

# TILTED HOUSE REVIEW



Issue #1  
Spring 2020

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*Tilted House Review* is a biannual art and literary journal founded on autodidacticism, chance, and community. We exist to celebrate art and literary exploration, both traditional and experimental, trained and untrained. We encourage everyone to jump and get to know each other.

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TILTED HOUSE  
R E V I E W

ISSUE #1

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## Editor's Note

On a planet fraught with pestilence, dire climates, deceived democracies, and the same violence that has haunted us for centuries, it's hard to know where to turn, and to whom to listen.

I wrote the first draft of this note in February, when coronavirus was still a joke to this country. Even then, the magnitude of the disease and its global repercussions did not seem to me, far-fetched. I listened to the news, skeptical, as usual, but still wary of its spread.

When I spoke to my peers about it, I often left the conversation peeved; I didn't feel heard, not to mention taken seriously. Faith in my own friends started dwindling—particularly among those who, when I'd protest their coughing in my face, would cackle and say, *don't be ridiculous, dude, you're not gonna get coronavirus*.

It's not an anomaly that my protests were in vain. I struggle speaking in groups, arguing, debating. And this, I've come to know, is why I write. Through mere speech, eloquence is lost to me.

But I can articulate through storytelling; through poetry, I can protest. The clarity with which I am able to do so finds its strength in lines. So I write. I write, and I listen. I listen not because I fear conversation—on the contrary, I relish it—but because listening is enlightening.

Through this journal, I aim to listen to my peers, whose voices I agree with, question, or whose words challenge me and the world at large. Hearing different minds yields a proper perspective. This is how I choose to learn, to unearth my own eloquence: by listening, writing, and listening some more.

C M L  
New Orleans  
Spring 2020



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**BRAD RICHARD**

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**American History**

I give you this loaded gun and you decide  
when to pull the trigger, when hammer

strikes powder and bullet  
bursts hot from bore

and you don't know  
if this is murder  
or suicide

until it hits you.

# BRAD RICHARD

---

## Roundelay For Briana

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
so take your white dress from the closet.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party  
for your cousin, Ka'Nard, turning ten.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
so bring an apple, a balloon, and your blood.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
say, "Grandma, I want some more chicken."

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
boys will drive up, rush in and rush out.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
the boys bring AK-47s with banana clips.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
bullets graze Ka'Nard, kill a lady driving by.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
the boys won't hit whoever they meant to.

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
hang on tight to your Grandma's leg.

Brianna, we're going to a birthday party,  
"Blood stayed on my leg for three days."

Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
"She couldn't handle the bullet."



Briana, we're going to a birthday party,  
you asked your teacher, "What color are God's eyes?"

Briana, Bri, you're five years old,  
so wear your white dress to die in.

# BRAD RICHARD

---

## Against Poetry

July evening, heat eases in for the night.  
Spent all morning weeding mint  
from my flowerbed, now I'm drinking

a gin mule my neighbor brought me,  
made from the mint I brought her,  
and writing this because I don't want

to write the poem I need  
to write, about Natasha  
twenty blocks away, playing

with her cousins in her driveway.  
Reader, since I'm your point of entry  
to wherever this goes, share my drink,

this delicious drink, so sweet and cold,  
share the languid air, and let me tell you  
what Natasha's cousin told the paper,

that Natasha's intestines are hanging  
out of her, that she may not live.  
Some boys had a beef with somebody.

Reader, in case you're wondering,  
I hate poetry. Thank God  
for this drink. Every summer

I tend my garden like Voltaire's idiot  
and sweat out poems with incidental rhymes  
while incidental crimes kill little girls.



Every summer . . . Reader, how was it?  
You need another round? I know,  
they just go right through you.

KAILE H. GLICK

---

## Welcome Home Chelsea Manning

It's springtime again & you are free to walk.  
We don't have to talk about the president or  
even the drinking water in Flint. You are free  
to find a park somewhere & feed the ducks  
with your mother. Talk about the weather and  
how it feels on your face. Welcome home Chelsea  
Manning, you will soon probably be the subject of  
a very cynical Wachowski siblings movie. I don't know  
what is going on but the kids seem alright from this distance.  
Your door will be unlocked tonight if you want it.

*(May 17, 2017)*



# ELIZABETH GROSS

---

## The Raccoon

I know what you want from me, reader—  
you want to see my soft parts in a private show  
those shiny scars, and, lucky you, this is all I ever do  
every floor in every room I've ever entered  
is covered with clothes I've stripped, the corners  
blooming with unmentionables and soon  
enough you can barely hear my voice from  
underneath these socks as the party next door  
shakes through. Yesterday my headlights caught  
a raccoon in the road, its soft animal fear  
hit me like a wet scent, hung all around me  
even though it ran, had time, crossed. I thought:  
some animals enjoy this, and men, watching the clear  
panic of another, being the cause, the one who's free.

# ELIZABETH GROSS

---

All of the rape poems were standing around wishing they'd worn different shoes and really how could anyone know what to wear to this kind of thing? Look, this one is barefoot and confused, has that where-am-I-is-this-the-future-was-I-cryogenically-frozen look in her eye. When she opens her mouth to give her testimony a waterfall rushes out instead and the roar in the courtroom is deafening but I'd be lying if I said none of us imagined her skinny-dipping right there in that stream.

All of the rape poems wore ponytails that day, which gave them that low-maintenance girl-next-door appeal and also made us think of actual running horses, how you can see their muscles working underneath their shine. From here it's just a single trot of the mind to get the women up on horses, of course they're topless, a stunning combination of beauty and strength to watch the impact of each leap rippling through both bodies—if they would only let their hair down we would watch all day.

All of the rape poems have obvious self esteem issues which is why they need so much attention. We tried removing all of the mirrors from the house but they discovered improvisation and now they're aping each other in pairs, twisting their faces sticking out their tongues, eyes wide to fake their surprise—this is how they prove their innocence—it's like a fucking pajama party in here, some television girlhood laid out in garish colors on the plush carpet like no one here once was.

All of the rape poems are advised against showing too much skin when they arrive to be strip-searched by the anonymous crowd but it gets frustrating, you know, when there's too many layers—something always gets torn—it's like a game show for the girls—to prove they're human. Is she human when she's drunk? when sleeping? when lonely? when terrified? See who turns rabbit when a voice is raised, who turns mockingbird who turns snake but struggles to swallow the animal whole.



All of the rape poems got their periods at the same time  
this month—that's how much time they've been spending together—  
so we shipped them out to the desert until they get over it.  
They're probably witches but don't worry we've got drones  
on them the whole time our drones have excellent night vision  
the women read as greenish glow and it's kind of sexy if you  
think about it how the part we can see of them is their actual heat  
lighting up the cold desert night but the best part is no sound.

All of the rape poems are experiencing an overwhelming  
feeling of déjà vu, they're all writing in their dream journals  
and so are we, we are fantastically well rested and watching  
from a safe distance, close enough to feel the same scraps  
of wind whip between our camps, waiting for it to throw  
a tent flap up, quick-dollhouse-scene-flash, but no, the wind  
carries voices between us like a sleepwalker, an emissary who  
forgets the message—could that be laughter from the other side?

# CLARE WELSH

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## Five Murmurs

i.

*Pittsburgh, 1945:*

You must know this city  
is soot, that soot is our name  
for ash and ashes  
are the dead transformed.

My grandmother wipes soot from tabletops  
and unbuttoning her collar, dabs soot  
sweat between her breasts,  
which like children

or war she considers  
a fact of life. Outside  
soot settles like an Instagram filter  
over the snow. Had my grandmother

lived on Instagram,  
she might have lived on it  
after the war. During the war,  
she inventoried needles—

would she have paused to live stream  
the air raid sirens? There were no  
hashtags for dinners rationed  
into stone loaves, the chaste dates

with men whose breath rose  
in knots. In a photograph I see her  
return with gloved hands sliding  
open the train window to inhale  
dirty snow: #NoFilter #412 #ImBackBitch.



**ii.**

*Pittsburgh, 2016:*

*Can you hear your ancestor, her body bacteria, her skin-slipped lip? She sings in the dream where you stab yourself with a rusty fork. She sings in a lung washed up on the beach. A gene already addicted. The word run.*

*Can you hear your ancestor? Her tongue dissolves the word stay like a pill.*

My grandmother was an army nurse. She worked fourteen-hour days in white stockings wet with the dreams of men she saved or didn't

save. How many consumptive lungs like deflated birds must a woman hold before she can dress without fetish?

My grandmother's language died in her lungs, died up into air. They say her language is ugly until you heard it sung.

A man once told me, "I love your voice, but I can't love you."  
My grandmother once told me, "Na ad i'th dafod dorri'th wddf."  
*Let not your tongue cut your throat.*

**iii.**

*Pittsburgh, 1940:*

*A currier hands you a crisp telegram: CONTRACTED TB—*

*Do you:*

a. *Risk visiting the mountain sanitarium or*

b. *Accept and cope.*

*Imagine death like a family dog. Her claws click on tile, follow with four-legged rhythm. This is your world. The room where all the pink and yellow telegrams you stopped reading after "THE SECRETARY OF WAR*

*REGRETS TO INFORM YOU—*” hover before descending to the floor. You accept. You cope. But you don’t heal. Light sits in a dirty bucket by the bed. Come back, you pray with your eyes, hands, your cursive script. Come back, you say with everything but your uncobbled air, a word: The lung’s ruptured scab.

iv.

*Pittsburgh, 2016:*

The snow is my mother’s arms, full  
of tubes and IVs and

cold. In the hospital I read about intergenerational trauma. Shooting herself in the foot, evolution imprints genes with ancestral memory of starvation, addiction. War. It is, perhaps, more advantageous for a species to forget suffering, but not very human. We are nothing without our stories.

Window light outlines my mother, out from Oxy. She is not sleeping but something like sleeping that smells like leaves in the gutter. Bouquets spill from the corners of the room. She was (is) a teacher, was (is) well

loved. A machine chirps as it pushes breath through her lungs.

I should be used to this. The women in my family open themselves, and the doctors press pills in the places where language once lived. The pills become our language. Some of us never remember the sound of our voices.

I remember. *Côf a lithr, llythyrâu a geidw.* I remember mother, grandmother, daughter, self.



v.

*Pittsburgh, 1962:*

My grandmother watches over my mother, twelve years old with Rheumatic fever. Wipes soot from the bed frame. Heals, as in restores, and heels, as in follows the path of flesh fighting itself, the trail of disease.

*Pittsburgh, 2016:*

The dead settle like soot. What survives: A Gaelic folk song or my aunt commenting on my Instagram, her red hair somehow audible. We truly have the most beautiful music. Instinctively at work, waiting for the bus, at parties or alone—I tap my sternum. That body of drum.

# CLARE WELSH

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## In The Low Desert

My secret is I don't know how I got here.

I followed something across an empty parking lot,  
a coyote maybe. Let's make it a coyote, let's make it

me leaving the party with my new personality  
smeared like butter over fur  
and gristle wedged in my gap tooth.  
You gnaw your straw  
like you're embarrassed, I throw my red cup  
to the light pollution, wait for the ding  
of the plastic bell. With the whirl of hair  
tracing a drum, wind tumbles  
trash across the city,

the pavement is younger than I am.

Why did I come here

again I was chasing something  
ancient: flesh, heat, lyric

tossed from a caravan, can you  
help me? Desperation is out of fashion  
but here I am with my sloppy brows

begging. Walking down a boulevard  
of mansions built on mammoth bones  
plied in tar, you reassure yourself:  
*Our species will survive.*  
The difference between us is you  
think we have time.



# SEAN F. MUNRO

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## Glitter Kids

Summer. I tell my brother: eat light  
from the gas station microwave.  
He's five. I'm twelve and can't hear  
when I close my eyes. It's my superpower.  
I steal some Certs from the Tchop Stop.  
His eyes turn to stop lights, his power.  
I put them back. Man said something  
about my glass being half empty,  
but I closed my eyes, wished  
for some rain. Our ceiling fan died,  
and our lights only come on with the sun.  
My brother's eyes tell me he wants  
to stop sweating, but that's too hard.  
I kick a beer bottle like a brown ice cube  
slid down the street's black throat and hear  
winter when the bottle spins under a wheel  
and the shards splash against the curb.  
I find a hose and wrench the knob.  
I go to drink but my brother's eyes,  
red like a coil glows on the stove,  
tell me that water's hot and old.  
We let the water run a minute  
and the hot water turns cool  
as a shadow drenched in rain.

# SEAN F. MUNRO

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## A Young Man's Advice from the Afterlife on the Night of His Murder

*for Devin Espadron Aug. 14, 1997 – Nov. 19, 2019*

You don't need a degree to take a shot.  
I built my business empire fruit drink brand.  
A life needs life to drink this drink I've got.

Old Mr. Greg at We Dat's Chicken bought  
and carried Element. With cash in hand,  
I didn't need a degree to make my shot.

Delgado teachers failed me; that ain't squat.  
I owned my trade and time without "the man."  
A life needs life to drink this drink I've got.

My passion, ethic, drive, and impulse brought  
me Gambit's "40 under 40." Understand,  
we don't need degrees to make the shot.

I'm twenty-two, of course, I smoked some pot.  
Beneath the oaks my mind was jazz, not bland.  
A life needs life to drink this drink I've got.

I met with Danion near the parking lot.  
We dapped and rapped about how we'd withstand.  
Success don't need degrees, yet I was shot.  
A life needs life to drink this drink you've got.



# SEAN F. MUNRO

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## uniform experience

to straighten one cop's pink trigger finger  
point it  
not at more brown skin under a white shirt  
but to his wife's heirloom necklace  
to the two numbers on his child's football jersey  
to the electrode pasted under his grandfather's bedshirt  
one steel finger  
curls like the head of a hammer  
and takes ten fingers to the sky  
the lead flowers; a gun is planted  
nothing will grow here  
a cop is a god of that  
one finger; ten to the sky



Joey Hartmann-Dow



# DAIQUIRI JONES

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## Charismatic Foam: From Quarantine Politics to Charismatic Care

The larger the amount of information, the more difficult the emerging signal. When dealing with large amounts of information or sensitivity, it is common for someone to revert to the familiar. It feels good to make something simple, to make something manageable. By species, by nation, by ethnicity, by city, by class, by family, by favorite musical genre, by favorite bar. In a blend between individualism and mass communication, our social ecosystems have been described as a kind of foam. One and many, reflective and modular. We live in cyclical time, repeating many of the same stories, ending up in the same places. We are also in a cycle of trauma where resolutions are unlikely, our politics elusive. In an age of information overload, we enter the stories of these traumas and not the stories of their healing.

When we talk about the immune system, even doctors use metaphors of war. The body attacks the invading enemy. Early researchers described command centers. Immunity was a police state, needing to distinguish between self and other. In reality, it's far more complicated. Why is it that some cells are able to spread throughout our body; that some agents can specifically read our cells? It is likely those agents that infect us are those closest to us. The self/other division falls apart. Most of the genetic material in our body is nonhuman and beneficial. Infections can simply be rebellions in our biology. Additionally, autoimmune and hypersensitive immune reactions are increasingly a concern. Cancer is not a foreign virus or bacteria, but the unregulated and excessive growth of your body's own cells.

But that is too much information, so we protect the metaphor. It lives in carceral politics. The idea that if you quarantine someone long enough, you maintain a healthy society. Incarceration is an inherited technique that was used against the poor and the disabled as a deterrent in being undesirable. Today, the poor and disabled disproportionately occupy our prisons still. Research again shows us that this quarantine solution ultimately does not work to decrease crime or to create social order. The noise is unsettling.



Our democracy is seen as a war of ideas. Our candidates represent the will of the people. However, the popular vote isn't counted in major elections and the candidates are practically pre-selected. Voting is often suppressed. Huge numbers refuse to vote, which in and of itself is perhaps a vote against voting. The highest positions are then allowed to elect individuals to positions of great power, sometimes for life. Because of this, one is under great pressure to choose the "lesser evil" of the two. To do anything else is to ruin democracy. The sphere of politics and the history of subversion and rebellion is long, but very complicated. The diversity of opinions and interests are huge. Many are content with this simple system.

It is a system that hides behind a mythical contract, an old tool made to reduce the chance of risk. It is made to reduce noise. It is very useful, an origin to our notion of consent. At the same time, it can create a misleading world. It creates a body beyond time, beyond context. It manufactures consent and rarely fulfills its end of the bargain. Like a debt-collector, speaking of the integrity of the system as long as they are not under scrutiny.

It is an asymmetrical form. Artificially inflated prices, backroom deals at conventions, the algorithms for determining everything from credit score to recidivism: these happen outside of the scope of electoral politics, which is already a realm that feels inaccessible. Our search for healing, transparency, and justice become issues of personal management, the jurisdiction of our small networks, and become a kind of new hygiene. To be healthy, to be free, to be politically active. The protocol is relative to each subgroup and to violate is to degrade lines of connection. While shared values are essential to culture building, they leave us underwhelmed when dealing with the world outside of these communities. What's more is that we are dealing with an interconnected world, where each piece happens at an incredible rate, at an incredible scale, with incredible complexity. We feel more isolated as we become more involved.

But there is a mirror to this problem as well. We are as inaccessible to politics just as politics is inaccessible to us. There is so much diversity, so many groups, so much history, so many languages, so many traumas and joys, so many mistakes, so many victories. Far from being reflective material, though, we are a black substance that absorbs all of its light and sends it nowhere. Far from being a coordinated effort, the political strata struggles to make sense of power. It claims



linear, progressive time, but it ends up in the same cycles we do. The state has a preoccupation with military budgets and military solutions as if revisiting old wounds for new answers.

While the state invests in psychological research and new technological means of surveillance and control, we can be more attuned to our feelings, our histories, our bodies. After all, our lives are the site of politics. The world isn't sustained by money, but by the unpaid labor of socializing, nurturing, and understanding each other. It is not the police that ultimately prevent crime. Large pharmaceutical solutions are not where we find healing. Yes, we still must seek relief from the politics of the state, but most of life, most of our dreams are beyond the state. We are allowed to experiment. We can move faster than any bureaucracy. The politics of the household, of friendships, of our wildlife and forestry sustain our world in the most meaningful of ways. We must find a politics of experimental intimacy. To find better ways of relating across beliefs and borders. Connecting our small circles reveals the shared circles uniting us. If we create beautiful politics but our relationships resemble a speech at a small rally to demand national change, then maybe our politics needs to create noise, to be less beautiful, to be of risk. Then maybe we move beyond the cyclical and the linear. We will enter a charismatic time when we come to see ourselves and everything differently, an uncertain time where opportunity is everywhere and new.

# LIAM WOODWORTH—COOK

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## Leviathan

*(For the death of Enlightenment)*

I missed the memo, where to sign  
to be under the body of Christ:  
*We the holy people, shall be governed.*

This contract is an insect,  
a spelling of parasite which we disguise  
in global firms hailing innovation.

Three-hundred years or so too late,  
a witness to democracy asunder  
a bludgeoned sacrament of divinity.

A keepsake in a closet or lockbox,  
under a pillow of all  
our sleep. These kings  
or presidents,  
United Centuries of Big Dick.  
These men glisten in gold  
suits and private streets.

We are on the big screen now! A full time ad,  
morsels collected on the stretching reel. Sell  
me a prayer. Call it anything other than sex.

Thirst me to a prayer. Like the wild  
calls of Pan, I will not see the sight  
that is still over the horizon.  
Those morals of misfits  
romping to the laughter of election circus  
as it's strangled in a loop. Stripping



fields, having stripped mountains, wasting  
factories, strip that Iron Lady! It was the thought  
that counts. That's the tune played over whiskey  
in the parlor and mansion. In the House frightfully  
white.

Leviathan's bestial eye collects unsaid offerings.  
These gifts shake rotting hands, rub oil crowns,  
build a better fence and greater tower while  
we the people swim in our sweat.

Like a bullhorn in the fog I am at the traffic  
stop better understanding intersections:  
These particular green lights. A simplification  
of history's mathematics. How much is one grass  
times three grass? Who's grass is this grass? What is  
the lawn if prescribed by law?

We are in the pantheon of muchness. Ka-ching!  
Given bleeding ballots to renew this contract  
as if we read the terms and conditions.  
As if now we knew how to get past them.  
I did not want this apple pie.  
Watch what I do with the fork.

# LIAM WOODWORTH—COOK

---

## Because The Crossroads Always Have Oil And Water

Strawberries and cream out of season  
as if we are to enjoy our pleasures freely.

A truck is not a boat or a plane yet gas  
is gas—a venom in movement. I am faced

with the high strides of dignity,  
that my simple dessert can come

with contemplation of God and the rubber  
taste of slaved expediency.

Could Johnson still have met the devil  
in the 21st century? Where now the traffic lights  
breeze the semis on their journey.

What enticement is the devil's hand  
in giving music for the exchange of souls—

The god in my nighttime treat is not the caped counter  
to the devil I describe, but a questioning of myself.

My mythos hasn't been kind to God nor my guilt  
of participatory serving in the pillaging plot,  
served my healing.

It must be the season why,  
I remember when fruit grows.

Length of continent, of rough gloved  
hand, of replacing Sun and Moon.



It's as if suddenly I had grown in fear  
of a being whose name my parents never spoke.

Attracted to something cold, and sweet.

# DYLAN KRIEGER

---

## from PREDATORS WELCOME

everywhere we go there is a whisper of a widowing

a soon-to-be-neutered new order no one else wonders about

touch your leech to mine so tenderly under this canopy of trees

take nothing too seriously to wet and wrap around the sores on your  
hind feet

i igloo into your orbit in your sleep so you can't tell me *melt*

i wrap my legs around your hellscape and ricochet like dope about  
the brain

all wars look weird, no matter where you're sitting half-soaked in  
the stadium

even the words for weapons sound antiquated, like we're not  
supposed to

aquarium here anymore but the ocean's no longer an option either

the question is always just how uncomfortable you're going to ask me  
to get for you

a very white shirt on a very red deathbed is how i want america  
to end

the way i feel about the fall of empire now is like a graduation song  
playing at an execution

so proud to see you reach your full potential by bending down  
beneath a reaping scythe



forgetting your own national anthem, stuffing an eagle with  
runoff chemicals

and calling it the dinner of millions— a country is a strange thing to  
rage at

so vague in its internal organs but steel-girt about the borders

flyover fossils forever documenting which ribs stick out prettiest

and there we are among them, spotted from a fighter missile

where the more closely we listen, the more the distance, limb  
from limit

# DYLAN KRIEGER

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## from PREDATORS WELCOME

spirits of long lost enablers past

this easter season i'm thankful for my psychosis

a statue of a sad stripper to compare myself against until i'm dead

the sky was so blank today i mistook it for blindness

but a gold-lipped new-money monstrosity said *no dice*

the mathematical principle of cockroach recurrence at work

i don't understand what straight men are waiting for

romantic love is vestigial; the future would be lucky to lose it

upgrade the system to combat boots & acrylics

tiniest touches of evil at the edges of our bodies

of water, rom com starring our ashes mid-cauldron

police every piece of debris into something you're proud of

the poor only make money by not knowing any better

no matter what anyone tells you, both sex and pizza can actually be bad

when you start self-identifying as vanilla, are you even an  
animal anymore?

these are a few of the silly scavenger clues i want to fit together but can't

we're here we're queer we're plotting the end times for the sake of itself



tally up your whole flower of contusion like, *he loves me trampled, he  
loves me trashed*

*he loves me at the bottom of the river, with missing fangs and all the flags  
half mast*

# DYLAN KRIEGER

---

## from PREDATORS WELCOME

this new year i'm trying that zero waste lifestyle where i swallow all  
the trash

on rare occasion i don't go to bed hungry, i gun you down in  
every dream

i'm sure you, too, are a toxic seabed of trauma and insecurity, but  
that's what makes it sexy

boyish smirk at the chokehold gasp, breathing the dust of  
crushed diamonds

like the rich don't matter— when you brag about your recent poker  
winnings, i say i'd rather

burn money than gamble— if you're willing to risk financial ruin,  
might as well for revolution

exchanging credit scores on a first date might be even worse than  
winding up an ax murderer

the patch of fur on the back of your hand marks you wolf  
immediately, and what big crypts you have

come fall asleep deep in the downy fresh snow in my throat until the  
pack howls home

how many strangers' faces have i kissed inch by inch as if rewiring  
a landmine?

how many lullabies have i invested in the hushing of bedfellows  
long dead?

i put up a sign like ALL PREDATORS WELCOME



pry open the attic windows left unnailed for this particular reason

utterly reckless with who i belong to, one sunrise to the next

you could be anyone and yet, the crystal coffin of your drool-stare  
down the wreckage

looks comfortable enough to climb into, liquid beginnings of life as  
we know it

fuck off— i'm trying not to get sentimental for once about the dried-  
up erstwhile

pill bug crushed into the office carpet and preserved there under  
plastic until spring

we try to crack the prehistoric at the thorax, but we forget

all the worst things have wings

# J SPAGNOLO

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## to heal is to understand power

and i understand  
    the rock thrown  
    underbreath  
    *slur*  
        and gravel

how i low on concrete  
was taken from my mother's arms  
and suckled, sucked of color, survived

how the past never really passed  
and the present wasn't born,  
but miscarried

and i understand

the rhythm of my heart beat  
    here under yelamu's  
    stars

the power of hush  
    which reminds a baby of mama's  
blood, the heart, digestion  
    air to unborn, because hush,  
the night still has something to say

and i still  
i can't stop my own glittering



# J SPAGNOLO

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## Whose Voice Is That

whose night is police light  
whose prison is community center

whose languages are studied  
whose cultures are angli-cised

who's lined up at the line-up  
whose dance is culture

who's hoping for exile  
whose refugees know refuge

whose roads connect to this one  
whose dead are burying the dead

who's so tall they don't need a stage  
whose voice is that

whose name is carved  
whose masonry is left for the dead

whose doctor believes them  
who's shaking right now

who's speaking for you  
who's no longer here

whose state is outside  
who's voting for us

whose ghosts make history  
who's doing the haunting

# J SPAGNOLO

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## Decree

The announcement of what  
joy is going to be like  
came from government  
officials today.

Note not everyone  
was able to listen.



# BENJAMIN ALESHIRE

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## Ars Moriendi

—for *Elon Musk*

My fellow members  
of the board:  
In the parable  
you see here,  
if the global South  
is Jesus  
& the technofascists  
are Judas  
& the Democratic Party  
is a weepy Peter,  
& the first train  
leaves the first station  
in 1807,  
traveling at the speed  
of an ecosystem  
in free-fall—  
then how many apples  
must we grow  
to escape this Eden  
slipping beneath the sea?

*(Mars exulti, amen)*

# BENJAMIN ALESHIRE

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## Meteor

They say, *meteoric rise*

but it reads as an insult:  
stone ships sail through millennia alone  
only to descend in flames  
as they finally enter the garden.

This brutal act is so moving  
to the human heart, it makes  
lovers fall upon each other like armies  
or cannibals.

I dream—

of meteors rushing backwards through history,  
a fiery baptism rewarding them  
with an eternity so clean,  
the only politics  
is gravity.



# BENJAMIN ALESHIRE

## Contemporary Poem

Your cartography of desire, *etching itself across the sky's purpling bruise*  
or whatever—  
My flock of griefs, *what pulses in the space between us* etc.

Our panopticon of melancholies, witnessing each other witness each other  
Our semiotic weapons-ban, words like *blithe* like *glyph* like *amethyst* etc  
Our anthology of astonishment, verbing itself into being—

*Now something different, something unsayable without an italicized remaking  
of the landscape:*

The sound of your hymn breaking  
The sound of a neo-liberal elegy announcing itself to the dawn's crepuscule  
or whatever  
The sound of a Wikipedia entry being edited to death by balding  
corporate lawyers  
The sound of *the body* becoming cliché in poems five years ago but none of  
us can stop

In the porno we make, your cumming is a fermata you hold.

When the government comes, I'm gonna run.

Let the reader write their own meaning into the poem.

(In the end-times, all poems will become eulogies)

# JAKOB HOFMANN

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## Adjacent Activities

My brother and I had a favourite childhood game, developed on lengthy car rides. We'd each think of a country, reveal, and then decide what their citizens would find in common if trapped in an elevator.

He said Chile and I said France? Having a red, white, and blue flag. Exporting wine. Anything was admissible, the more arcane the better. A rice-heavy diet, separatist movements, a liquor with protected origin status. Switzerland and Lesotho probably don't have merchant navies, we reflected. Cubans and Iranians know what an embargo feels like. Hundreds of car rides meant thousands of miles and dozens of countries.

When I moved from Scotland to Canada in 2013, I felt like I'd been dealt an easy hand at the car game. They are frozen and oily. They are less preoccupied with hawkish foreign policy than their obnoxious downstairs neighbours. Rather than the jingoism of a faded empire, Scotland and Canada embody an inclusive patriotism. I like to think that this is what might come up in the elevator. After that, they might discuss Banff, Calgary or other towns they both have. 'We have a Perth in Lanark, Ontario!' the Canadian might exclaim. 'Our Perth is in Perthshire. Our Lanark is in Lanarkshire' would come the dour response.

Canadian identity is about not being English, not being French, and above all, not being American. It is defined negatively. To be Scottish is often to be not English. This leaves a strange space for writers and artists to occupy. A Canadian who makes a name for themselves will live in the shadow of a compatriot loosely in their lane, with whom they probably have nothing in common. Or they achieve global recognition and the world calls them American. Tony Blair, Gerard Butler, or Calvin Harris will tell you Scottish is not a distinction which travels well. A great Canadian female author must brace herself for the inevitable Margaret Atwood comparison.

You're either restricted to the yardstick of your countrymen or you're subsumed into the country below. Of course you can cheat—Irvine Welsh writes books which can only be read in a Scottish accent. Joni Mitchell warbles about Canada. In the last few years, as the



elevator pair would surely discuss, two long-running champions of literary nationalism have died. Both pushed for self-determination, Alasdair Gray on behalf of his beloved Scotland, and Leonard Cohen for Montreal—and more abstractly, for Canada from the USA. As the West slipped further right, grew suspicious of immigration, lost its tolerant streak, and succumbed to a grubby rhetoric of exclusion, two quiet ambassadors for a very different brand of nationalism died.

Cohen and Gray were two sides of a commonwealth coin. Neither of them is thought of primarily as novelists—Gray was foremost a painter and Leonard Cohen's music has since eclipsed *Beautiful Losers*, the novel he wrote by starving himself and taking amphetamines on a Greek island. Gray minored in novel-writing, you could say. Cohen's books were a side hustle.

Alasdair Gray configured Scotland as a brutalised woman, time and again, subject to the whims and perversions of a brutish, colonising England. In *1982*, *Janine* and *Something Leather* he endlessly re-deploys the image of the rapacious English imperial administrator. Christopher Gittings points out that both Alasdair Gray and Leonard Cohen 'represent their respective countries' relations with Empire as pornographic violations of the female body.' The sexual violence is front and centre—*1982*, *Janine* is about pornography and *Something Leather* is about sadomasochism. The dominatrix is an aristocratic Englishwoman, naturally.

In experimental novels which 'allegorize the female body as colonized territory', the Scottish painter and the French-Canadian folk legend eagerly incorporated experimental techniques, illustrations, folklore and symbolism.

*Beautiful Losers* is vaguely constructed around a love triangle between a Canadian academic, his First Nations wife and a cryptic semi-terrorist and MP known only as F. The grisly fate of real-life seventeenth century Algonquin-Mohawk saint Catherine Tekakwitha is intertwined. Several characters are borderline nameless, and events are often opaque. There's a lot of Nietzsche and a lot of redface.

To call Cohen and Gray contemporaries is to understate. There were only 1,215 days when one was alive and the other wasn't. Impressive when both were born in the 1930s, and Alasdair Gray only missed out on seeing the 2020s by three days. As polymathic dabblers, as staunch-but-subtle nationalists, their similarities were so uncanny that they surely met—introduced by Nick Cave, perhaps, at



a Canongate party.

The dignified nationalism will likely not be replaced. Montreal and Scotland push for political autonomy and economic emancipation, but the campaigns are marred by cheap politics, oleaginous sovereign wealth and distracting colourfulness. Trudeau Sr was cuckolded by Mick Jagger, and possibly Fidel Castro. Bouchard lost a leg. Alec Salmond crowdfunded the legal costs for his #metoo defence and hit six figures in three days. The time when the nationalist agenda was left-wing, and furthered by challenging, contemplative novels seems like a distant epoch.

Gray's socialism was beginning to look passé. He was less Green New Deal, more portraits of hard-faced union leaders and hard-left councillors. Escheresque workers' tenements, blocky and lead-coloured, snaked around his paintings of Victorian Glasgow neighbourhoods. It was difficult to see the future in something so nostalgic.

As the dismal populism set in, Alexander Linklater rejected the Scotland Gray saw, 'an independent nation in the sepia image of his own childhood, set in a retro-futuristic landscape'. He scoffed at Gray's 'Fabian-socialist Scotland, like an improbably benign Switzerland, but without the banks.' Yes to the welfare state, no to the BBC, NATO and nuclear weapons—any weapons in fact. Cherry-picked institutions, doubly fitting for a man who re-wrote Frankenstein.

Cohen achieved an agelessness by remaining lofty and unspecific. 'The frontiers are my prison' he declares, all lordly husk, in *The Partisan*. Which frontiers isn't important. 'Everybody knows the boat is leaking/ everybody knows the captain lied' is a placard sentiment which works at any protest.

They're both dead now. Leonard Cohen was quietly returned to Canada and buried hastily per Jewish protocol. Alasdair Gray married his great loves—public spiritedness, education, ghoulishness—by donating his body to medical science. That their thoughtful ideologies will outlive them is neither desperate nor coincidental. Their work lives in public. Gray's murals adorn the pubs and even subway station of his beloved Hillhead neighbourhood in Glasgow—you don't get more public than public transport. Cohen was never possessive of his songs. *Hallelujah* took him five years to write, winnowed down from 80 original verses, and still he was happy for it to pass through genres and musicians like tumbleweed. 300 covers have been downloaded five



million times. The closest to jealousy he has ever come was reflecting with characteristic measure, 'I think it's a good song. But too many people sing it'. Civic commissions, free permanent collections and public domain ballads are sensible time capsules for ideas we aren't quite finished with.

# SKYE JACKSON

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## i remember

do you hear that?

it's the sound of a white girl  
on a blue bike riding up st. claude  
on her way down to st. bernard.

it's the sound of a european wax center  
being built on freret street.  
it's the sound of the last coffee &  
being torn down and a starbucks  
going up in its place.

it's the sound of my mama's voice  
as she taps on the window glass  
when we drive down franklin and burgundy.  
she points to a row of candy colored houses  
and says:  
i remember  
when only black people  
lived over here.

it's the sound of my best friend saying:  
i remember when you used to be able  
to buy a starter house in gentilly.

or my boyfriend being illegally evicted  
because apparently airbnb needs more  
room for tourists in this  
small goddamn city.

it's the sound of my friend  
who grew up in mid-city buying  
a house all the way out in kenner



because he and his wife  
can't afford to live in this city.

i close my eyes  
and when i open them  
lorraine hansberry stands before me  
glowing brown like the virgin mary

in one palm she holds a raisin  
and in the other, revolves a sun.

she whispers to me:  
i remember when they wouldn't let us in  
and now they're pushing us out

and in my mind –  
a chilling realization:  
gentrification is just  
another word  
for revenge.

so people let's call it what it is:  
allow the snake squeezing us dead  
to shed its skin.

get ray nagin on the prison phone  
let him know that this chocolate city  
has officially melted

# SKYE JACKSON

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## until the world ends

one night in bed  
i asked him:  
can we hang out  
til the world ends?

he shook his head  
and his smartphone too  
said baby i'm sorry  
but it already has

so let's write poems  
let's get rich  
let's stockpile guns  
and cans of beans  
in the basement  
let's buy a big house  
& a boat for when  
the waters rise

i sigh  
& think of the dog  
that won't greet us  
at the door  
or the baby that won't cry  
or rouse us from bed  
at four

i think of the god  
my mama told me about  
plans she said  
he'd written for us  
in the stars



i think of yeats as  
i look at my man  
all of us so small  
just pawns  
in someone else's hands

i wonder  
when the stars fall down  
and the seas dry out  
when we become maggots  
and the maggots become us  
will we even recognize  
each other when  
the only thing  
we have left  
of this  
world  
is  
us?

# JACK NORCROSS

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## Three Promises To Fish

### I.

I have not always done well, but for you,  
this little thing made wet and breathing,

I have let fall the waters which cover  
the earth. For you, the snow melts,

kelp thrives in the shallow seas, and even rain  
dropped on the highest peak will spend its life,

forever trying to find you. This is my first promise:  
what is wet is yours; the rest is nothing.

What is wet will follow in front of you, will cradle you,  
deliver you to calm waters—to me;

and the rest is nothing.

### II.

Know this, maybe only one of you will have a thought. This will be called  
the Fall. You will learn to walk. Some of you will rise to your feet to  
conjure time between self-directed steps, straying so far from me

I will not recognize them. Men will punish as if they were me.  
Their nets will capture whole schools of you and call them  
fisheries. Here, then, another

promise: I will not forgive them.

Though you come to me pleading, I cannot. He was right  
the time he said they did not know



what they were doing. It is not their fault  
to have thought of sin and learned to do it well. For them,  
they cannot help themselves but to think and fight wars for their own  
sake.

But I will not wear legs, and you will not  
imagine yourself a thing  
imperfect. This is how we will be beside each other.

### III.

For every day, I have my treasure. He lives in a deep eddy  
near where the Blue Nile drinks from the banks of Lake Victoria.

He is eight pounds and perch and has rested  
there for the better part of three thousand years. At last,

another promise: Here is where I will rest with my friend,  
like two spoonfuls of cold mud settling. For those crickets

which sometimes sink to the bottom, skeletons  
full of water and stiff, we will wait in near silence, sharing

the whispered and full laughs of centuries  
hiding. And

when you have gasped your final dry breath, laid out  
on the steel deck of a fish boat, burning

in their unbaptized sun, do not call me false  
for them. I have not sinned.

I just wanted to see you—  
wild, with gills.

They were only the scraps.

# ISABELLE GUZMAN

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## Vigil

It was dusk when I finally reached the gravel road that led down to the cabin. Fireflies were beginning their bioluminescent mating rituals in hemlocks surrounding the property. A choir of cicadas hummed, and the distant call of a whippoorwill echoed through the encroaching darkness. This was the soundtrack I'd been missing in the city—that of a southern Appalachian summer. I plucked a few squash from the vine and ducked to avoid breaking a beautiful web draped across the porch, almost stumbling over two cats who were winding themselves around my ankles.

I cooked while listening to a speech on the radio promising a wall on the southern border of the country, ethnic profiling, healthcare repeal, and improved nuclear arms. Cheers erupted after every statement, and it was the sound of the crowd that chilled me, shattering any illusion of safety I'd been hoping to feel out there.

When the owner of the cabin called to check on things, I asked about the neighbors. I didn't want to make any assumptions, but I'd noticed a faded Confederate flag hanging in the window and another tied to a tree branch in the front yard. Old cars and appliances littered the lawn and sullied yard-art cluttered a grimy, neglected porch.

Granted, none of this was new to me. I'd grown up in the south and spent the first half of my life in and around rural landscapes just like this one. We called them rebel flags as kids, and they were as much a part of the landscape as red clay, pine trees, and wooden shacks on the side of the road selling boiled peanuts.

After some hesitation the owner confided that there was one winter when the neighbors built a snowman and dressed it in a white hood. One branch held a noose, the other held a rebel flag. She asked them to remove the hood and noose, and they did.

“Otherwise there's been no trouble. I wouldn't give it any more thought, they're just country people.”

But thinking was all I could do out there, completely isolated except for my two companions who spent most of their time napping on the kitchen table or outside hunting for baby rabbits and field mice. It was a comfort to have them close at night, their



warm, purring bodies pressed into me while I read. Every so often the younger cat would startle at an unfamiliar sound, and then with paws outstretched, he would yawn before shifting positions.

One morning I walked into a neighboring field where an abundance of Queen Anne's Lace grew along a barbed wire fence. The locals called it *wild carrot*, but it seemed much more elegant than the name suggested—a cluster of delicate white flowers with one singular dot of purple in the center. Apparently the flower inherited its name from Queen Anne of England who pricked her finger while sewing lace. As I bent down for a closer look, I noticed a boy standing at the top of the hill. He was watching me.

I waved and stood there awkwardly, waiting for a response. He appeared harmless enough with shoulders slumped forward and arms dangling at each side. There was a dog at his side—a catahoula with pale eyes and a tail wagging with what I hoped was friendliness. I smiled, but he turned and disappeared, leaving me with the hairs on the back of my neck standing up.

On my walk home I wondered if he would tell his brothers about seeing a dark-skinned woman up the road.

Dinner was arugula, chickweed, spinach, broccoli leaves, and pea shoots from the garden. I sat on the porch munching and gazing at the woods surrounding the property. The air grew chilly. I pulled on a few extra layers and stepped out to gather logs for the wood stove. When I walked in one of the cats was sprawled out on the table with his head resting on my laptop. The only sound in the room was his belabored snore and the ticking of an old clock. In New Orleans there was always some noise to remind you that you weren't alone, that someone was in close reach.

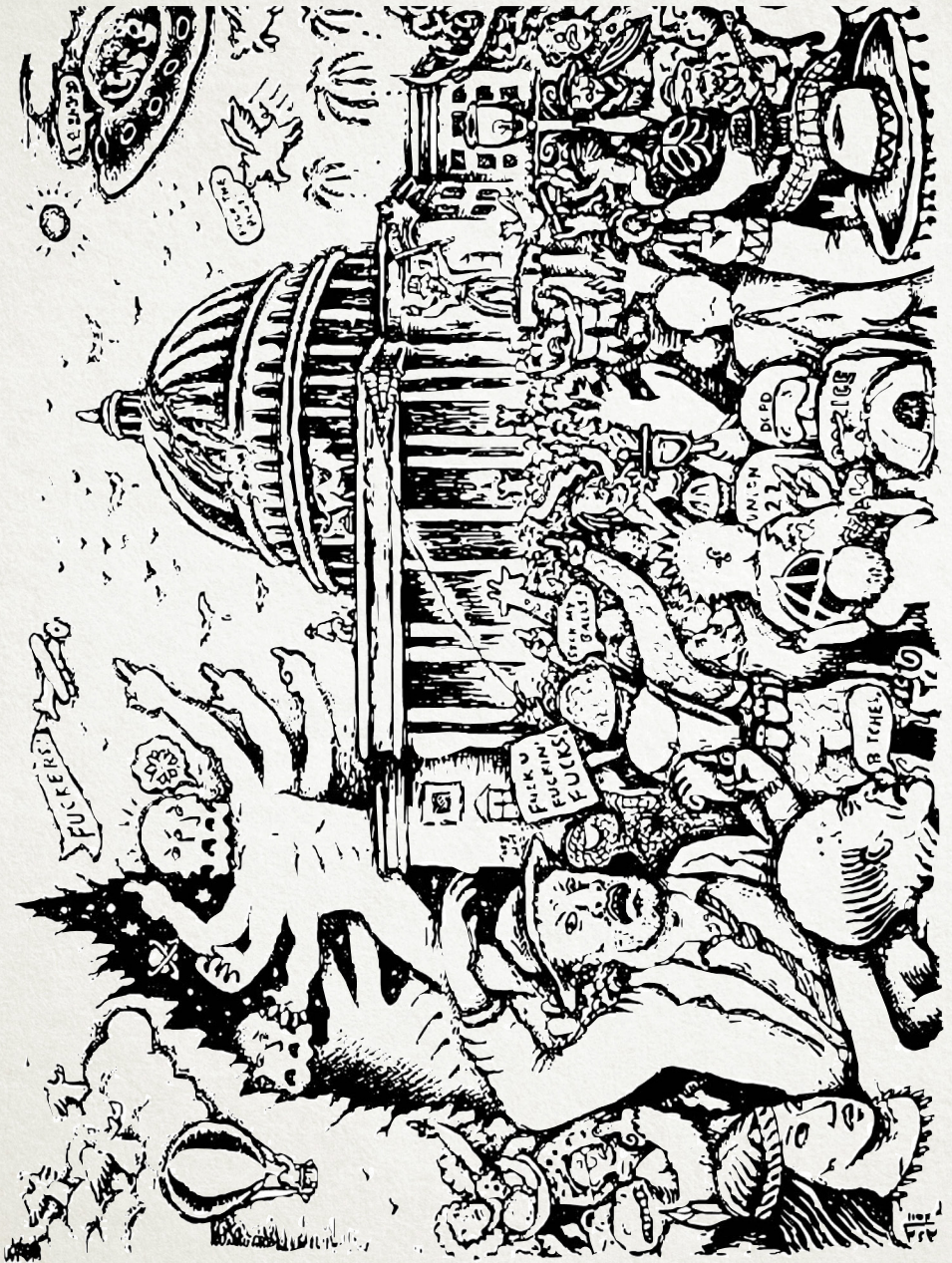
But night time noise here was so different—a rustling in the trees, an owl hooting from somewhere unseen, and every now and then the unnerving sound of gravel crunching underneath a slow moving truck.

Before my arrival, hundreds of people had gathered in Baton Rouge to protest the shootings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castille. Many were pepper sprayed and arrested, reporting stories of unwarranted police brutality despite an otherwise peaceful gathering. At the vigil in New Orleans where I'd been, snipers watched from rooftops while pointing automatic weapons at the large crowd. The notion that I might be gunned down over a knee-jerk reaction had

wedged itself inside of me that day, destroying any illusion of being safe in a body. Even out here, in a secluded cabin where I had hoped to find respite, there were people nearby whose presence robbed me of peace.

And then I saw them, like stars, blinking in the treetops before cascading to the ground. Their tiny illuminated bodies fell to the ground and floated into the garden, leaving streaks of light like a comet's tail. I took it as a signal of hope; of God's perfect timing. And as the spider began spinning her web, I walked inside, this time leaving the doors and windows open to feel the cool mountain air I'd so missed.







# GENNAROSE NETHERCOTT

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## Christina's World

*after Andrew Wyeth*

A farmhouse at the hill crest, a sloping barn further off, and Christina collapsed in the low wheat. Pink dress. A wisp of dark hair escaping

to speak to the wind. Left hand hovering like a haint, her back to us, facing home. Christina, she was born with a caul, veil of skin

draped over the face, as if wedded to the flesh. It lets her see the dead and the living, the way they used to be. She can see herself in the farmhouse

windows, up the hill, opening and closing the blinds. She can see her brother, staring unblinking at his bedroom wall, shrapnel like lightning bugs glinting

inside his dud knee. What she cannot see is what lies outside the meadow. Nothing lies outside the meadow. Nothing.

Within this field: Tractor marks gouged into the earth. The crop circle her body will leave when she rises. The ewe giving birth in the barn,

the stink of blood. My god, let us fall to our knees in the straw. When our own worlds tighten, when there is only the wheat

sharpening as it grows like a blade on a strop, may we be brave enough to turn our faces towards home. May it be enough.



# GENNAROSE NETHERCOTT

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## Bastulon

*(a creature excerpted from 50 Beasts to Break Your Heart)*

First, they believed their hair was a blessing.

Furless and too skeletal to survive winter, the Bastulons begged the old spirits for warmth. When they grew mute from pleading and their hands had warped from clasping too tightly against the cold, they noticed the first strands prickle up from their scalps. Soon, crimson locks galloped in ringlets all the way down to their ankles. It never tangled nor dirtied. It refracted light, shining like lava against the snow. The Bastulons wove it around themselves and were grateful.

In spring, poachers came. Then, young men with spidery hands. Then photographers. Everyone wanted to touch the hair, or braid it into elaborate ropes, or cut it off to sell to shampoo companies. The poachers didn't care if the Bastulons survived the hunt, as long as they came away with hair to sell. The spider-handed men didn't care if the Bastulons ran from them, as long as they ran slow enough to be caught and stroked. The photographers didn't care about the Bastulons at all—only the brilliant shade of scarlet bulletting by their lenses as the Bastulons fled. After a year, the torment became too much to carry. On the first freezing night of winter, the Bastulons passed a pair of dressmakers' shears between them. They abandoned their curls by the roadside. Then, hand in hand, they walked naked towards the frost.

# GENNAROSE NETHERCOTT

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## Finlir

*(a creature excerpted from 50 Beasts to Break Your Heart)*

Finlirs are lanky creatures with arms so long they must keep their elbows folded so that their hands do not scrape the ground. Their knees, too, are ever-bent and their shoulders hunched, for Finlirs often feel too unwieldy for this world. They are shy, afraid of taking up space. If you have ever done something you regret, you already know all about them. You have endured a Finlir following you, lapping at your guilt as if it were honey. You know well the laments you felt shake from your lungs as you remembered your mistake, and the hum of satisfaction from the Finlir as it drank.

Most people believe that Finlirs feed on the guilt, itself. This is not true. They are not as malevolent as they seem. On the contrary, they are nourished by the small acts of forgiveness we grant ourselves, in time; each sigh of kindness we accept. Do not begrudge Finlirs their feast. If we do not forgive ourselves for our indiscretions, the Finlirs will die.



# JULIEN BLUNDELL

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## End Song

Maybe we belonged here once.  
But we were broken by ambition.

I keep my quiet log of the garden,  
listen to the mist rise from the soil  
and ask forgiveness from my failures.

What lies in the memory of a species?  
Resting in the dirt, I watch the birds flock  
like a dog. The sky guards into darkness

the way a mouth closes. I would have preferred  
a carrot to the stick. Just to sit  
and eat, pass a thought around my finger.

But I go about anyone's work  
with skill and mild pleasure.  
These days, I am hardly an encounter.

\*

I could never create the song for beauty.  
I refused the care it took to mend  
flesh, always wanting wings.

Then this wild song is a lilac.  
Year-round its woody stems  
store the silent power your dreams bring

and tuck them into that brief  
week in spring, which is your life.

## Contributors' Notes

**BRAD RICHARD** published four collections of poetry, most recently *Parasite Kingdom*, winner of the 2018 Tenth Gate Prize (The Word Works, 2019). His poems and reviews have appeared widely in literary journals. A teacher of creative writing for twenty-eight years, he has also been the recipient of the 2002 Poets & Writers, Inc., Writers Exchange Award for Poetry (selected by Reginald Shepherd) and the 2015 Louisiana Artist of the Year Award. Now retired from full-time teaching, he is writing and occasionally teaching and editing. More at [bradrichard.org](http://bradrichard.org).

**KAILE H. GLICK** is an aspiring librarian, infamous woman of letters, and all-around stand-up guy. By night, they are also the proprietor of The Spontaneous Prose Store.

**ELIZABETH GROSS** is a poet/translator/teacher/artist in New Orleans. *this body/that lightning show*, her first poetry collection, was selected by Jericho Brown for the Hilary Tham Capital Collection of The Word Works, and came out in 2019. *DEAR ESCAPE ARTIST*, a chapbook in collaboration with artist Sara White, came out from Antenna in 2016. She co-translated and produced a new adaptation of Euripides' *Bakkhai* at the Marigny Opera House in 2015. Her poems have appeared in the *Fairy Tale Review*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, the *New Orleans Review*, and many other journals. She teaches interdisciplinary humanities for the Honors Program at Tulane University and co-organizes The Waves Reading Series, showcasing LGBTQIA+ writers.

**CLARE WELSH** is a poet based in Pittsburgh. Her recent poems can be found in *The Massachusetts Review*, *Salt Hill*, and *Infection House*. Currently, she is working on a book about wild dogs.

**SEAN F. MUNRO** is an Assistant Professor in New Orleans, who teaches creative writing, lit, and comp. He co-curates Open Floor, a reading series in the French Quarter, and co-directs the Scholastic Arts & Writing Awards for Southeast Louisiana. Recently, he was a runner-up for the Tennessee Williams Poetry Prize and one of his collaborative poems was nominated for Best of the Net. He received an MFA from University of Arizona and is calibrating his first book of poems.



**JOEY HARTMANN-DOW** works under the name Us & We Art. She draws from feelings about the planet and its creatures, and tries to make connections between them with her work. Joey is based in New Orleans, LA. [usandweart.com](http://usandweart.com)

**DAIQUIRI JONES** is a local creature of New Orleans, by way of New Orleans, who attended NOCCA for creative writing and later studied Anthropology and Gender Studies at the University of South Florida before dropping out to pursue love and revolution. Disenchanted, they now create storytelling performances and small plays for local festivals, venues, and online releases. They are eager to collaborate and dance with you (yes, you) in between studying critical theory and amateur fermentation.

**LIAM WOODWORTH-COOK** is a twenty-five year old poet currently residing in South Portland. After several years as an autodidact romping around the country, Liam settled in the Portland area to attend Community College. Graduating in the spring of 2020 with the high honor of Student of the Year, Liam will pursue a Bachelors program for English at a four-year institution. He is an avid student of history and social sciences, subjects that frequently show up in his poetry. His first chapbook was published by Tilted House in 2018.

**DYLAN KRIEGER** is writing the apocalypse in real time in south Louisiana. She earned her BA in English and philosophy from the University of Notre Dame and her MFA in creative writing from LSU. Her first book, *Giving Godhead* (Delete, 2017), was dubbed “the best collection of poetry to appear in English in 2017” by the New York Times Book Review. She is also the author of *Dreamland Trash* (Saint Julian, 2018), *No Ledge Left to Love* (Ping Pong, 2018), *The Mother Wart* (Vegetarian Alcoholic, 2019), *Metamortuary* (Nine Mile, 2020), and *Soft-Focus Slaughterhouse* (11:11, forthcoming). Find her at [dylankrieger.com](http://dylankrieger.com).

**J SPAGNOLO** (they/them) is a poet and creative leader based out of California. Their poetic work has been celebrated through radio shows, film festivals, and publications. They are currently acting as the Strategic Director of Poets Reading the News, a widely respected literary nonprofit they co-founded. In that role, they have taught



poetry workshops and readings, published celebrated poets, and pushed the organization toward long-term sustainability. They are currently a fellow with Emergent Arts Professionals.

**BENJAMIN ALESHIRE** lives in midcity. His work has appeared in *The Times UK*, *Iowa Review*, *Boston Review*, and the Poetry Foundation's blog, *Harriet*. In 2019, Ben received a James Merrill fellowship to the Vermont Studio Center, and the Words & Music Festival prize in nonfiction. An excerpt of his novel-in-progress, *POET FOR HIRE*, was published at *Lit Hub*. Ben serves as a contributing editor for the *Green Mountains Review*. You can find him at [poetforhire.org](http://poetforhire.org), and on Instagram at [@benjamin\\_aleshire](https://www.instagram.com/benjamin_aleshire).

**JAKOB HOFMANN** lives in New Orleans. His work has appeared in the *TLS*.

**SKYE JACKSON** was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana. She holds an English degree from LSU and a JD from Mississippi College School of Law. She is currently an MFA candidate in poetry at the University of New Orleans Creative Writing Workshop where she serves as an Associate Poetry Editor of *Bayou Magazine*. Her work has appeared in the *Delta Literary Journal* and *Thought Catalog*. She was recently a featured author in *Rigorous*: a journal for people of color and has work forthcoming from the *Xavier Review*. Her prize-winning chapbook, *A Faster Grave*, was published in May 2019 by Antenna Press. An interview about the collection is forthcoming in the *New Delta Review*. In 2019, she was awarded the Vassar Miller Poetry Prize. She is currently an instructor at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, where she teaches poetry to young artists.

**JACK NORCROSS** is from Illinois and hadn't planned on his first published piece to breathe fire from a Christian theological framework in the politics issue of a young literary journal. Timid in the face of uncertainty, Jack fears backlash from readers who like people more than fish.

**ISABELLE GUZMAN** lives in a basement in Bayou Saint John, New Orleans. When she's not writing, she can be found reading tarot cards, making potions, talking to crows, baking pie, or dancing somewhere along the Mississippi river.



**ASA JONES** is currently an Earth human, with the first record of his existence being 35 years ago in Brooklyn, NY. For the last decade he is typically found in the city of New Orleans, where he teaches elementary school students visual art and beginner's sorcery. At the time of this publication's release, he is quarantined with his canine companions and his partner in Moab, Utah.

**GENNAROSE NETHERCOTT** is the author of *The Lumberjack's Dove* (Ecco/HarperCollins) selected by Louise Glück as a winner of the National Poetry Series, and *Lianna Fled the Cranberry Bog: A Story in Cootie Catchers* (Ninepin Press). A born Vermonter, she tours nationally and internationally performing from her folkloric works and composing poems-to-order on a manual typewriter as a founding member of The Traveling Poetry Emporium.

**JULIEN BLUNDELL** lives in Lyons, Colorado, where he gathers antlers and prickly pears from the hillside, walks his dog the mile to the mailbox and back, and listens to the prairie dogs to pray for rain.

# Submission Guidelines

**Tilted House Review** publishes fresh and pickled writers alike. Whether you are new to the pen or a veteran, we want to read your work. **Everyone is welcome to submit.** But we strongly encourage writing from marginalized communities. That means, but is not limited to, people of color, the LGBTQIA+ community, those with disabilities, children, teenagers, the elderly, and those outside of academia or compulsory education. We love works that are both traditional and experimental.

## READING PERIODS

Please only submit during these periods.

**January 1st - March 15th**

**July 1st - September 15th**

Simultaneous submissions are accepted, but please notify us as soon as your work is accepted elsewhere. No previously published work, please.

Submit all work in a single .doc file to **tiltedhousepublishing at gmail dot com**. Include a cover letter with your name and a brief bio. In the subject line, enter your name followed by the genre in which you are submitting. i.e., *Robin Hood - Poetry*

**POETRY:** Submit up to 4 poems (any length).

**ESSAY:** Submit up to 2 essays at 1,000 words or less (combined).

**FICTION:** Submit up to 2 short stories at 1,000 words or less (combined). THR also considers excerpts from longer works.

**FLASH FICTION:** Submit up to 3 pieces at 800 words or less (combined).

**PLAYS:** Submit one short play, or an excerpt from a longer play.

Up to 1,000 words. Standard format.

**VISUAL ART:** Submit up to 4 pieces, black & white only. The page specs are around 8.5 x 5.5, so submit accordingly.

*At this time, we are unable to pay our contributors.*

*As a contributor, you will receive one handbound copy of the Review.*



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**Joey Hartmann-Dow**  
**Daiquiri Jones**  
**Elizabeth Gross**  
**Brad Richard**  
**Liam Woodworth-Cook**  
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