American flags. The Governors of Chihuahua and New Mexico shook hands to launch a surveillance blimp to help the Border Patrol catch drug runners and smugglers and people who looked like us. We were served lunch in a dance hall with high ceilings and dusty light from open barn doors. We ate carne asada and drank Coca Cola from bottles. I said "gracias" when a girl my age picked up my empty plate, my only Spanish. My parents didn't teach us, didn't want anyone mistaking us for Mexicans. There have always been walls. Ask the bobcat, Chihuahuan desert split in half. Ask my brother and me. In English so we understand.

Penner, Andi

Aging in Tree Pose.....(505) 736-2446

Grand, mature cottonwoods
flourish in gold leaf.
Autumn's cobalt dome
protects the yellow canopy
of broad-leafed cottonwoods
in New Mexico,
 my heart's home.
Sharp light, cloudless heaven.
Leafy abundance held aloft by sturdy, gnarled trunk
wrinkled bark, thick limbs, and wide boughs.
Majestic old cottonwoods
 riparian roots
 outstretched arms
embrace the mystery.

To age
is to balance
in tree pose.
Let me be
that ancestral tree
on riverine path
in enchanted autumn—
golden brilliance
reflecting day's last rays

steadfast and serene.

From *Rabbit Sun, Lotus Moon* (MercuryHeartLink)

Penner, Andi

Bury Me Under the Chocolate Flower.....(505) 736-2879
for the fragrant *Berlandiera lyrata*

Bury me under the chocolate flower
scatter me to the sea
lower me into loamy earth
covered with aspen leaves

sift me with the sand of a southern shore
float me on a twig in the creek
hold me up to the arctic wind

blowing down from the highest peak

and I'll find my way to the midnight sky
to silence between the stars
with my arms encircling the galaxies
the universe expanding my heart

so bury me under the chocolate flower
scatter me to the sea
release me in a river's meander

let me choose my eternity.

From *Rabbit Sun, Lotus Moon* (MercuryHeartLink)

Penner, Andi

Ode to Sweaters.....(505) 736-6338

To cashmere and cable knit
to rough scratchy Scottish wool
and trendy recycled cotton blends
to sweaters that fit and baggy favorites
to jackets, coats, hats, and scarves—
glorious woven scarves—Oh! but I digress.
To turtle neck sweaters and mock turtle necks,
V-necks, and cowl necks. To cardigans,
belted sweaters, and cozy sweaters—
dress sweaters and sweater dresses!
To hand-knit jumpers and crocheted vests.
To sweaters with pockets and
sweaters with sleeves long enough to roll over one's chilled hands.
To sweaters for cuddling—
soft soft sweaters to burrow in and
sweaters to take off when the fire is warm.
Handed-down and handed-up sweaters
moth-eaten patched and darned
sweaters that lose their shape when you wash them
and sweaters that shrink when you dry them.
House sweaters you wear because your mother is cold
sweaters you borrowed and kept
sweaters you loaned and lost.
Sweaters
that smell of home.

From *Rabbit Sun, Lotus Moon* (MercuryHeartLink)

Perea, Natasha

La Rose..... (505) 737-7673

POEM TEXT UNAVAILABLE

Petersen, Karen

Los Perdidos (English).....(505) 738-7371

I have a dead brother.
Who doesn't have a dead brother?
I have a dead brother,
killed by a bullet May 2, 2008
and when I think of him
I cannot sleep at night.
For me, the sun rises
but it means nothing.

I have a dead brother
and the man who killed him
sits in a café drinking mate.
His revolver is strapped to his side
and his fat belly falls over his belt.
For him, my brother was nothing,
just another protester wanting to
deny him his authority.

I have a dead brother
and you have a dead brother
and all the mothers have lost their sons,
these frail mothers whose hearts ache.
And when I do finally sleep, my brother is there,
and he says in a quiet whisper
do not forget me and my friends,
our day will come.

Published in *The Saranac Review*

Petersen, Karen

Los Perdidos (Spanish).....(505) 738-7372

(translated from the English by Flor de Maria Oliva)

Tengo un hermano muerto.
¿Quién no tiene un hermano muerto?
Tengo un hermano muerto,
Muerto de un balazo un 2 de mayo del 2008.

y cuando pienso en él
no puedo dormir de noche.
Para mí, el sol sale
pero eso no significa nada.

Tengo un hermano muerto
y el hombre que lo mató
se sienta en un café a tomar mate.
Lleva el revólver a un lado
y su panza le cuelga sobre el cinturón.
Para él, mi hermano no era nada,
sólo otro manifestante queriendo
negar su autoridad.

Tengo un hermano muerto
y tú tienes un hermano muerto
y todas las madres han perdido hijos,
estas madres frágiles cuyos corazones sufren
Y cuando finalmente duermo, mi hermano está ahí,
y dice en un susurro
no te olvides de mí y de mis amigos,
nuestro día vendrá.

Proudheart, Jacob

Rightful Pride.....(505) 776-7444

I will take credit due for my Shortcomings and Accomplishments alike

I will take no pride in my mistakes and I shall take no shame into my future

I will feed my roots with the Knowledge Learned from the errors of my past
My improvements shall Always grow with Time

I am ME and I make my Own history
I am an explore, a survivor, a student and a teacher

I strive to Always be my Own best
Not to slack or accept less

Today I will tell Myself that I Love myself
I will rely on no other for love but I shall always Tell All of my love
For if I love you are not being said Enough to me
It is because I quit Caring how I show it to thee

I will Give when I wish to receive
I will be Grateful for All that I have

I will be Proud to be Me

Proudheart, Jacob

Sexy Sin.....(505) 776-7399

Standing free
Feeling Strong

Nothing in life has ever been fair
Mountains I climbed to breathe this fresh air

So shiny to see
so tempting to me
my heart heeds warning
but my fingers are in greed

Just one sexy sin couldn't possibly hurt
Another sexy sin do my eyes see
so delightfully tempting on me

Only two really is not so bad
nor is three or even four
I only need just one more

I can no longer see
For my crown of sexy sin is blinding me

One foot in front of the other I start to stagger
On the desert ground, Screaming out loud
By sexy sin I once again find myself pinned

Faster this time than the last

I proclaim myself free

One sexy robe
One sexy crown
Two sexy boots no longer weighing me down

One sexy ring at a time
I put sexy sin aside

Standing free
Feeling weak

One foot in front of the other I start to climb
Determined to once again claim that mountain top as mine

Nothing in life will ever be fair
Success will never be near

So for myself I must fight
For myself I must win this eternal war against damned and sexy sin

Reno, Stephen

For Li Po.....(505) 736-3675

This one is for Li Po, the famous Chinese poet

All of us, brother Po,
All of us fall into the moon,
Our shadows drowning in concentric circling of memory and dream, motion and desire.

Reno, Stephen

Waltzing with Scatman.....(505) 736-9258

This one is for Scatman Crothers, the actor

Shari is showing the Park and the Inn
and 9th avenue food-fair from here to Nebraska
and 10 000 food-booths from 10 000 nations
and Wall Street and wharf and China and spice-laden airs
And traffic and traffic
and people and people and people
and diamond-dripping apartments and parties.

And our Assyrian guide takes us uptown through sweet Harlem sidestreets
and downtown to commerce and Empiring vista
and distant horizon blocked in concrete and brick
and we peer down through blue haze to the tiniest tiniest vehicles.

He tries to bribe our way into the Twin Towers to ride elevators to the top for an even
bigger view of the world, but the old shuffling custodian says it would be his job if he
unlocked the doors. The Towers rise up into science fiction skies and just a few tiny
stars.

I forget if we ever got home.

Roche, John

Eggs in a Basket.....(585) 762-3447

Chicks may hatch
Hatchets may cleave
Cleave unto the Lord
The Lord of Dynamite
Dynamite omelette!
Omelans walk away
Away, come away, human child
Children cross the border
The border is wide, we cannot cross
Cross of Fire, Cross of Shame
Shaming, naming, gaming the same
The same rain that falls on the rich man...
The rich man eats pâté de foie gras
Gross old man eats Big Macs on silver platter
The platters spin, the planets spin, the Wheel spins, the whale of a ride
Riding Hood holds her basket dear
Dear Heart, keep your ducks in a row
Row, row, row your boat ashore
Ashore, on the other side, paragate, parasamgate, Bodhisvaha
Buddha sits basket in lap
Lapping waves all atwitter
Atwittering sparrows and avenging hawks
Hawking their wares at the county fair
Fair weather friend, what will be your end?
The End Is Nigh, or Never!
Never mind that man behind the curtain
It's curtains for you, Mr. Rooster
Rooster may broil or broast, but hen will sit
Sitting, sitting, sitting, what chicks may hatch?

Roche, John

Joe the Hermit.....(585) 762-5638

nobody can call me text me email me skype me tweet me
but you can write me
ive got po box in town thirty miles up dirt road follows arroyo
if not too snowy or muddy can get there once a week
only stranded a few weeks a year
chevy truck has no reverse
don't want to go back
please send royalties money order easier to cash
ive got credit at piggly wiggly hardware store barmaids all know my name
what else do I need but guitar pad pen paper

From *The Joe Poems: The Continuing Saga of Joe the Poet*, Kanona, NY:
FootHills Publishing, 2012

Roche, John

Lucky.....(585) 762-5825

It's 1955
I'm being rocked in my cradle
My father's on the road
driving the highways and byways of Connecticut
for the American Tobacco Company

Four decades later he'll succumb to emphysema
in what lungs remained after the cancer surgery a few years previous

But, right now, he's tanned and young
and energetically setting up the Camels display
flour-pasting Lucky Strike decals on the windows
of package stores and general stores and grocery stores
in Goshen Hebron Pomfret Scotland Norfolk Cornwall Coventry New Canaan
and Deep River

This morning he's sitting at a lunch counter
In some pharmacy in some hamlet too small for a Woolworth's
My Dad's got a cup of coffee a donut a cigarette
(a triad that was a constant in his life— matched only
by my Mom and morning Communion)

I would create a world where such pleasures are non-lethal

Picture him outside
on a sunny June day
leaning against a post by a shopfront entrance
examining his work with a satisfied eye
and enjoying one more Lucky

while morning stretches out and around the Elm-draped bend
in the road that goes on the road that goes on the road that goes on
forever

From *Topicalities* (FootHills Publishing)

Roche, John

***Stopped in Your Tracks*.....(585) 762-7867**

Water bottle
some Good Samaritan
left yesterday
's been poured onto sand
Trail you followed
last year
's been erased
Child you left other side of the Border
's been kidnapped
Dream of a better life
's been snuffed out.

Sun is still high
Hunger is still with you
Thirst grows by the hour
Despair
's stopped you in your tracks.

From *The Fixed & Free Anthology II* (Mercury Heartlink)

Rogers, Janet

***Birds Carry My Goodbye*.....(250) 764-2473**

Kal-lak'-a-la Lo' lo Ni'ka Kla-how'-ya
Tin-tin of nika tik-egh
Stone of nika wau'-wau

Skoo-kum of nika se-ah-host
Smoke of nika til tum-tum
Kwah-ne-sum kum-tuks ky'-as nah-kook
Kal-lak'-a-la, lo'lo nika kla-how'-ya
Mah-sie waum way-hut
Mah-sie e'-lip closhe eh-k'ah-nam
La mes'-tin
Le mo'-lo kloodsh'man ko'-pa ni-ka al'ta kwass
Siwash pil-pil, kwann
Cloosh-spoose halo mahlie
Cloosh-spoose halo mitlite
Bell of my love
Horn of my talk
Ghost of my eyes
Smoke of my heavy heart
Always know dear
Birds carry my goodbye
Thank you for the warm road
For the best story medicine
The wild woman in me now tame
I shall not forget
I cannot stay

Rogers, Janet

Soft Earth..... (250) 764-7638

is this earth?
it's so soft
I've been living
amongst steel beams
reality is hot uncomfortable

not
air-conditioned
where precipitation
is discouraged
touch her
she wants to
hold you
feel the heat
surround you
go ahead and sweat
why don't you
cry through
the words you wrote for them
go there and come back
come back again

silence
inside the vault is sexy
museum secrets
made public
is this my history
is this history at all
I find being this close
erotic

special time with them
reveals stories they hold
from others
I am an open-hearted target
I come to them
humble, with nothing
taking aim and piercing
me with teachings
opening my thinking
feeling what she felt
I see what she is seeing

I like uncertainty
reminds me of
respect
when no one
has taught us
modesty

the earth
is so soft
come, touch it

Rudolph, Aaron

Almost.....(806) 783-2566

There's nearly a magic that surrounds me
when I am not looking or when asleep.
Even in daytime, when the sparrows outside
on the fence jabber for attention, beaks
poised high, their miniscule bodies shaking
from the effort. I wait five beats before
answering her phone call. Before I push
my shoulders out slowly and breathe once, twice.

Is it magical if laughter can stitch
moments together, if a quilt-like line
of stories can almost bring two people
to the same place? I can spend the morning
in my yard watching sparrows, listening
for each break in their song, each small moment
when wind slaps against weeds and a distant
knocking rhythms along like song, like hope.

Published in *Pasatiempo* and from *The Sombrero Galaxy* (Strawberry Hedgehog)

Rudolph, Aaron

Coffee.....(806) 783-2633

Coffee is my energy, liquid I use as a boost.
It's not what you think—this is no
business arrangement—it's intimate. We hug
and I bathe in the beauty of coffee's smell.
The aroma is an ocean of clean and bold,
the smell of coffee lifts, holds, embraces
and massages. Its aroma carries the mountains
and fields where it's grown from Cuba to Brazil
to Tanzania to Hawaii. Coffee smells of sun
pouring onto beans throughout the globe. To breathe
in the fumes of a fresh cup is to travel at light speed
from one alluring world to another and another, rolling
green hills, high snowy mountain peaks like lifted shoulders.

You are my querido, my small cup
in chubby hands, warmth in winter to warm,
warmth in summer to take me back. Oh,
you time machine, you cup of memories,
you collage of mornings where the day is new
and as open as a field growing possibility.

Rudolph, Aaron

Crying.....(806) 783-2794

Many times I've let my shoulders sink down
and my gut rise, bellow out all those things
that needed escaping. Many of these were trapped
for months or years, too long, and the release
was magic—for those woes and for me.
The celebration in crying myself
into a new moment where pain flees, momentarily.

I've cried for loved ones dying,
cried for romantic relationships faded to dust,
and cried when alone, scared to silence.
I've cried when overwhelmed with lovely news
that touched me like mist, where my shoulders
were suddenly moving as dancers, caught in a beat,
sounds left my mouth, tears left my eyes, but as dance,
celebrating the life I plead for when alone.

Crying exhausts me, sad and joyful, but weeping
for celebration is to cry freely, to be heard and to hear
one's self genuinely—wailing, sobbing, or silently
breathing downward into ground.

Rudolph, Aaron

A Poem to My Niece, Almost Three Years Old.....(806) 783-7636

Every things she wants she sees
in the dark coin of this child's eyes.
—Valerie Martinez, "Traveler"

You count in Spanish
uno, dos, tres
just as my sister taught you.

You perform on cue

acting as jester, arms whipping
around like confused snakes
when your mother demands it.

You laugh and your eyes
glaze solid like pebbles.

In your eyes I see my years
at Mora Avenue Elementary
where I was picked last for dodge ball,

where I kicked a ball into someone's yard
and spent three days after school
because I climbed the fence

to retrieve it. I etched
doodles in my Big Chief notebook,
wrote an acceptance speech
for when I was elected President.

Your eyes also hold
the picture of a girl,
Elena, Elena, Elena.

I think, "Muy bonita," the same words
your mother says at night
as she stands above you,

the sandman with your mother's face,
spreading a kiss like sleeping dust
across your forehead.

From *Sacred Things* (Bridge Burner's Press)

Rudolph, Aaron

Where the Skunks Live.....(806) 783-9437

I live where the skunks live
and though they hide, they show
themselves in their stink,
lingering for hours on the street.

Most likely, one ran into the road and nearly lost
its head to a car and sprayed. Once or twice

a month, driving on the street in which I live,
I smell the skunks and remember
that they are alive. One morning, I saw
a skunk, splattered, on the road's side,
the only time I've seen one in this neighborhood.

You don't have to see a thing to know it exists.
You can smell its presence, feel
that it's nearby because its spray is thick
in the air like globs of paint thrown
against a wall but permeated in odor, a stench
stronger than a boxer's punch, a horse's stride
in full gallop, or a kick of caffeine
in early morning while driving down
my regular road and seeing that lifeless skunk,
limp and blood soaked at the curb.
It's tiny and formless. In early night
though, it's something to note, a pungent
and ever present smell around dinner time.

Sandoval, Yvonne

Reclaiming Beauty.....(505) 726-7325
POEM TEXT UNAVAILABLE

Sandoval, Yolotzin

Butterballs.....(505) 726-2888
The Silly Willies.....(505) 726-7455
POEM TEXT UNAVAILABLE

Shannon, Beth

Dial the Poem Booth.....(928) 742-3425

Dial the poem booth
Listen for the dial tone
Huh...
Dial the poem booth
Is it a party line, land line, long distance?
Do you need a contract, minutes or a dime?
Operator could you help me place this call?
Spread the word not the turd
And
Listen, be amused
By the booth
By the poem

By the whimsy
By the truth.

St Thomas, Thomas

New Mexico Newbie.....(505) 788-6396

Doesn't make any difference
Where you go in New Mexico
...cause there you are:
Upon a windy mesa or cuddled in a timeless plaza
Inertia ,as in existential .
Is Always by your side ,
Your co -pilot ..?
A Cosmic Kemosabe kokopelli Kit Carson crackhead .
Formless ..yes
Weightless..not so ..
As an overloaded bag at check in,
No amount of discarding yields unto ..
Some blame the altitude,
The manana attitude ..or the Californians .
Regardless,
there you are.
Like blondie on a mule in a mirage
So thirsty..
In New Mex we are all living our own private spaghetti western .
“Nice hat ...too bad about the head full of noodles “.
Red,green Christmas?
Doesn't make any difference
Either burning sensation momentarily
Thaws the mind ,
not unlike a rogue ice burg.calved free to melt elsewhere,
only to be obliterated by the titanic force of nothingness,
Constant as tinnitus.
The wailing toil of a restless siren ,
broncs Bareback within the center of the cerebral corral.
Sadistic muses like rodeo clowns,
Distract and redirect oneself to the
Reality of life ,that snorting confused
Tortured bull ,Pursuing its last curtain call.
....When and If you find yourself a newbie to this land of ancients ,
Be warned.
This land of enchantment Will pummel you into mentorship ;
By Observing the space ,
Between the chants.

you will find yourself .
Alone.

Shaw, Levi Raven

Normalcy in America.....(505) 742-6676

Cold hands like death,
know no uncertainty,
nor the warmth of our vibrating, synchronized human hearts,
the past and present remain an unbearable truth,
that continues to hold us apart,

though the same blue blood courses through our veins,
the same salty tears flow from our eyes,
we cross the same pathways of emotion,
we inhabit the same earth, she was made for all mankind.

Do you remember police batons waving and water cannons daily,
the music celebrations and unifying marches,
Nixon and all his dirty wars?
I do and some of us thought it was the De facto tipping point
of this horrifically and disdainfully charged American du jure,

The invisible beauty of black and brown spirits
still grieving over the inexplicable importance given to skin color,
even after electing the first Black President
that socially constructed and defined concept called race,
continues to foment unrest,

while uncivilized, disaffected white privilege,
offers not even a moment of regret,
while police antics are celebrated as heroics,
causing my sadness to turn into an anger I cannot express,

the unbearable sickness in our common core has
turned into quite a remarkable dis-ease...
state sanctioned murder is the cause
for so many dead black bodies

I'm tired of gun violence,
I'm tired of praying in a world emptied of human beingness,
I'm tired of social media and its thoughtless path...dehumanizing.
You are tired of wondering if your sons, brothers and fathers
are coming home safely tonight.

How much longer, you ask, how many more generations of Black Mothers
must sleep interruptedly,...ad nauseam,...at night?

How is it that so many have yet to become human or declare that all men ARE FREE?

Sze, Arthur

Black Center.....(505) 793-2522

Green tips of tulips are rising out of the earth—
you don't flense a whale or fire at beer cans

in an arroyo but catch the budding
tips of pear branches and wonder what

it's like to live along a purling edge of spring.
Jefferson once tried to assemble a mastodon

skeleton on the White House floor but,
with pieces missing, failed to sequence the bones;

when the last speaker of a language dies,
a hue vanishes from the spectrum of visible light.

Last night, you sped past revolving and flashing
red, blue, and white lights along the road—

a wildfire in the dark; though no one
you knew was taken in the midnight ambulance,

an arrow struck a bull's eye and quivered
in its shaft: one minute gratitude rises

like water from an underground lake,
another dissolution gnaws from a black center.

Published in *Ploughshares*

Sze, Arthur

First Snow.....(505)793-3477

A rabbit has stopped on the gravel driveway:

imbibing the silence,
you stare at spruce needles:

there's no sound of a leaf blower,
no sign of a black bear;

a few weeks ago, a buck scraped his rack
against an aspen trunk;
a carpenter scribed a plank along a curved stone wall.

You only spot the rabbit's ears and tail:

when it moves, you locate it against speckled gravel,
but when it stops, it blends in again;

the world of being is like this gravel:

you think you own a car, a house,
this blue-zigzagged shirt, but you just borrow these things.

Yesterday, you constructed an aqueduct of dreams
and stood at Gibraltar,

but you possess nothing.

Snow melts into a pool of clear water;
and, in this stillness,

starlight behind daylight wherever you gaze.

Published in *Academy of American Poets Poem-A-Day* (poets.org)

Sze, Arthur

Sight Lines.....(505)793-7444

I'm walking in sight of the Río Nambe—

salt cedar rises through silt in an irrigation ditch—

the snowpack in the Sangre de Cristos has already dwindled before spring—

at least no fires erupt in the conifers above Los Alamos—

the plutonium waste has been hauled to an underground site—

a man who built plutonium-triggers breeds horses now—

no one could anticipate this distance from Monticello—
Jefferson despised newspapers, but no one thing takes us out of ourselves—
during the Cultural Revolution, a boy saw his mother shot in front of a firing squad—
a woman detonates when a spam text triggers bombs strapped to her body—
when I come to an upright circular steel lid, I step out of the ditch—
I step out of the ditch but step deeper into myself—
I arrive at a space that no longer needs autumn or spring—
I find ginseng where there is no ginseng my talisman of desire—
though you are visiting Paris, you are here at my fingertips—
though I step back into the ditch, no whitening cloud dispels this world's mystery—
the ditch ran before the year of the Louisiana Purchase—
I'm walking on silt, glimpsing horses in the field—
fielding the shapes of our bodies in white sand—
though parallel lines touch in the infinite, the infinite is here—

Published in *Kenyon Review*

Troy, Holly

Crush (1976).....(928) 876-2787

Cigarette dangling from her mouth
Bunny opened the door.
I thought she was cool.
Bunny was an enormous woman.

Bunny opened the door and grinned.
Her trailer had a dark heady smell.
Enormous, Bunny wore a strapless shiny polyester cheetah print jumpsuit,
gold high heels, gold hoop earrings, and gold bangles.

Her trailer smelled dark, heady, secret.
I wanted to go in, but M's mother made us wait outside.
I told M I wanted gold high heels and that I couldn't wait to get my ears pierced.
We poked sticks in the mud and pretended to be Davey and Mike, our favorite
Monkees.

I wanted to see the mysterious darkness inside.
Dimly, we heard David Bowie singing about outer space.
We drew stars and moons in the mud,
stopped talking and listened—

We heard him cry "5 years, that's all we've got!"
My head spun, *that's almost my whole life*.
We stopped talking. For a minute
my stick, the stars, the mud and M disappeared.

The world spun and I was in the sky looking at my life.
I saw nothing but endless blue
no stick, no stars, no mud, no M, just blue—

and it was beautiful.

I saw something push through the edge of blue
when the smell of Bunny's trailer hit me.
It was beautiful.
Glimmering purple haloed her eyes,

Bunny carried the smell of her trailer
when she stepped outside into the afternoon sun.
Shimmering eyes squinting,
she lit the cigarette dangling from her mouth.

Published in *Bentlily.com*

Troy, Holly

Detour.....(928) 876-3386

Frictional horseflesh quiver
beneath hare(y)lipped cowgirls with
cornstarched thighs.
Into the discoball moon shine they breakaway--
brazen
to the gypsum-walled grocery

(imaginary) oasis

for onion, pepper and kidney beans.

Published in *Night Train Magazine*

Troy, Holly

The Most Beautiful Thing.....(928) 876-6678

The most beautiful thing in the world sounds like – *and they lived happily ever after.*

The LDS-approved “where babies come from” book shows a woman sitting up in bed, blanket draped over her lap, husband standing behind her – his hands resting on her shoulders. They are both looking up, fresh faced and smiling – the woman’s arms outstretched toward a gigantic hand in the sky holding a baby wrapped in swaddling cloth.

I was three when I asked my mother where babies came from. She told me that sperm, which is in a man’s penis, fertilizes the egg that is inside a woman.

I imagined sperm to be free-floating, fertilizing eggs everywhere.

Mom didn’t mention God or hands at all.

She told me God was in everything. Not just in the sky, but in trees and rocks and the ground.

—*Even blades of grass?*

—*Yes.*

Lying on the lawn at the end of the day, cool against the warm summer air. I picked a blade of grass and pressed God between the side edges of both my thumbs and blew.

The sound echoed.

Tumbling, rolling down the hill on the grass of God. Stone in my back!

Troy, Holly

Where Asteroids Come From.....(928) 876-9437

Today,
as I walked
down
the street,

I found myself
lifting off, floating
in space—
my body
dis-
membered
but hanging
by twine.
A piece of ham, a tad of T-bone.
a heart-ache, a tooth-ache—
glazed
and
clove-pricked.

Published in *Earth's Daughter's Magazine*

Troy, Holly

Wish I Were the Earth.....(928) 876-9474

Wish I were the earth
could open my mouth
and swallow the blur.

Turn a wail to a purr
in my warm dark house
if I were the earth.

A natural re-birth
on deep stable ground
if I could swallow the blur.

Wouldn't leave me to murmur
my pain in your couch
if I were the earth.

A place to clear hurt
to quiet loud sounds
and dissolve the blur.

Fear turns to dirt
when it is found
that I am the earth.
I will swallow the blur.

Varela, Tavares

Strange Dreams.....(505) 827-7872

I had a dream that I was
standing in front of a hologram
The hologram showed me space
ON this operation system an instructor
was showing me how placing a
black hole on this model warps
space time
And how placing black holes
next to each other
has a tremendous effect on
space time
And also he told me about
putting black holes on different
sides facing each other
he made a small statement I
wish I can remember it
this was before he decided to
unleash hell
on the model universe
with black holes
To the point where the
holographic universe reset
I had a dream that I kicked it with
some of the illest lyricists
I was determined to become the greatest
Because I was motivated to be
heard and have a voice
I hated life
I still find joy a hard concept to grasp
Maybe that's why I like British literature
I'm joking
but I do

I had a dream that my family members died
And I couldn't do anything about it
My father did and I couldn't do
anything about it
I was supposed to be a statistic
I know others that were supposed to as well
But they didn't

They have dreams too
They have motivations to become the best that ever
walked the earth
May you be compelled to dream a little bit
You never know you might hear
the voice of reason

Varela, Tavares

Through Thick and Thin.....(505) 827-8476

Sometimes I feel hopelessly
Lost heading the right direction
Despite tension
Mocking my holed wings
The gravity is pushing down on me
I feel suspension
My caskets open again
Which way will I die
For the people or myself
Will I be loving or destructive
I can't do things based off of
feelings all the time
Because they can be far from truth
I don't trust my heart
I barely trust my mind
Liars and suppressors of truth
I remember the times I would sit
alone in my room
Thinking I would be nothing
I still have the same fear
But I have come so far
And I'm in the creator's hands
So no matter thick and thin
The almighty will be there

Wice, Andrew

Four Seasons in Haiku #1.....(505) 942-3687

On the numb winter branch,
a candy-bright cardinal –
hissing snowfall

The color green!
All the little leaves glow

in the chilling April rain

Summer siesta
hot glue heat
my kittens sleep
stretched out like stringbeans

Death sweeps
a dry broom of broken straws,
scattering leaves
sound like the sea

Wiggerman, Scott

August.....(505) 944-2848

Rain barrels are empty,
a sludge of bugs and muck,
dried up like the gutters,
the deck, the grass, the heart.

Nests of bagworms hang
from trees like dirty clouds;
the usual clamor of cicadas
diminished to waves of echoes.
Roaches slink indoors, but
they too lack the spirit to react,
not even scurrying, easily whacked.

You don't have to be told
about drought to know thirst:
everything thirsts.

I venture into the backyard
only long enough to shift the hose,
keep things alive
another day, perhaps a week.
How to keep the heart going
when it's packed down like adobe,
so hard, water runs right off it?

Published in *Concho River Review* and in *Presence*,
(Pecan Grove Press)

Wiggerman, Scott

Corn.....(505) 944-2676

Off come the husks,
shucked in a quick striptease.
Off come the strands of silk,
carefully, like fine French underthings.
Shorn of these threads,
into a hot tub they're plunged.

Out they come, dripping wet,
circled by swirls of steam.
Slathered and bathed in butter,
bright as neon yield signs,
sweet kernels spew forth
their sticky milk sugars,
drain juice down chins like drool.
Ears are nibbled to nubs,
cobs are sucked to the marrow.
The kitchen is filled with comestible moans.

You and I find ravishment
fresh from our Midwest fields.
Corn must be an Illinois thing,
for your husband
clearly misconstrues
our just-got-laid smiles.

From Vegetables and Other Relationships (Plain View Press)

Wiggerman, Scott

Formations.....(505) 944-3676

A quiet field of punctuation marks
becomes a murmuration: first, the lift,
despite a brutal wind, and then the shift
across the sky, from right to left in arcs
that sail in folds, a hundred wings as one,
apostrophes in sync, an aerial
display of feathers, beaks, and last, a pull
back down to earth, this sudden dance undone.

Our lungs inflate. Our breathing bellows cells

in movement: rising, falling. That's a fact.
My own heart murmurs, beats its wings the same
direction—over, over—casts its spells,
abandons them. And so . . . expand, contract:
it's how the world began, how we became.

Published in *Hobble Creek Review* and in *Leaf and Beak: Sonnets* (Purple Flag)

Williams, Moriah

Wait, It Gets.....(505) 945-9258

We never told him about the ladder on the stairs
or how I sang Jerry Lee Lewis
while you stood on my shoulders
and almost killed me with sheet plastic,
but he still knew enough
to tell me how to get a coat hanger
out of the gas tank without asking
anything. He didn't even know
about the time I pulled your pants off
to prevent heart attack
and frostbite after you fell
in the fish pond in December,
trying to fix the heating coil,
the same red corduroys
you believed you manifested by coercion,
forcing someone anonymous to drop them
at the thrift shop after you saw them
in the department store window,
the same pants neither of us remembered
were unbuttoned for comfort
when I took that photo of you, proud
we had shoveled the last horse manure
from your land cruiser. We were making
little greenhouses from gallon glass
cider bottles so the new seedlings could go out to play
in the high-altitude spring,
and how else do you burn the bottoms off jugs
except by cracking them with a lit lasso
of gas-soaked twine? Who would go
all the way down a mountain
to fill up a can? Not that we were unable to drive,
just lazy—unlike the time I got drunk
from cleaning your walls with your stolen steamer

filled with Everclear. Unlike the time
we couldn't talk straight from laughing
and scared all the hang-ups
with our answering machine giggle, right after
we programmed its code and discovered,
in addition to sharing a birthday,
we had chosen the same PIN number. I love
how we saved plates
to smash on Witches' New Year
when you meditated in hot pink fleece and silver sunglasses
and we built that sixty-three-square-foot altar
made of weird little things and cheese.
No, we shouldn't have tarred the roof like that,
one glob still stuck to my favorite sandals.
And no matter how much
fate loved how we teased it,
that fire season we knew
better than to leave
the trees so close to the house
the way we did,
especially the ponderosa
whose bark I leaned into
who told me it was time to go.

Willis, Timothy

I Went to the Desert.....(505) 945-4936

I went to the high desert seeking solitude
To think without distractions
There were birds balancing on the cacti
The lizards were chasing each other
Through small patches of tall grasses
I sat under a lone gnarled juniper
Its branches were few and wind swept
The roots came up all around me like veins
They had broke through the rock I sat upon
The Virga above me was making its way to the earth
I could feel and smell the moisture
The air was cool and wet
All the the birds went silent
I could only hear the wind and thunder in the distance
The first rain drop hit my forearm
The drop was speckled with the colors of the desert

I tried to hide under the gnarled juniper to no avail
Then I opened my arms wide and lifted my head to the sky
The rain only lasted for a few moments but it felt like a lifetime
For a brief moment I was cold until the sun broke through
The warmth of the sun began to dry and warm me
The birds started singing again
The lizards started chasing again
Rain drops were dripping off the tall patches of grasses
The rays of the sun made them have a surreal glow
Flying insects were circling in the steam rising from the desert
The roots of the juniper were submerged in the puddles it created
The desert was alive and full of distractions

Willis, Timothy

Night at a Round Table.....(505) 945-6444

I opened myself to a creation vibration
That caused an inebriation of sensation
Vino con limon music myths and fables
Surrounded by old souls seated at a round table
Channeling the wisdom of ascended masters
Moments of slow breath while the heart beats faster
Time slowed down and and everything felt real
Even though to a passerby it all appeared surreal
The wind and the birds stopped by at times
To rustle the leaves and listen to the music and impromptu rhymes
Moments of laughter and moments of silence
Moments of spirit and moments of science
Down the rabbit hole and into a labyrinth
With sounds from Zeppelin Van Morrison and Sabbath
You have to lead and you have to follow
When you find yourself dancing with only your shadow
Then the local DJ provided the lush tracks
As the candle transformed into a puddle of wax
As the sun rose and the stars disappeared
The song birds awoke me with music to my ears
Under the branches of a pinon just south of town
I realized my bed for the night is where a deer lays down
Scents of lemon, lavender, tea tree,citronella and eucalyptus
And my pillow made from scraps of a blanket some unfinished art and a bag of citrus