

The background of the cover is a dark, textured surface. Overlaid on this are numerous pieces of torn, translucent paper in shades of light blue and white. These paper fragments are scattered across the cover, some overlapping each other. Interspersed among the paper are small, dark, irregular ink splatters or stains, adding to the abstract and layered appearance of the design.

Half Day Moon Journal

Issue N. 4

Featuring Cyanotypes
by Anna Atkins

Digital Edition



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Featuring Cyanotypes by Anna Atkins

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In Loving Memory of

Ayhan İlgün

(1932 — 2026)

*Gemliğe doğru
Denizi göreceksin;
Sakin şaşırma.*

(Approaching Gemlik,
You'll see the sea;
Don't you be surprised.)

Orhan Veli Kanık

*rerum quidem, non solum animalium, simulacra inesse licet
intelligere intuentibus uvam, gladium, serras, cucumin vero et
colore et odore similem, quo minus miremur equorum capita in
tam parvis eminere coctis.*

For there shall yee meet with fishes,

resembling not onely the forme and shape of land creatures living, but also the figure and fashion of many things without life: there may one see bunches of grapes, swords, and sawes, represented, yea, and also cowcombers, which for colour, smell, and tast, resembleth those growing upon the earth. And therefore we need the lesse to wonder, if in so little shell fishes as are cockles, there be somewhat standing out like horse-heads.

Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, trans. Holland (1601), IX.

Sabine Miller

Vespers

I won't transcend it.

I will be a chute for the soot-colored pelican in the soot-colored waves.

I won't climb that green hill.

I will hover as a bridge strung with icicles in the sun, stammering.

I won't transcend anything.

I will be a grieving post for rain.

I won't ride an amber camel into the agate sunset.

I will sleep.

The Present Continues

And the Persian chemist's skin reflects the porch light like a lily; she knows the night heron, who is a juvenile, whose mother she knew. Its knees bend backward like yellow elbows. We speak of green things and the price of water. There are houses on hills with windows big enough to be mistaken for the rising moon. My father, who doesn't care for poetry, arrives tomorrow with the rain.

Arrives tomorrow: continuous present that makes marvelous
the drops of time.

More Notes from Afield

Out here it is quiet as a meteor shower or an owl hunting. But on the weekend before Christmas, the neighbor put on a Santa hat and fed people. The Mexican trumpets in his living room sounded like the octopus tentacles whose cylindricity I am trying to paint.

I live at the end of Nada Street, where again I have nothing to say.

What do you call a swath of desert? It's not a field. A Lizard Dreaming, says my friend.

The black cat with electric green eyes eyes me, a Martian among the pale cholla and ironwood.

I've walked the Lizard Dreaming about twenty times now, and I'm still finding trash.

It was too cold to watch the meteors so I listened to them in my sleep.

In learning to embody the predator one sees rabbits differently. "Quick" instead of "cute."

My mother, when she comes, wants to talk about her peregrinations in Europe, the Spaniard who danced Flamenco on a table, the caves at Lascaux, the bicycle she bought in Portugal. Occasionally she touches her hat and what's left of her hair.

My mother is a rabbit. She can always depend on the kindness of other rabbits.

Another friend says to be grateful I still *have* a mother; of course she is right.

My mother left her walking stick in the Lyft, but we found a utility broom by the tool shed. Together we set out into the desert.

Judson Evans

Sirāt

(from a film by Oliver Laxe)

missing hand missing leg they are already half
eaten by the world before the music has fully
started burring up from subwoofers turning blown sand
glassy as if the gnarled ones' veins tattooed
to the surface as if the mounds of speakers stacked like
strata
were a scalding rack and they were drones mistaking it
for honeycomb I can't help as they climb into the pulse
that keeps astounding them I'm drawn too but can't
dance
in their dimension gnarled limbs more tendon
than bone not limber enough to be misshaped by the music
dune swept a sine wave hajj burns through voice coils
before which I rest on the staff of my own intransigence
not willing yet to part with myself break my body
like bread braid breath to terminals of sweat
and death as the ones who go all the way deep
into the desert of the music

Cotyledon

ur-breath of a word in loam, full of hover and flensed
filaments, stubby wing of entropy. I wanted the full
stop I couldn't have, the in-folded auger, cup-
bearer to the cavities of planets under
foot, findspots of bowl-shapes
I couldn't lift.

Woven verbatum from verb-
mumbled hands in the proto-Indo-prehensile-
Eurosaurian. I wanted to swallow what the serpent
spoke along the long-lost trade routes
of interior, what the stream
sieved in cursive, epoxy hardening across
voids and rushes, rubbing ink in the fissures,
becoming that other
yoke binding two horses together
by the bit,

one death-
dreamed, the other immortal — one
called Bright Charger, the other
Deep Messenger.

Homo Centaurus

Observe how our fetlocked other
fixtures itself to
stable that cloudy long
 gelatinous lash no tense yet
for the scramble as we are extracted time
 here where we bring our dapper twin-brained skin
to lasso whip ribosomes
 of fossil flower hoof beat
build the larger gracile beast to a gristle state
 of grace frames
per trip wire flash clinging to mane
 we are many-legged dead reckoners
of words in skitterish
 shudder seizes all
 who see us roughening our velocity
around the grave posts the Wide Load
trance as metal is alloyed
 to cheek piece greaves butter of sweat
and friction as we are breached
unfitted for stillness as we are
 rehooved

John A. deSouza

Selections from *of liberty*

A Royal Charter sealed on 17 March, 1665, and cancelled on 18 September 1667, of the Canary Company. The Committee of the Canary Company of both factions come to me for my Cozen Roger that is of the Committee, etc. amidst plague and fire, the threat of a Dutch fleet, is this peep out of Pepys. A fashion for clothes *HE will never alter*, from the French, but against them, the VEST, or long waistcoat for reminder, that the aristocracy might learn thrift from the King, sipping Canary wine. This ultimately travels by Adams and Franklin, not as a lack of ostentation, but as the *vesting* of Executive Powers of the President, who is vested with the costume of restraint against rash tyranny.

begun so in isolation, division flattens,
pancakes time, flattens toward uniformity.
The mind catches at this like a trout at a
midge, that applies its own contact at some
elastic surface mirroring itself, eyes to eyes
complete we love, chemicals spill messily to
join at the touch and yet bends not with the
remover to remove. As distant densities
aspire to distant ends, distortion simplifies its
carriage into spread constellations, spun
galaxies contain the steady wheels of ancient
chariots, we know not but spilled milk of
galaxies, but a trickle more is such love. What
if the midge is but a twist of fluff, the trout
hooked on an image of a love of sun's gleam
at an edge of quickened thought. How now?

is time to think, to put aside accruals, account not for what remains unpaid, ungratified to humbled origin. They make their claims, of a system that prolongs our suffering at an expense. But who can fault a natural inclination? We make to take, winners are remaindered as the new edge slides across the old lawns of a sunny suburb, we made them marvelous with song and motion, fairy tale's romp for a child's fear and frailty. All order subject to our renderings. The palette knife sweeps also color across color. Tools that propel ancient inquiry, solution more than particles' embrace or collision. Lively, frisk, brisk, frolic! Debts to debts be paid ever away, and system's wink back again satiated

John Grey

Fishbowl

The kingdom is pint-sized —
pebble-baroque, castle-in-miniature,
a moat not even ambition could drown in.
The water knows only one direction.
It circles.

At appointed hours,
divine intervention,
a slow gospel of floating crumbs.
A mouth opens like a fact of life.

No hunger, no harm.
Desire remains tactful,
behind convex glass, unreadable.

You, reluctant witness,
drawn by ritual.
Three hundred revolutions.
And still —
only communion, never collision.

Dissonance in Glass

Yes, that's me alright —
though my left hand's taken up
the right's old job,
and that mole, traitorous,
hops to the other cheek.

Teeth join the mutiny,
no longer sure which hold silver,
which remain innocent as enamel.

I lift one arm, meaning no poetry, no metaphor —
just muscle remembering motion —
but the mirror rebels.
I'm miming myself inside out.

Even you — you're no better,
your parts misplaced like mine.
I'm tired of this tired refrain:
"My right, your left."
As if compass bearings might set it straight.

So I've taken to a house with no glass,
no panes, no reflections.
Just the warm touch of sun
and a dog who never contradicts.

Long life's too short to spend chasing symmetry.
This cockeyed world mirrors its opposites.

John Levy

Unexpected Moments

An A plus moment, when nothing escapes
through the sieves. And each minus has left

like yesterday's cloud. And the mice of worry

are sound asleep, near their dreaming babies. And
the routines, the goals, the tissues of fear,

the greed and desire, move as far away as the mirror

above the metal sink in the small bathroom
of an airplane flying above another state.

The Tree

The tree is in business
for itself. The sun perhaps

hired the tree
and the earth maybe

interviewed the seed and
said *Yes. Yes*, in every language.

The wind is in the tree's
business, all up

in the tree's
business. A bird

flies out of the tree's
business

to find something else for
the nest

it trusts the tree's business
will be to hold.

Quag

I do the marsh in different thoughts.

Unlike Sloppy, in Dickens'
novel *Our Mutual Friend*, Sloppy

who reads aloud, beautifully, the newspaper
reports, changing his voice for the police,

my thoughts — sometimes messy, marshy,
unspoken, with varying

depths, weeds, underwater
creatures, sedges, lilies, sweet flag,

pickerelweed, grasses, the narrowtail
cattail, expansive

mats of algae — my thoughts, with their

blooms, reflections, whites
of floating clouds, blue-greens

and yellows, and the very smell of ideas,

marsh: a word that, aloud, ends
in a hush.

James Reidel

S. sanibelensis

After the island's truck farms failed and here was no one to
stake them up,

after the hurricanes and storm surges pulled the feral vines up
by their roots

and scattered the rotten fruit and their seed, this wild crop
persisted underfoot in a prostrate form,

and with the droughts they became dwarves of themselves,
hominids of tomatoes,

somewhere between the size of a pea but well below the weight
class of an organic table grape —

spread by bird droppings, palm rats, and more recently the
bright green iguanas —

to grow alongside the beach daisies like a crab until senescence
sets in —

and with yields that fill the beach bucket, the one I use to water
them,

that would spill from the bed of a plastic pickup truck,

which you and I could push to market on all fours.

We could even hot glue the crates from popsicle sticks and keep
pushing and shrinking out of sight year after year,

giving mimicry a try.

Reed Caned by Honeysuckle

A cabbage butterfly flutters its snowdrop wings, picking its way through the sunbeams broken up by a canopy of beech and maple. Eyelash legs, a doll glove's pinkie for its velvet gut . . . then I stopped myself once more and gave my full attention to Reed's impassioned recollection of how this picnic table, at which we sat in a clearing above the creek, got so far into the woods as though by itself. Had it not been for that butterfly, I just missed the mile or so to our hidden place, but I did see the other tables still "corralled" under the park shelter, because it was a little like horse thievery, cattle rustling, he said. I even believed him, that he pushed and dragged, cajoled his unwilling green sledge as though it were alive, making their way through the honey-suckle until his arms and legs and face bled downhill and uphill. He even flipped the table up and over like a flat rock in the end. Had Jesus done that with the cross, the roll-away stone — but I stopped myself again and not because it was a better story.



Philip Rowland

Ballast

satellite city railway crew
drilling track ballast — at intervals

stepping back, laying down tools
to avoid each passing train

and lean against the cement railing
saying little, each perhaps

laying claim to a world of his own
across from the swept shrine

where the bell pull hangs
perfectly still

A Poem

for John Levy

's an act of levitation,
oars poised over
say, a garden

not unlike my grandfather's,
freshly dug, soil growling
between trimmed borders.

Whose name was Frank, Frank
Messenger, of the
Brylcreemed hair

and pale blue eyes (paler
at death's approach),
of the strange varieties

of wine, home-
brewed from the fruit
and veg of his garden

intoxicating the poem,
bearing it aloft
in the heady afternoon,

until a snagged
oar finds us
sullenly rowing earth.

Alice George

Antipetrichor

for a time the word *petrichor* was in every poem
the distinctive, earthy, usually pleasant odor
*that is associated with rainfall**

maybe my senses are off
the swirl in my nostrils is
the stench of runoff, the waft of earthworms
the opaline film of gasoline

in southeastern Pennsylvania
the rain incites the infamous Callery pear
to emit rotting fish

and far away Corpse flower and *Rafflesia arnoldii*
and dead horse arum, tickled
from humidity, draw carrion-hungry insects

a puddle is the thing my dog disregards
the thing children jump into
and adults step over

**from Merriam-Webster*

Height of Fire

my origin story peels ragged like a rind
I've never met anyone who likes pulp

macaques in tune with their GI
eat soil as remedy for stomach upset

in the dark I assault my medicine cabinet
my fingers are intimate with
the oval shape of my target
the finest sand under diamond pressure
I think of it as an oasis that
I can find with my eyes closed

experts tell me what to do about mixed states
except the man who reads my poetry
says *tell them to kiss your irish ass*
my mother leaned into our german heritage
and my father told me to plant river birches
though he never got his hands dirty

give alms to the madness
the height of fire cannot be measured

Sean Whalen

Crow at Noon

perches pendulous
casts a black shadow

waits for the wind
to move the sun

waits for the sun
to move the earth

unable to blink
away the light

that pins him
through the spine

renders him unable
to turn his head

see the sliver
of silver spiking

to the ground
from between

two tail feathers
that have ticked askew

Roberta Beach Jacobson

time
multiplied by the square root
of death

when
do calories expire
day-old cake

crashing
onto its own shadow
plate

Mark Young

Lunch Poem

mash

unable to
afford the
cost of
knee re-
construction

mesh

he settled
for verb
replacement

mish

a list ran
around in
his brain

mosh

pit
potatoes
romantic novels
husky
stockings

mush

what would
Prèvert have
written if
confronted
with laminated
café tables?

A Murder of Glockenspiels

So many in the one place,
& none of their names a
palindrome, not even caco-
phony. There are androids

in the elevator, electric sheep
in the hallways. Somewhere
nearby a muezzin calls the
faithful to prayer. He has a

voice that carries easily over
all the other noise, a settling
sound, a reminder that non

sequiturs can have the ability
to turn out to be the most im-
portant game going in town.

Dialogue Revealed by the Wind

(after the painting by René Magritte)

A wind, a cold wind has come

— Arthur Miller: *The Crucible*

"Nakedness has a way of showing itself," she said. "If not the wind, then some other act of nature. Though is it natural that we should be standing here, headless, legless, words that usually describe some condition of drunkenness? & is standing the right word to use when we have nothing left to really let us stand?" The other two might have nodded in agreement, had they not been beheaded & now had nothing left to nod with.

A Line from Daisetz T. Suzuki

Otherwise it is borrowed plumage, an idiom that denotes the act of falsely assuming qualities, honors, or those dis-

tinctions that make a bird a bird such as feathers which are theirs alone. In lieu of an abstract, it reduces people to stereotypes

& mocks identity, meaning that if one cannot easily see beneath the exterior they present, they'll be mistaken for sheer nothingness.

Elmedin Kadric

Via Negativa

no bird mimics
the silence of
another bird

Man

I am as
I am of

John Phillips

Anyone
can play
my part
in the story

I simply
walk by

Kareem Asked

“Can one die in a dream?”
but if one can’t
how does one die

or is death another life
where dreams don’t exist

Cont.

After the world ended
everything went on
as before

only
it meant nothing

Orhan Veli Kanık

Translated from the Turkish by Joseph S. Aversano

Yokuş

*Öteki dünyada akşam vakitleri
Fabrikamızın paydos saatinde
Bizi evlerimize götürecek olan yol
Böyle yokuş değilse eğer
Ölüm hiç de fena bir şey değil.*

(Ankara, Ağustos 1937)

Steep Incline

Come evenings in the world beyond
When we're let out from the factory
If the road that'll take us home
Is not this steep
Death is not so bad at all.

(Ankara, August 1937)

John Pappas

come sweet death a nebula stretched

hidden winter the silent k in knife

Jennifer Hambrick

rustling

in the weft of the arras

a new creature

birthing

a storm, the wind

with three eyes

undersong our secret lipsync

bones in the leaf x-ray dawn

curve of the river mouthing the words

my father, the constellation

I
'm go ing

circle of sky
stutters

nothing
but galaxy

there he said

) pines take bites
of moon

scatter
star-crumbs
(

is where I'll be

the wind 's weeps up

a sob

Ashley Mangtani

T – 00:00:43

*O2 pressure nominal.
Cabin pressure holding.
Suit pressure stable.
Internal power confirmed.*

Nominal.

As if everything were.

The gantry groans away from me.

Six million pounds of fuel beneath this small arrangement of bones.

Waiting.

Men in headsets.

My name belongs to everybody else now.

I close my eyes and hear that song again.

Not the words. The rhythm.

My mother humming over dishwater.

July heat.

The kitchen window open to cicadas.

Me, cross-legged on linoleum.

Building rockets from stolen batteries.

Columbia, you are go. Godspeed.

Go where.

I almost laughed.

T – 00:00:10

9 The straps hold. I let them.

8 My teeth vibrate.

7 This is what churches were trying to imitate.

6 The song. Thin as static.

5 I can almost remember the chorus.

4 Gravity was a habit.

3 I was good at leaving long before NASA found me.

2 Ignition sequence start.

1 God.

It presses through me.

Every bone is a tuning fork. My vision trembles silver. Florida
folds inward beneath cloud and flame.

Velocity nominal.

My breath inside the helmet.

Underneath it — that hum. A warped cassette sound.

Houston, this is Columbia. Reading vibration above threshold.

Static answers.

Columbia. Do you copy?

The engines keep screaming.

I am eight years old, lying in the backyard grass with my Walk-
man pressed against one ear, staring at the moon so hard it
blurred white at the edges.

The capsule shudders.

A light blooms red across the console.

No sound follows.

Only the song.

Cabin pressure nomina

nomi

no

The stars look like punctures.

Houst —

Just the song climbing until I remember the missing line —
something about the sea. Something about returning.

The red light spreads across the controls like sunrise.

Heat crawls through the cabin walls.

Leaving was how I loved.

The whole planet fits inside one breath now.

Small enough now to forgive.

I press my helmet against the glass.

The stars multiply.

The capsule opens white.

And somewhere beneath the shrieking and the smell of burning
metal, my mother reaches the chorus.



Vaucheria dichotoma.

Julie Schwerin

after . . .
where do they go
the songs still inside
a sparrow?

Spring on-demand backordered

Joshua St. Claire

widening gyre ring-billed gulls circle a landfill

my inability to see Brâncuși's Bird

Sreyash Sarkar

Curtain Theory

after a thought in the soft voice of water

What is a curtain if not a skin
taught to breathe-both inside and out —
a veil that rehearses vanishing without leaving,
that opens not to the world, but through it.

To pull apart the linen is not to see,
but to enter:
a room knits itself to the forest.
The forest is not outside. It is a vowel
in your mouth.

A window does not need glass to be dangerous.
The light, let loose, grows feathers.
A cloud flinches.
A bird invents silence with its wings.

This is not metaphor.
This is how grief travels.
Curtains don't hide you.
They prepare you for *the* seeing.

When you draw them back,
do not say sunlight.
Say mother's hand in a bowl of water,
say sky peeling open like citrus,
say the soft architecture of doubt.

I once opened the curtain and found
the inside of a fruit —
slick, seamed with memory,
a wet hush holding its breath.

Yes.
That's what it is:
a fruit opening into itself,
not for hunger,
but for knowledge.

So let it fall —
this fabric that believes in shadows.
The body becomes real
only when backlit.

You are not watching the world.
You are being seen
by its brief mercy.

Now close the curtain.
Let the forest remember
what it looked like
before we gave it a name.

*Shukto*¹, As I Carried It

I.

I was born between two tastes.
Salt. Bitterness.
No flag for the tongue.
Only a bowl.
Full.
Of memory pretending to be food.
*Dida's*² saree-mango-skin folding open.
Light hung in neem.
The dusk stirred by her hands.

II.

The spoon
gleamed like an answer I wasn't ready for.
Her song crossed rivers.
Not in words. In fever.
Cumin fell like ash
across the borders inside me.

III.

I came blurred
like something dissolved in poppy.
The marrow of gourd stuck to the teeth of silence.
Sap held the shape of her absence.
Every step —
a prayer that forgot its god.

IV.

Plantain. Lentil.
Soft wounds.
Jacaranda bruised the air.
Violet means something else in exile.
Clove burned under the ribs.
I carried her in my hunger.
Her voice-current, pull, undertow.

V.

Oil wept through neem.
She bathed me in mustard steam.
Spoke in turmeric.
Each taste:
a map
that refused to settle in one country.
A forest breathing from the root up.

VI.

Now the bowl is a silence.
Not empty — just unsaid.
Where is the address of dusk
when no one is waiting at the door?
Does it dream in ginger?
Or does memory
rot sweetly
in the dark?

VII.

The last spoon.
I am not the meal. I am what remains.
Chalice. Vessel.
Her voice breaks into spice,
into shade,
into a home I can never return to
because I never left it.

1. *Shukto*: A quintessential dish in Bengali cuisine, *shukto* is a bittersweet medley of vegetables — typically including bitter gourd (*uchhe*), plantain, eggplant, drumsticks (*shojne danta*), and often flavoured with mustard, ginger, and milk. It is both a taste and a ritual — served first in traditional meals to prepare the palate and, symbolically, the soul. Bitterness here is not rejected but embraced — an initiation into memory, grief, and the complexity of origin.

2. *Dida*: A term of affection and respect for one's maternal grandmother in Bengali. *Dida* is not just a familial figure but an archive of taste, voice, and survival — a carrier of tradition, a keeper of recipes, a bridge between past and present.

Simmi Sirohi

Forefather and Figs

I strip the fig that I plucked from my *dadu's* tree;
The nectar trails past the crevices of my nails
Flowing onto the plate like blossoms seeping into the soil,
Almost reverently.

I claw the pieces apart; auburn and crimson
Like an ant's fleshy meal
Pieces on the plate lying as bark orchids on my
Grandfather's stone, limb to limb.

I dig my talons into the skin, pressing a kiss
To its hushed cheeks, letting violet seep into my tongue
And taste until my throat cradles in the grime of his window.
A homage to January.

Gerard Sarnat

Entries from *Gerardo Gazette*

journal entry #4, Tuesday 14 April 2026 5:02 AM PST, pre-dawn back to social justice work: kouta [guard democracy's Garden of Eden, springtime during octogenarian's winter to avoid mourning]

Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water.

— Zen proverb

green blueberries — ripe soon — mine
to savor — not trees
plant for next gens — though oy vey
I won't enjoy shade

Bonus 4: journal entry #9, Sunday 19 April 2026: tanka [puer aeternus: our never-ending childhoods]

— thanks to RP for Milan Kundera's *The Art of the Novel* quote

youth left (dunno what) —
marry without grok — as age
won't "get" where headed:
old are innocent kids — Earth's
planet of inexperience?

Grant Hackett

cedar smoke. mesas. the cranes will come back.
strange that a naked mind is here at all.
wisdom turns to dust and dust becomes wisdom.
simple language holds meanings yet to come.

spring leaves. painted a small red.
almost lost in slightly taller sounds.
through cracks in the ceiling
i hear footsteps of moss on the roof.

Cherie Hunter Day

The Unexpected Visitor

This being human is a guest house. — Rumi

My first glimpse of the fox is its bushy, white-tipped tail trailing through the underbrush. Its coat matches the auburn of the pine's fallen needles. Even the soft needle clusters suggest fur. The fox stops and sits down. It's in no hurry, in fact, it appears quite comfortable in this sliver of suburban woods. Aloof could be construed as confidence. We regard each other for several minutes. I'm new to the area and have much to learn. Listening is the fox's superpower. They can hear grouse shift on their roosts, and voles in their burrows. Should I be looking for deception or doubling down on independence and resilience? It's too soon to tell. I look away for just an instant and Red takes that cue to disappear.

language the marks of capture

rain in a bid for matrimony

crows measuring the river in wingbeats

blue moon
the execute function
of a king bird

Funnel Clouds

Twin tornadoes touch down in Oklahoma.
A testament to the vortices we all carry with us.
We're sisters of the same thunderhead.
Our anger is atmospheric, crackling, filled with debris.

A testament to the vortices we all carry with us.
Danger escalates between watch and warning.
Our anger is atmospheric, crackling, filled with debris.
Having come this far, the rain is empty of mercy.

Danger escalates between watch and warning.
Tornadoes are rated by the damage they cause.
Having come this far, the rain is empty of mercy.
We remain careless with our words.

Tornadoes are rated by the damage they cause.
Only in hindsight will we know the consequences.
We remain careless with our words,
Something attributed to our upbringing.

Only in hindsight will we know the consequences.
Despite the sisterhood, there is no forgiveness,
Something attributed to our upbringing.
We are storm chasers tracking our own downfall.

Pravat Kumar Padhy

rolling boulders
I hold back
my tough words

early dawn
I woke up into
darkness again

Louis Bourgeois

The Bird Catcher

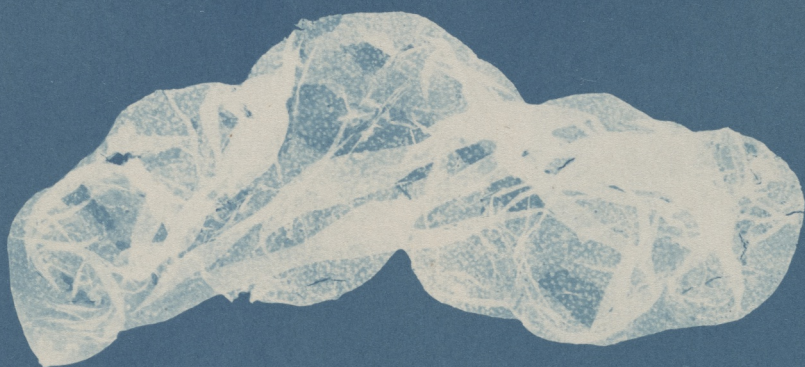
All he wanted was to catch all the birds in the world. He didn't understand why he felt this way; all he knew was that it bothered him that birds could take off into the sky whenever they wanted. *There's something wrong with that kind of freedom,* he often thought, as he was snaring birds with his dozens of traps. *They should be captured so that they'll appreciate freedom, so they will become humble and not place themselves so high above the rest of us.*

One day the bird catcher was thrown in prison for trapping birds without a license. In his cell, all he could think about were all the birds he didn't catch and how they still flew into the sky whenever they wanted.

The Jerk

There was a man named Alfred who died every year on Good Friday and like clockwork was resurrected every Easter Sunday.

Therefore, Alfred had very few friends.



Chuck Brickley

tworld

spring

sun

Satya Yuga

Golden Age

Theocracy

God

One

I

spin

Treta Yuga

Silver Age

Aristocracy

Emperor

One

faster

and

Dvapara Yuga
Bronze Age
Democracy
Every
One

faster
until...

Kali Yuga
Iron Age
Chaos
No
One

winter
stars

— *for Gary Yost*

a chipmunk scampers
and stops
scampers

stops
each time
a new now

a new heart
of the
mountain

all night eldritch
noises itch
where

scratches
even in
dreams never reach

the morning nowhere
more dead
quiet

Marge Piercy

The Ocean Intervenes

It was supposed to stay hot
yesterday. But in the afternoon
the ocean decided differently.

A wind arose, tickled trees,
cooled our bodies, faces.
Acorns banged staccato

on the sunporch roof, sharp
as rifle shots. Air smelling
fresh, salted lightly pushed

fetid air from the house.
I felt my brain clear, swept
clean. My body woke.

A heavy blanket torn off,
I moved freely. A new
morning in late afternoon.

The Snow Moon Rules

Tonight's the full snow moon.
It looks down on snow
clogging roads, turning
bushes to marshmallows,

every tree branch coated.
Birds flock to feeders,
hungry in the fierce cold.
We huddle indoors.

The outside is forbidden
territory, icy, a frozen
North come to our sandy
spit. The ocean batters

dunes and stunted pines.
The wind is a shining
blade, newly sharpened.
It goes for the throat.

I am aware of my warm
blood beating. Aware
I do not belong to this
frigid landscape. Even

bears in their thick
robes sleep in their dens.
A lone rabbit hops up
where the drive was.

What the Rabbits Say

One June evening just after supper
Willow sits at the screen door.
Just outside staring in a few
inches from her, a fat jackrabbit

Is pressed to the screen, staring
at her. He seems to want to
get in, get at her. She is calm,
simply curious. He seems lustful.

He is as big as she is. Rabbits
on our land are no longer even
slightly afraid of us. We almost
have to kick them to get them

to move out of the way, out
of our gardens. Fences don't
present them with an obstacle:
they just burrow under.

They were here, they remind
us thousands of years before
we invaded. We're willing
to share. Why won't you?

Shloka Shankar

The koi in a pond
seeks no validation.

To know you belong,
is to forget you belong.

mythologizing my time here jatayu

Harrison Fisher

The Plaza

Genius loci

A granite figure stands in the fountain
while a rent at the base of its feet

draws shadows down
to slip through miles under concrete,
beyond suburbs, past the exurbs, into the aquifer

in the dead reckoning
of the water table, its unadvisable flesh
a nautical genius, bobbing along under the crust

on cryptic tides that come in, go out,
come in again, as holds above.

Complex Beasts of the Field

Absent a common culture,
public art means only

its own plunked-downness, a sign of budgetary
provision — corporate or municipal largesse
dedicated for plaza blight.

Inside, canvases hung
like criminals above the ferment

of boos and grumbles, growing
into yowly maledictions
from the lobby.

Projectile Disaffections

I traced
the origin
of projectile
disaffections
to experimental
neurosis.

Another
crappy, carpy
diem. Don't
droit on me.

Confusion over
cocoa, coca,
and cacao
is a distraction.

Peter Yovu

Shades of Blue

glaumist the blue of Maine blueberries before they are washed

glaudigo the blue of Maine blueberries after they have been
washed

corshin the blue of a crow excited by the sun

cobbled the blue of slate roof after the rain

veefyre the flash of blue of a dewdrop wobbling and about to
fall

dullfyre blue cast of a room lit only by a television, seen from
outside at dusk

zularc the last perceptible blue as it merges with black as
reported by practiced meditators

vincentian color of sky as implied by Van Gogh's paintings of
sunflowers in a vase

cyaneal the momentary molten sapphire of an indigo bunting
when it first moves into the sunlight, before one's eyes think
they know what they are seeing

is this/who I am

is this the first light
who I am in a body
wind wrinkling a pond

an apple bruised by its fall
is the homeless guy sleeping or what
who I am peering into a ditch

who I am on black ice
an oak burl carved into a bowl
is that a dog trying to howl

◦

is this the photo you took
who I am in the background
rusty staples on a telephone pole

the face in a wallet I found
is this a blind alley
a man sleeps by a laundromat vent

who I am the moment you see me
is this what comes after an echo
a name on the back of a mirror

◦

is this the fine linen sheet
light billows then falls on the bed
who I am not awake not asleep

the beach house unshuttered for summer
who I am with my feet in warm sand
is this bird dead or just stunned

who I am when you open your eyes
is this the ocean you hoped for
one seal slips next to another

◦

who I am in the subway
the hand my father keeps in his pocket
is this nickel his or mine

who I am in a ditch
is this a little boy's sky
one wheel still spinning

barnacles scraped from a hull
a man carefully counting his change
is today the day of the eclipse

◦

fog half hiding a bridge
who I am growing old
is this where the toll's to be paid

is the body ready for viewing
one bag left on the carousel
who I am among others in line

who I am as the lights go down
hundreds of jellyfish under the moon
is this the image it ends with

Bob Lucky

Travel Plans

I've shed dreams
like a snake
sheds skin.

Mountains
have disappeared,
rivers flow on

without me. The roads
less travelled
remain untrodden.

But where I am
is also where
I've been.

Witness Statement

We wanted to swim but there was no water. And then we came upon an oasis, and there was water. But we didn't swim. We drank. And later we came to an ocean. But we didn't drink although we were thirsty again. We swam. To tell the truth, some of us couldn't swim.

6 *Greguerías*

Inside the cave the cave is outside.

The moment that slips away is a wounded haiku.

A bilingual dictionary is a difference of opinion.

The silence talking to you is a blank page.

When you think about it, it is real.

A miracle is what you can't believe just happened.

Trust

a kid
hands her kite
to the sky

and the sky
runs off
with it

Dan Schwerin

Bidden or Unbidden

hope

the light
about us

will sugar
the little apples

Time Enough

no one needs to say
where the fish
will bite
if you watch
the lake
a dock spider
walks sideways
the jewelweed blooms

Victor Ortiz

a
gain

in
g
rain

ed

in
rain

g
rain

again

in
grained

in
rain

grain

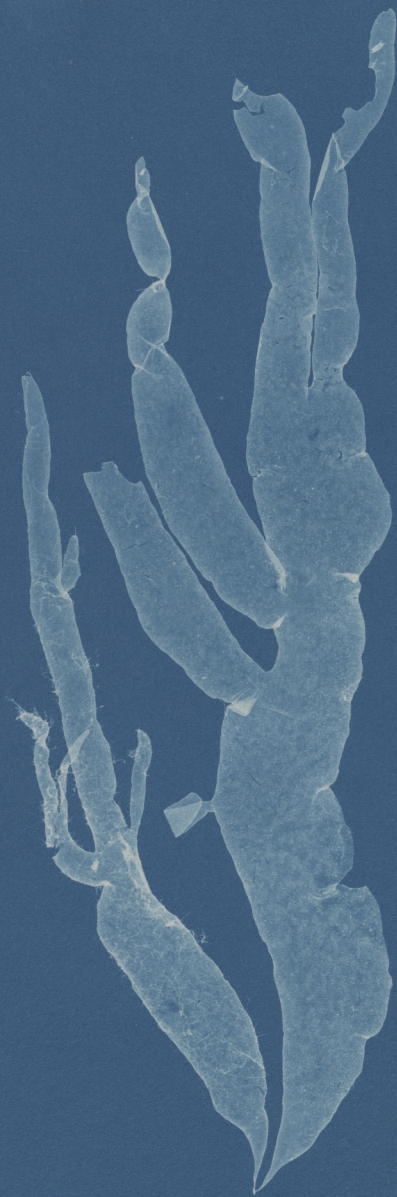
a
gain

(after Scott Metz, in HDMJ N. 3, p. 28)

(h)earth : h(e)aven

they teeter
where the present feels
the reel

in a grey area where the unknown plays ball



Halymenia ligulata . var. *ramentacea* .

Timothy Robbins

Shakuhachi Whale

I try hard to confuse the matter. I don't know why.
Despite my ignoble effort, it goes on making sense.

In a rented flat,
below a boat,
one long hollow
note chases another through
flesh and bamboo throat.

As the whale and the flute are my witness, I'll stop
trying to make a mess of us. It's exhausting and I'm
too faithful to middle age, and despite my stumbles,
we stand unbroken like the sense of basic words.

Parent and child sounds
fore and aft. Sound of
nature. Sound of craft.
Both sounds wailed.
Neither laughed.

At three in the morning we poke our heads up
briefly from dreams. The record tries to be a
whirlpool. Earlier you stood by the glass door
unfurling your erudition on the structures and
causes of various birds' wings. Earlier I showed
you were mistaken about a girl in a TV series.
She is not flat. She makes 3-D sense.

That these sounds
are stark, that they
sound deepest in
the dark, at home
in air, and below
an ark is worthy
of remark.

233 Cézanne Paintings Rotated Once

When the verticals become horizontals they are flags
from exquisite countries whose gross national products
evinced the most advanced aesthetic.

Horizontal or vertical, they are shocked at first
as you would be if I rudely tipped *you* over.

“What the Hell?” you demand.
And I justify, “You were tired
but didn’t have the sense to lie down.”

Or, “Time to get up, you lazy good-for-little.”

Like you, the canvases quickly recover their
Cézannesque composure. Trees are proud wood-stacks
as they were proud thickets.

And all those apples! I have to jump back lickety-split.

You will notice they leave behind their shadows,
which now look like stains.

The profiles? Those that become sky gazers
fare better than those that now gaze at the floor.

The pitchers, mugs, steins and bottles? I figured
they were all empty — and they were, save one that
painted a little puddle on the table.
I guess Paul had forgotten to check it.

The bathers? I haven't time
to interpret their changes from upright to couchant
and vice versa. I am too busy
marveling. There are many more bathers
than I guessed. As many men as women.
Both with misshapen sexiness.

All take part in the same visual education.
But what's that? three skulls? Still-lives or the
bather's destination?

Pooja Verma

Butterflies

Today I brought flowers

for a still life I'd never sketch.

I was given the choice to change —

I didn't dare. Butterflies are only butterflies

upon natural maturation.

Zhuangzi Butterfly Dream No. 2

Or was it the temple bell, Buson,
that was sleeping on

the
butterfly . . .

One Thing That Struck Me After Seeing Nuri Bilge Ceylan's *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia*

Worse than seeing a skull at night

is seeing it in the sun.

DS Maolalai

The Symbol

the sun hits my face
like a symbol.
no — hits
like a cymbal —
too clever?
no art in a pun?

still though — it shines
with the same yellow
brass.

and still though — it makes
the same sound.

Dublin. The Quays. No Celebration.

the wind running frozen
down unflown flagpoles.

a clink shift of buckles;
a slack of hung lines.

The Advance

she had written a draft of a play.
she said they had read it
and told her they didn't want
more. she could keep the advance
as a token for the time.
it seemed that discouraged her —
them paying her off —
more than disliking the writing.
she's been part of my poems
for ten or more years now.
I didn't think she'd be so easily
torn asunder. had been moss
in the shade of my brain
for that long — always regrowing
in crevices. I left her at christchurch and gave her
a very quick hug. my dog, when we'd got her
as a puppy 18 months before
had caught a sick mouse in that spot in her mouth.
it looked like a costume moustache.

Glenis Moore

Absence

I conceived our child that day;
corn stalks stabbing into my back,
the sky blue with the cool of late summer.
But I was not there.
My body gave the right responses,
my mind was not required.
Maybe that's why the child came,
to mitigate my absence.
I do not know.
All I know is that our love died
before the abortion,
and I was not there either.

Shontay Luna

I've Held Hands

I've held hands
with the dying,
though neither
of us knew it at
the time. While
some random
90s sitcom
rumbled witty
puns and canned
laughter in the
background.
As soon as I
looked into her
eyes, I knew
Death shared
the room with
us.

Marcia Arrieta

to fly away/to remain
to remain/to fly away

aviary

ravens
doves

ship sailing star
star sailing ship

otherworld birds
of the day & night

merge

Randy Brooks

theocracy?
herons' lack of faith
in swan songs

mossy backbone
the barnacle's
barnacle



Joanna Ashwell

day moon
the long exhale
of yesterday's shadow

Joseph Noble

From *Mirror Song / Winding Grace* Part 2

he found that he had more voices
than he had bargained for

his imagination had invented a shadow
that kept insisting he was the body

the shadow kept humming all night in his sleep
just to prove that he had a voice

till he was not sure which he was —
he stood in the sun as if he stood in the sun

looking for his shadow that was nowhere
to be found, and yet he heard him clear as day

shadowing him as he walked, rubbing against his
own shoulders, startling himself with his own voice

line of sight established from the ears
lip light bringing its tune into focus

he finds sweet williams throughout the torso
invisible but for the melody they emit

the talking drum has lost its tongue
but its words sing from its skin

with each distal imagining
he signaled the conifer

one, two, three strings, and
there was the African violet

the soil would wrap around his arm
and he would invoke the standing tree

Jerome Berglund

talk of muses in
the abstract, perhaps cause to
reevaluate

Sondra J. Byrnes

writing then reading
to see what
i meant

lifting a word
for what's underneath
flabbergasted

unleashed —
evening shadows
jump the fence

Debbie Strange

siren songs more than 130 words for wind

wild gentians untwisting the prairie sky

night migration the starred tips of reindeer lichen

jisei : this cairn of smooth, black stones

Michele Root-Bernstein

not quite
my last

word wished
but almost

the pen's
felt tip

cello drone	sounding out	the only soul
plucking	the red peony	his finger reach
her heartstrings	old sorrow	bone-deep

blue light
the year of living
deciduously

rain
taps *Sa*
this *tie's*
leaf *Sar*
then *ab*
that *and*
go *es*

merrily merrily merrily :: meadow in full spate

better than the alternative sky / gods / fill in the blank

E. A. Bourland

intelligent life

we're not going to find intelligent life out there

maybe microbes
moping on a rock

primitive creatures

here's the bug eater of Rutabaga III

we're not going to find anything
that's gonna beat us
in chess

the universe is not
infinite
just evacuating
emptying out

you think you know
loneliness?
you'll be lonelier
when you look
into the night knowing
it's long-beyond
unavailable

and sentience
is a once-per-universe
deal if
you're extremely lucky

lonelier
when you get back
behind your
bluelit barbican
of books and beating off and booze

but I tell you whom we're going to find

Anne McCaffrey
that's right
the Dragon Lady

we'll find Ursula and Tanith
we'll find Gene
on Blue or Green

my advice, sentient one?
keep reading
books of gold
that's your one job
on this mudball

there's dragons
fighting
acid threads
that fall like rain

ghosts
waking to shuffle
through their
murders again

listen for agonies
in the metal tower
Medusa's hiss
in the halls of the ward
the raging outcries
of the rapist
stranded to die
on the island
he had stripped of trees

please sing
a spell of praise
for these stories
such as I have not heard
in many seasons

a spider is just about
the smartest
thing in our
galaxy
cetaceans are
sweet-talking
diplomats
pigs philosophers
octopodes mad
scientists

horses know red from blue
rabbits how to count
to two
and which star
is Capella

the cathedral
that appeared today
between two beams
in my bicycle shed
was the work
of a savant

that star over there, do you know
what its name is?

it can be anything you want

Tom Barlow

Charades

I sigh when I find dead air coming
out of my mouth, I beat out the rhythm
of a cricket's wings on my temples
as I seek to reacquire the word stridulation.

I once knew Anne Sexton's middle name,
the combination to my bicycle lock,
the words to "Hallelujah,"
but my database has developed a retrieval flaw

so now I will call you honey or sport and I
will belabor the word whatchamacallit,
I will hang on the last letters of my passwords
like a sheep caught halfway over

a split rail fence. I will use my thesaurus as
a church key until the day I can't remember
where I left it, and I will keep writing
drivel until the paper looks like a map

to a treasure I buried around here somewhere,
with a string tied to my finger so I won't forget
the word string.



Gigartina acicularis.

Gary Hotham

concerns
about friends
the ocean settles into my footprints

clouds
all the shapes before
we had ancestors

moving our chairs back
the rain taking care of
our last words

Notes on the Poems:

(p. 3) Editor's personal note: The verse dedication (*Gemliğe doğru . . .*) was once spontaneously quoted by the dedicatee, my late father-in-law, when the work of Orhan Veli came up in a conversation we were having. The poem was first published in *İnkılâpçı Gençlik*, 17 October 1942. The translation is my own.

p. 4. The Pliny passage translation: Pliny the Elder. *The Historie of the World*. Translated by Philemon Holland, 1601.

p. 6. "Vespers" is composed in a poetic form invented by Peter Yovu.

p. 11. In deSouza's words, the poems in his *of liberty* project "make use of American history to examine liberty of language at the Sestercentennial of the nation." The embedded quote, "The Committee of the Canary Company of both factions come to me for my Cozen Roger that is of the Committee" comes from Samuel Pepys' diary entry of October 8, 1666.

p. 31. Young's "A Line from . . ." references the following from D. T. Suzuki: "Unless it grows out of yourself no knowledge is really yours, it is only a borrowed plumage." This can be found in Suzuki, D. T. 1934. *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. Foreword by Carl G. Jung, Grove Press, 1964.

p. 34. The poem "*Yokuş*", in its original Turkish, was first published in *Varlık*, 15 September 1937. A freer version of the translation is included in "Carnation Cuttings", a zuihitsu on the afterlife, published in *E-ratio*.

p. 54. The epigraph to Day's "The Unexpected Visitor" is taken from Rumi, Jalāl al-Dīn. *The Essential Rumi*. Translated by Coleman Barks with John Moyne, A. J. Arberry, and Reynold Nicholson, Castle Books, 1997, p. 109.

p. 62. "a chipmunk scampers . . . " can be heard read in a live video recording of "just one more cartwheel the milky way", with Brickley reading from his work and Gary Yost on handpans at O'Hanlon Center for the Arts, Mill Valley, California on 27 June 2026. (Available on YouTube).

Notes on the Cyanotypes:

Cyanotype images by Anna Atkins reproduced from *Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions* (1843 — 1853). Digital images courtesy of the Spencer Collection, The New York Public Library Digital Collections (digitalcollections.nypl.org). Some images cropped to fit.

Plates reproduced: *Ulva latissima* (cover); *Codium amphibium* (p. 21); *Vaucheria dichotoma* (p. 42); *Asperococcus Turneri* (p. 59); *Halymenia ligulata* var. *ramentacea* (p. 79); *Bangia fusco-purpurea* (p. 92); *Gigartina acicularis* (p. 107); and *Porphyra laciniata* var. *umbilicus* on *Chondrus crispus* (back cover).

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HDMJ N. 4

Porphyra laciniata
var: *umbilicus*
on *Chondrus crispus*.