

RECORD

I am pleased to Alicia Winski has been named the Featured Writer for the Winter Issue of Record! - Godfrey Logan

Hourglass

Old lace
 Fine wine
 Brushed silk
 The world mine
 Life simply sweet
 No cares or
 Tribulations
 No deeper meanings
 Unpleasant revelations
 A time of few trials
 Little discontent
 When I dreamt my
 Girlish dreams
 And I knew
 What love meant...
 Now with dreams
 Shattered
 My hourglass lay
 Scattered
 In shards
 Around my feet
 Blended

With the	Little Red Riding Hood	...whole...	Avaricious Desires...
Dissipating	I can see your eyes	Your Lips licked in	My blood runs cold feeling
Sands of time	Watching me	Lusty satisfaction	Your lustful need
While the	Where ever I go	Gorged and plumped	The avaricious greed
Soft ashes	Hungry	With the extraction	To feed on me
Of my lost	Wanting	Of the last vestige	Radiating
Loves	Piercing	Of privacy and	Vibrating
Swirl gently	Haunting	Innocence I	In the air around me
Around me	Covetous and	Held onto	The main dish for your
Like feathers	Oh...	Brutally ripped	Solitary table....
Dancing	...so frightening...	From me	Will you eat me whole
In the wind...	I can feel the heat	The fragile emotional	Or slice me up into
	From your fingers	Virginity	Bite sized pieces
	Aching to	I had retained	Tender morsels
	Touch me	Remained	Sinfully flavored to
	Break me	Deliberately	Savor at your leisure?
	Teeth sharpened	Untouched now	
	Read to devour	Sullied	
	And take me	Soiled by the	
	Swallowing me	Impurity of	

<p>With nowhere to hide I crawl inside myself A frightened little girl Hoping not to be seen A Little Red Riding Hood Trembling in fear From the big bad wolf Knowing that he's Not just near but Arrived and Here knocking... ...at my door...</p>	<p>Stalk-Her The Poetess Oh, Jesus Christ, another message light blink- ing What is this man thinking? Night after night, taking such delight in flood- ing my aura, my hearing, my sight with lewd, lascivious desires to own me, touch me, undress and possess me-- a woman he's never met I suppose that will teach me to try to be kind to a clearly lonely,</p>	<p>warped and unloved mind his soul aching for resurrec- tion, so desperate for connection in a world deliberately pass- ing him by unwanted, ignored Now I see why Godammit , It's still ringing! Can't he just leave me alone? I want to be able to pick up my phone without hearing the heavy broken voice of celibate desires, un- quenched fires saturating my senses with his wanting</p>	<p>I'm being victimized, terror- ized, dissected and vandalized, my thoughts and words sto- len, looted, manipulated and di- luted by a strangers idea of love perverted and diverted my way Is there no disguise in which to hide From these probing, voyeuristic eyes?</p>
	<p>The Reader Oh, look at her words glori- ously heard solely in my mind as I read them convinced she cries out in a night echo- ing with pain from love torn wounds only I can hear and heal How I long to feel her skin shimmering white, trembling in delight,</p>	<p>bathed in love starved, lin- gering kisses laid upon a body unknown, yet hungered for Desires inspired by this ver- bal siren, I can close my eyes, almost feeling her presence breathing deeply of her es- sence unknowingly consumed by the fires she's ignited with her words</p>	<p>No one understands her like I-- Perhaps I should pick up my pen, remind her yet again I must open her eyes, make her see she belongs to me, destined to be mine forever awh @March 2009</p>
<p>The Rumor Game Ah, he said, she said, it's the hottest game in town! Cock that verbal gun, take aim and fire! Let's see who can cause the most dissension, get the most attention, with their worded blood lust desire? Load up those bullets and shoot 'em kids, let's fire at the weak and downhearted Aim for the jugular, we'll all take turns and it doesn't matter who started</p>	<p>'Cuz it's a vicious world, gotta learn to play that game Who can we chew up and spit out today? It doesn't matter where we aim that pain, as long as you know how to play The rules will apply, as rumors run rampant, in the game of, 'what can we start? Now load your guns, and check your ammo,</p>	<p>we'll blow those bastards apart! And we have no shame, we just mow 'em down, we'll take no prisoners and run We can step over their bod- ies, while trashing their names But of course, it's all done in fun! So come one, come all</p>	

So come one, come all
take your aim and best shot,
let's see your talent for
wounding a soul
Come on, come on, let's see
what you've got
let's see who you run with
and know!

Yes, it's a vicious world,
and a damned rough game
It's dog eat dog as they say,
But if you want to survive,
to stay on top...

Then you'd better
learn how to play

awh @ 2007

Amerika Idolizes

Across the nation
Worshipers on
Bended knees
Heads bowed
In adoration before
32" Flat screen
Shrines
Glowing
Neon bright a
Shining light
In the dark
Illuminating
Reverent
Marbleized eyes
Zealously
Blazing from
Cherubic
Faces split by

KFC slick smiles
As a new
Messiah is
Manufactured
Commercialized
And created
Specifically to
Please and
Appease the
Demands
of the masses

On your knees Amerika!
A new Idol is born.

Awh @ may 2009

Confessional

I lie quietly watching
you slowly advance
to your place of worship,
driven by
your vocation, your
quest for meditation,
zealous redemption of
your faith

With no hesitation, res-
ervation
or doubt, you kneel at
my alter,
head bowed, sipping of
my warm wine

Taste my consecrated
flesh,
Oh, sweet sacrament

Wind Up Doll

Pull me from
That dusty shelf
Wind me up
And watch me go

A song and dance
For your pleasure
Your own little
Distraction
In action

Yes sir! That's Me!
Your own personal pocket
pal!

Occupying you
For the moment

Killing a little time
In your life

But don't wind too hard
My batteries aren't charged
And I can be worn down
If I'm over-wound

And you'll no longer have
Your wind up doll~

Awh @2008

Cat 5 Alicia

There's a storm blowing thru
my ravenous soul tonight
relentlessly whipping the
winds
of my personal war around
me
with the velocity, the ferocity
of a category five hurricane

Harsh furies agitate my sober
atmosphere
with the momentum of a bul-
let train;
menacing to the fragile sani-
ties
being torn from me and fer-
ried out of reach

Slip into my feminine
sanctum,
we'll meet in blessed
communion,
professing our sins in
beatified union

Reach with me our
heavenly rapture,
your lips divine, warm
and sweet on mine

We will lie spent, com-
pleted,
contented, languid, liq-
uid salvation,
in our confessional

awh @ 2008

In righteous wrath and fear,
I raise my fist violently
against this turbulent chaos
funneling, channeling the
vicious dark spirits
seeking refuge in my core,
the eye of my storm--
this angry ocean of impurity
pulling me out to sea,
leaving me washed away lost
in the waves of madness and
despair

Battle weary with my ration-
ale threatened,
my voice a howling fury in-
dignant against
the forces ripping away the
last precious
threads of my sanity,
the violence wreaking havoc
on the wastelands
of my sorrowful, desperate
excesses,
I capitulate, swallowing my
demons down

Hurricane Alicia abated, my
spirit sedated,
I lie hypnotic and calm,
flat lining in the seas of tran-
quility

Patiently waiting for the next
tempest,
I lie dormant and calm in the
eye of my storm

©awh july 2007

The Film Ran in Reverse

The film ran in reverse

We saw the combine put wheat in the field

We saw the old barn falling together

We saw the cat jump up on a large post

We saw the catcher pitch the ball to the pitcher

We saw a log sawed and chopped

Reassemble itself back on the wood pile

We saw the end throw the football

Over his shoulder to the quarterback

We saw jet planes in weird retrograde

A diver came out of the water arcing

Up to land feet first on the spring board

Rabbits and squirrels in reverse

Going where they've always been

Then when my Dad backed up the car

It looked oddly normal

Two reversals made it right

In Their Own time Defined

We walk along a time line with fashions and fads

Of common products and commercial ads

Novels of the nineties can now refer

To Nintendo, Walkman, CD's and fake fur

Word processors, lasers and microwave dishes

To cable –HBO, Sports Channels

What is matter?

Does it dance?

I challenge every teacher to come up with one question for every test that goes beyond notes taken during a lecture... bolded terms on the sides of textbooks... a question that goes beyond... An answer.

What is Matter?
Does it Dance?
Do swing sets miss you when you get older?

James D. Ardis

Query languages – relational data bases

We see the trail of life littered

With the signs of the times

Recycling bins in purposeful hues

Crash diets, the Heimlich maneuvers

Closet doors with slots and louvers

We shall remember these littered time

The fast pace of change

Technology builds in obsolescence

Resale's, upgrades, to better

Their quota, the market share

We talk the time line

Anachronisms nonverbally defined

James Webb Wilson

English Major Woman

Her feet cry out to me for salvation from the shoes that demand five toes to converge in a single point. The proverbial "toe-cleavage" throbbing red As she mangles her textbooks with bookmarks and ear tags.

She plays Sudoku in the newspaper during Medieval Lit.

fingers bound around a pencil with a brand new eraser for all the mistakes she's bound to make as a professor in her late eighties strings together her final thoughts before the end of class like an epitaph, spoken in perfect Iambic Pentameter.

James D. Ardis

Ferris Wheels In Pripyat

Discontented bumper cars wade in melting snow thin wires cling to the decimated ceiling, The grovel gathers along electronic pathways a steering wheel rests beside the passenger's seat.

The classroom seats are firmly planted on the ground dirt gathering on the floor like pencil shavings,

like a student slapped for insubordination

A Ferris wheel plagued with rust, arms bent in exhaustion letting its fingers, the gondolas, dangle low, wonders to itself if it could even rotate if it cared to try.

James D. Ardis

The 4th of July on November 22nd

A 12-year-old Asian child smokes a cigarette

touching the smuggled fireworks like a holy shrine the stench of 7-11 Taquitos dances around his friend, his protruding gut and the sweltering hive of acne sprinkled across his face tell the story of many late night Slurpee binges.

The cold November air, the ying contrasted by the lit match, yang collide at the core of the firework's fuse, the first flints spark like magnets their tango as passionate as a

Latino mamba.

Flying in the air reluctantly on its kamikaze mission, the crackle like popcorn as the rocket releases its cascade of color, the calm November evening shattered in calamity by the rocket's pure, impressive light.

An entire town collectively, leave the warm embrace of blankets and crave a hot dog drizzled in ketchup.

James D. Ardis

Lauren

While her friends pay to get their fingernails painted at stores, she stays at home and sinks her hand into bowls of red paint hurling it at the canvas, bombarding the tranquil plain with sheer passion so it won't take bottles of Tequila to see those strawberry fields forever like her idols.

James D. Ardis

It's Bad, But Not More Than a Private Affair

Showed the Full Monty to "Monty," Pants apparently open Worldwide, Affairs with female staffers, while in committed relationships,
And married - on the side!

Caught with Stephanie, almost half your age, So smitten with "Smithy," you drove her home,
Sucking face in Haldeman's driveway, Did you think he would leave that alone?
It takes two to tango, Like her brother, she liked "dancing" with the stars, Not a cheap or stupid trick; not "Dutch" to pay for her law school,
And ask her to be your personal attorney after she passed two bars.
The King of Late Night finally, Well, at least you got a ratings boost, With Leno gone, probably would have happened anyway,
Extortion, as the way to rule the roost?!

Sexual harassment?, workplace hostility? Look closer, sly Stephanie was playing a pair,
Two timing, working both sides of the street, Hedging her bets on a lair and a "royal" spare.
NOW and Gloria Allred entreaties aside, Until recently, apparently closed, consensual circles - or triangles - of love,
If employees didn't know and jobs were unaffected, Where's the need to involve legal review from above?

Kudos to you for taking responsibility, For Harry's sake, I hope you can "fix" things with your wife,
Become her Late Knight and learn a lesson at 62, When in the public eye, be a better role model in life.

And while Letterman's healing his family, Instead of feeding our appetite for salacious fare,
Let's look away and not make his misadventures what they are not, It's bad, but not more than a private affair.

Karen Ann DeLuca

At times I couldn't wait for some deity to come and reward me for my faith. Instead I focus her shoulders to yonder window. As light from the eyes of the Holy Ghost through yonder window which blessings come alighting on her breasts. This fellowship. All of it in fellowship. The open room of witness seeking such a blessing as well. Children of the moment are they not? For some had come for the wine in the pots. With your spirit full I took it upon myself to be more than witness. Lifting said spirit with a whoosh and a sigh grab her about her waistline and watch the eyes

of the Holy Ghost become focused on her source of pride and shine its light brightest on its very inside. All of it in fellowship.

G. Logan

Since you're not here. Since it's been months. Since I have no one else and the distance is long between us. You love Rudy. But she's just a cat. You love me though, more than that. I've been hoping you would come back. Hoping that you won't try to sneak Rudy out in your bag. I could come where you are, I've said. But you don't know when you will have the time, until your sister is dead. Can-

cer stricken and she has children. A constant vigil at her bedside. I am alone here. She doesn't like his tone. No family. Anyone. You're not here it's been months. It's been a cool summer. Cooler than usual around here. It's good for me. I get to wear my hooded sweatshirt for most of it. Switched from riding the city bus after a tree had been felled during a storm. The street blocked by the tree and its limbs. To riding the train to downtown and back. You talk about Rudy the cat most of our conversations and I understand that. I've been waiting for you to come back. Hoping you won't try to

The street blocked by the tree and its limbs. To riding the train to downtown and back. You talk about Rudy the cat most of our conversations and I understand that. I've been waiting for you to come back. Hoping you won't try to sneak Rudy out in your bag. I could come where you are I've said. Can never seem to pin down a weekend. Pin down a date. Pin down a place to sleep. I cannot sleep at your house because the gentleman who lives there would feel put out.

G. Logan

It is the end of the game that shook him up. He blamed the same guy every time he saw him. All he can remember is the whiskey haze. The boys were feeling themselves that day. See him around the train yard and say it to his face. It's obvious he's in the same haze as game day New Years Day. The game is gone. The game is over. It's all he keeps saying as if it was all he had. It was a merry day. There was revelry and all the boys put their money on the table. They gambled as they drank until the other boys succumbed to their stupor. Then he took everything. There'll never be another game at that location. That fool was tight with the man who owned the house. His limp is more pronounced now. He still goes around looking for a stiff drink and a good game. Things will never be the same. That's what he had come to say before he spit and stumbled away.

Godfrey Logan

Enclave of Excellence

Jimmy Carter spoke of racism, In the Congressman's "you lie" remark,
Joe Wilson's 62, from South Carolina, The ex-President may not be far off the mark.

Number 39 also took aim at Kanye, For hijacking Taylor's acceptance speech,
The "punishment" came from Jay Leno, Is this what Dr. Donda West taught?!

What no one seems to be saying, Is that racism works both ways,
Against black Presidents in the White House, And sweet, young white girls at the VMAs.

We all have our enclave of excellence, We don't like it when others intrude,
That may explain Seven Days in September, Joe and Kanye, Serena and Roger, all being so rude.

Karen Ann DeLuca

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Karen Ann DeLuca

<p>Elegaic for a Week of Incivility</p> <p>It started with Joe Wilson's "You Lie," to the President, In chambers, televised for all to see, One apology, that's enough, so what?! I was frustrated, I heckled, what's the fuss, gee?! Then came Serena, not so serene, On court, doing her best Johnny Mac, Another line judged crossed, tantrums in ladies' tennis, Grand Slam means not only the ball is attacked. At the same time, MJ, inducted into the Basketball</p>	<p>Hall of Fame, Accepted, dissing, from high school to the pros, who he didn't like, To his kids: "You...have a heavy burden...I wouldn't want to be you...," Do people still want to be like Mike? Running for Governor in Virginia, Bob McDonnell, When interviewed, of f---ing mechanisms spoke, He said he meant "funding;" oops, believe it, or not, The "culture warrior" now seems more like a joke. But worst of all, Kanye, dissing poor Taylor, Spoiling the teen's moment, narcissistic and crass,</p>	<p>Thank you Beyonce, for being so gracious, And showing the rest of us the meaning of class. Just as Serena was fined and said "sorry," three days late, There was Roger, cursing, what is Arthur Ashe thinking from above? Sure, no one likes to lose, particularly a champ, But the solipsism gives new meaning to the tennis terms "upset" and "love." From the world of politics, sports and entertainment, Modeling poorly, it's common, there's no getting away, Outbursts, ego and swear words, regrets only after the fact,</p>	<p>from above? Sure, no one likes to lose, particularly a champ, But the solipsism gives new meaning to the tennis terms "upset" and "love." From the world of politics, sports and entertainment, Modeling poorly, it's common, there's no getting away, Outbursts, ego and swear words, regrets only after the fact, Elegiac for a week of incivility. Karen Ann DeLuca</p>
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Just Look What Has Become of US?

No one says "please" or "thank you," "Hello," or "excuse me" as they shove by, Newt called Nancy by her last name, We're accustomed to rarely being looked in the eye.

I've been woken up by loud TV, blaring music, Thumps and slams in the middle of night, My neighbor's website boast a hobby of "bothering people," That has given me a fright.

For the ex, name calling came naturally, "Bitch," "evil," "worthless," and "whore," I had enough by the time he took a swing, The police hauled him out the door.

And what about the language on radio or TV, Talking heads screaming over each other, If "leaders" don't model or show respect, How can we expect it from our "brother?"

Online it's even worse, Borderline "opinions" and inflammatory trash talk rule the day, The only line that's been drawn is in New York, Where calling someone a "skank" or a "ho" is not okay.

In business, always trying to put one over, Disingenuous discourse to see who can be gypped, A person's word used to be their bond, It's worth has certainly dipped.

We used to be able to calmly converse, Have a dialogue, agree to disagree, Now you can go to a town hall meeting, And leave one finger free!

Woodstock and Kumbaya were not so long ago, Is this rudeness the result of thirty years of "partisanship plus?" We're shrinking in the eyes of the world, No wonder, just look what has become of US!

We're acting like animals, not using our brains, Less "listening tour," more national Jerry Springer show, No civility, no empathy, adrenaline fueled vitriol and rage, With a Congressman calling the President a liar, we've hit a new low.

Karen Ann DeLuca

<p>How Soon</p> <p>Tingling daylight, everything is strange,</p> <p>The worlds become a rifle range.</p> <p>The sky has become one giant cloud,</p> <p>It's raining bullets, bombs, and shrouds.</p> <p>The earth is bleeding tears and pain,</p> <p>And I the only one left to ex-</p>	<p>plain.</p> <p>I would have finished this, with luck,</p> <p>But I forgot to...</p> <p>Michael Bruce Foster</p> <p>Earth and Darkness</p> <p>I lie on the cold evening sidewalk,</p> <p>Windy waves pass over me.</p> <p>A star tries to impress, with its fall,</p>	<p>But I am without a net.</p> <p>I'm in the sea of earth and darkness,</p> <p>Drowning from a bullet's blow.</p> <p>Michael Bruce Foster</p>	<p>Below Zero</p> <p>The cold covers my face</p> <p>Like frozen glass,</p> <p>Ready to shatter at</p> <p>The first warm touch</p> <p>Of my lover's hand.</p> <p>Michael Bruce Foster</p>
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<p>Fog</p> <p>Delighted with my misery</p> <p>The fog gave chase to my soul,</p> <p>Until I no longer felt its security</p> <p>Nor heard its soothing, whispered</p> <p>Fragments of advice.</p> <p>A Meal of Colors</p> <p>Rainbows fly,</p> <p>On the sides of fish.</p> <p>The hawk gathers them</p> <p>Up and feeds each color</p> <p>To her children.</p> <p>Michael Bruce Foster</p>	<p>Ebony Song</p> <p>Ebony song,</p> <p>Without stars or moon</p> <p>You sharply chill</p> <p>My bones, and with</p> <p>The wind play a</p> <p>Freezing chorus</p> <p>In my ears.</p> <p>Michael Bruce Foster</p>	<p>Sated Dreams</p> <p>Against the blazing twilight horizon in passions</p> <p>Of orchid sashay and rusty erstwhile forevers,</p> <p>A pulse in the heartfelt redemption</p> <p>Of currents in cause and desires alight, alive,</p> <p>Akin to the epic assurance of evermore and a</p> <p>Star, an invocation in the tinder of sated dreams</p> <p>And sparrow revelations in black and</p> <p>Silhouette.</p> <p>Ron Koppelberger</p>	<p>Tender Embraces</p> <p>In embryonic assurances of undisguised love, the</p> <p>Passionate wills of what is bidden by the saints and</p> <p>Skies in amber hued prisms of</p> <p>Existence. The hope of well fed mistresses</p> <p>And clean cured calm, a pleasure in the serenity</p> <p>Of tender embraces and eyes in rouge ascension.</p> <p>Ron Koppelberger</p>
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<p>Passion and Presence</p> <p>The ecstasy in fame and strengths</p> <p>Of wisdom, in purpose and exhibited daze, in dare</p> <p>And rare wills of repentant troth, in absolute wild,</p> <p>Sensual abandon and favors of satisfying,</p> <p>Visible bloom, the purity in sapphire skies and</p> <p>Twilight fray, the buzz in</p>	<p>bones of dusty, desolate</p> <p>Passion and presence. The seasons in sage arrival</p> <p>And bidden apple awareness.</p> <p>Ron Koppelberger</p> <p>Silent Touch</p> <p>Hyacinth perfections in azure prayers of romance,</p> <p>In mischief and wild coquette, the passion of tear drop honey</p>	<p>In amber asylums of beauty, existing for the</p> <p>Love of silent touch</p> <p>And swathed assurances of devotion,</p> <p>Wandering by the precious flame</p> <p>Of yearning hearts.</p> <p>Ron Koppelberger</p>	<p>folding around your name.</p> <p>July. The highest month lost, climbing to claim the sun without you, step by step like a small breath tossing among the snowflakes or the beautiful shadow from your heart.</p> <p>Simon Perchik</p> <p>The mirror a convict holds out and between two bars sees the long, steel corridor :the sun</p>
<p>Sweet Sanctity</p> <p>Remedies of discovery and vigilance,</p> <p>An arrow in ascending melancholy</p> <p>And balanced spectacle,</p> <p>A trapping in torn vestures of charm,</p> <p>Descried by the touch of loves sweet sanctity</p> <p>And passions arrival, the flourishing bond of devoted</p> <p>Security and care for the ancient arts</p> <p>Of affection, a tear in gentle waves</p> <p>Of sufferance and radiant will.</p> <p>Ron Koppelberger</p>	<p>Exhaling Desire</p> <p>The caress of your tears against my lips</p> <p>As the world shadows our love and the essence</p> <p>Of ethereal defiance, sublime temptation to worship</p> <p>The sustenance of your amber eyes and bonded</p> <p>Bidden heart, a testimony in rapture</p> <p>And warm suspiring grace as we share the spaces</p> <p>Between moments of exhaling</p> <p>Desire.</p> <p>Ron Koppelberger</p>	<p>Eight months your heart that blinking flag mountaineers still carry to the sun -you came down with only a crib sheet folded around the light</p> <p>-it's enough! The air ignites, cries out pours down your bones gutting your throat. You drink maps waiting for a name</p> <p>named Eight. The July you couldn't find looms in front covered with snow -Eight</p> <p>just born and your heart one month short rises as each morning the sun somehow must be carried down tiptoe, asleep on its side</p> <p>and the July you couldn't climb will always be too dry, too hot your skin burn out -a druggist walks past wraps something for shade and inside the jar you hear</p>	<p>aches too, hunting down the light that escapes each evening, hides a few hours, a few clouds, the cold the lifetime -what did you expect</p> <p>holding out your hand as a dorsal fin will deflect and everything swerves to the floor -I'm drowning so close to your lips</p> <p>and my heart held out still looks down the hall the dust covered breasts no longer thirsty for lips or hands almost on fire</p> <p>-a small mirror shares my room with an electric switch with light that kills on the spot</p>

and what did you expect
holding out the sun
till it finds a window
covered with frost
and how the curtain warmed
your shoulders
and kisses and yes, birds and
oceans too are hiding some-
where from my arms.

Simon Perchik

The plumage in this nar-
whal's side
lifts as every birth tangled in
water
bleeds from a place it's not
wanted
-one feather left
splashing and splashing, the

sea
dead, drifting, all these waves
torn from one gill

-night after night a breath
so huge in my chest
and the Earth rolling on its
side
bloated with air and pain.
Choking almost helps.

I carry this enormous breath
back to its sea, its silt again
then rise into
moonlight :tides
trying to revive these waves
as if underneath all wings
there are no roots and water

now
weighs less: the whale
tumbles each night closer
circling to gather speed
and its blood
as streams will wither
on the mountain inside

-in this darkness
everything is red :the moon
floating away or I cough
or walk like a sunrise

-again that birth: the sky
chased from my side and
emptying.

Simon Perchik

The cots, the stove, the
crew
unclaimed in this Nissen
hut :my mailbox
between twelve more :a
camp
ditched, the road too
narrow, curved
from rain and letters
home, tissue thin
too weak to lift my lips,
my slow
wide, rippling sweep
crumpled to tin, its great
arc
now eyes and claws and
thirst, the flag
soaked in blood, waving
where it fell.

People I don't know send
letters
promising to lose. I've al-
ready won!
A SOUTHERN CAPE FOR
TWO that couldn't wait
printed on the envelope --
my hangar's

full. Too many capitals and
these stamps
each day heav-
ier :monuments
defaced the first time up
tenacious as fly paper

--I can't separate the mail
just by calling out, every
name
sounds as if mine at some
briefing
we agreed the last one left
a prize that sounded more
like laughter

--the letters too heavy
now :a heap
as clouds still gather each
evening red
--the last carrying their dead
to the pile: every sky

waiting on my table to be
sent home
as a flower reaching into the
world
or letters with my name out-
side.

Simon Perchik

No hardhat and this stub-
born doctor
too close, my heart
battering his head --his
timid fingers
knocking to unearthen from
my chest
the great cave, the fire that
listens

for flesh --he collects and
keeps a chart
slants is pencil-thin light
writes on my eyes
something I want forgotten

--without a rope, the light
lowered through my throat.
He says my breath is still in
place
warm from human sacrifice.
He asks how old I am

and my heart by milliliters
is carried off on a tray
as if a wince could tell
what blood was like in an-
cient times

the blood that always saw
me naked
the blood long before the
Earth
began to beat :the ava-
lanche
still gushing out my arms
my colors and perfumes.

This doctor's used to snap-
ping nerves
with pointed hammers and
whisk brooms
--he digs bareheaded, un-
covers
the murmur stone by stone
:so many deaths
for one brief grave :my
heart
as sometimes an old school
song
and the soft drizzle that was
a name
before his cold fingers, the
fierce cough
he tells me to try.

Simon Perchik

**Short Meditation Po-
ems**

I my original self
washes away in rain
left as dew clinging to
fruit

Like snow on the moun-
tain
becomes the ocean,
we live and die.

Three birds perch on
step
two moons reflect in
water
one monk in dharma.

The Buddha sits in the
rain
and doesn't get wet
but when he swims in
the ocean
he becomes the water.

Like stones in the water
become stuck when the
river freezes
hatred and ill will be-
come trapped
once allowed to enter
the mind.

There are thousands of ways to be but only one way to not be.

Just as you can't smell an orange until you peel it you can't reach non-thought without first peeling away thought.

There are no need for benches and no need for words it is far better to sit on a stone in silence.
Chloe Viner

Myself
Here I am within myself
Wondering if this is I or that was me
Thinking of questions so hard to answer
Why is the sky blue
And why is the depth of my soul so dark
How could I Have done the things I did
Where is the inner soul I knew so well
Why did it leave me so soon
Has moments in time stripped off
A layer of my soul

have I lost a part of my compassion
Have hardships of others I've loved caused callous to engulf my heart
Has misfortunes damaged the fragile barrier
Surrounding my heart
Look at me what do you see
Is this that boy
Smiles, loving, caring and learning.
Absorbing each passing day
Perhaps I have learned that Too much may be no good
And trying too hard
Sometimes doesn't work
Is love for others
Slowing slipping away

Have I learned from my pain
Or just avoiding it
Inside I grow more confused
Moments alone seem more like hours
Thoughts and memories are
Draining my life fluid from my soul
Love drips away

Come back, please come back
I liked who I was
Please come back
For I miss the softness and compassion I now lack
Please return to me myself
I know to be that person called Jack
Jack Bellis
Where Are You
Where is my power
Where did it go
I thought I was someone special
A mere mortal?
Cuts me to my soul
I thought he loved me
Perhaps he does
But not in the way I imagined
It cuts me to my soul
This feels like a dream
Not real at all
Do I pray to something
Or to nothing at all
Where are you really

Why can't I say for sure
Your existence is so very important
Yet your never there when I open the door
Confused is my logic
I can tell all you exist
Doubts are deep
That it hurts so bad
It confuses me
And makes me feel sad
Why does it have to be this way
Can't a few know you're here
If you can't do it yourself
Let me be the one
I'm already here
Jack Bellis
Teacher
What is it that drives us?
Is it the concept
That motivates us all?
Or is it something you sense
While walking through these halls
Our job is to teach a simple concept
You would think
It's a good one at best
Would we not all agree

Yet there are those who shiver
At the thought to learn?
To be taught?
To expand my mind?
You must be crazy I have
Better things to do with my time
O yes to prove the Concept
To those who resist
The battle line is drawn
So roll up your selves
And dare not make a fist
For it's us to do battle and always persist
Our Opponent have allies
We capture them from their ears
Game Boys are also seized
With the opponent some-
times in tears
This War is more important
Than the one in Iraq
For the future of
Our country is placed
Squarely on our back
Jack Bellis

Looking
As I look what do I see
I see a young boy in front of me
His smile was bright and so was his life
Who is that boy I do see?
As I look through my eyes
I can see the makings of a kind young being
He was smart and funny and good to be around
He was the type of boy I wish I knew now
Bright was his life for his potential was grand
Nothing could stop him well at least nothing at hand
As I look very hard through my eyes I don't see
In the distance the coming of a great tragedy
As I look I can see the boy didn't think
That wouldn't happen to me
For I can see his hope and great possibility

Here I look and still see the glimmer
As his push for a better life that starts to shimmer
Death his about as he wonders why
This can't be real as he often cries
It is I and this can't be
For doesn't he recognize it is me

As I dare to look again more pain do I see?
For the young man still trying oh yes so
Desperately wishing for a break from tragedy

I can see his puzzled face as again he asks
Why is this happening to me?

It's getting harder to look for the wear and tear
Is showing quite clear
I feel sorry for the young man though I can't do a thing
For I only can see and absolutely do nothing

As I squint I can see the hardship and agony
Sometimes I wish my own eyes would fail me
But as I look and I must
The pain in his face is now

painted on an
Older man with no glimmer of hope
And the age was drawn by an artist of
Despair rather than that of one with the Almighty's flare

As I look with a heavy heart
I have seen all I can bare
For his life has taught me all is certainly not fair
Potential is great and brightness as well
But I can't do a thing I can't even yell
For the boy to man I have seen through my eyes

I now know what he lacked but way to late to act
Simply put I am looking through the eyes of
The shell of an old man named Jack

10-22-09
Jack Bellis

Mirror

When I look in the mirror
What do I see
Is it me or him
So I ask who are you and I say you are real and I am the dream
I am who you wish to be and you are you the one you have to be
I am the one who hit the home run I am the winner you dream to be
You are the one who works those simple jobs I am the One that travels the world
I am the one that mingles with the stars you are the one
That mingles too long
You are the one that has all the responsibilities
You are the one with all the obligations I am the one who gets you through when you are weaken by all you have to do

I am the one that holds you up
when the problems mount
I am the one that takes you where
you have to go to rest your mind and feel
the peace that helps you through
I am the one you wish to be
I am the one you dream was me

Jack Bellis

The Wake

Forced conversations in a hushed tone
Awkward laughter, guilty cheer.

"She looks so natural."
No, she doesn't. Did you know her?
Doesn't this bother anyone else?
We stand around this artificially darkened room, trying not to acknowledge why we're here.

feel
better about her not being here?
She should have fought, tooth and nail!
Why is she there, lying still, while I'm here, comforting strangers?
"It was her time."
How dare you? How dare you say
that she deserved this? Or that God
deserves her more than I do!
What kind of God do you believe in?
Not the God I know. Not the God she knew.

Forced conversations in a hushed tone
Whispered questions, shamed ignorance.

Justin P Lambert

Us

I want to believe.
I need to imagine
I can do what you need,
I can be what you want.
Tell me what's right.
Tell me who to be.
We work on these revolving

until we're dizzy and sick.
I know there is more.
I know you have wished-I lost that once.
I never want to lose it again.
Forget about the past.
Forget what I have forgotten.
We ramble in and out of confusion
until we've forgotten everything
except us.

Memory

Mind thinning--
Gray and fuzzy flights of recall
dapple harder-won concrete memories
creating shadows from no substance
smoothing sharp contours and carving
tiny holes in what I thought
was my life.

Justin P Lambert

Confession #12

There is no speaking,
She talks to herself
even though she has

a roommate who won't
talk to her. The roommate
stalks through the house,

stirs the widening door-
frames,
retreats to the bedroom
behind her head, riffle

shuffles for a game of soli-
taire.

On the other hand she has
a jukebox full of atonal mu-
sic,

enough to speak to the
damned.
She talks to the music, plays
her hand
and demonstrates the mania

of listening everywhere:
she closes her eyes
and stares.

Janann Dawkins**Inventor's Glee**
*(in the wake of a suc-
cessful poem)*

My entire
tarpaulin skin
shimmers like a
licked clitoris
tottering
on orgasm,
my ears whine with the
charge
of camera-flash,

my shadow
becomes my secret admirer
and my neurons anticipate
the synapses of others.

I'm thus afflicted for hours.

Janann Dawkins**On Being Human**

Eat, sleep, and excrete.
With luck, you fuck.

Your Odds

You can't elude it. Were
it
a fire you'd trance
as your pants legs
dazzle with heat.

It's red; it's black.
No matter your turn, it's
there

to greet you, the beggar
trawling for change: you,

upended, surrender
your last bit.

Janann Dawkins**Eleven**

O Father Of Mercy
Wash out this grief you
shower
Over me and the land,

Ring out the spirit
And Saturday our love's
weeks
Like light through locked
twigs,

Beyond the puddled boy
Crying in vain for solace
Sung all about him

With worried weather,
Arise in your emptiness
Head-high like the sun.

Stars are for darkness.
May each night blanket
blessings
Down Heart's corridor

And the floors of joy
Shift shapelessly through
lives
Like mud on apples

In a woven dreamland,
Floating as God's single
thought,
Making rich your harmony

As the cross flies off
And the Bible loads squirt
guns
And "grace" replaces "debt"

Replaces tongue and
Speech in swirling compas-
sion
Viewed from your own chair

You made from pictures
And lightbulbs and fake
noses
And dusty open cheer

Up! The baby smiles
Your world of grief has shat-
tered.
Light has pierced the dark.

Matt Caliri

In the End is the Word Our
passion sets up apart
With a light that goes on
and off
In its own way and pace,
We recognize ourselves as
we rise,
Touch the floor with our
feet
And head off into the day,
Each made whole by a des-
tination
That does not overlap with
any other,
Though the paths might
collide.

God is another name for
our desire,
And the idol reflects back to
us,
We celebrate it and pray to
no other,
In time we leave all
churches
Close all the holy books
In order to turn the world
our own way
Upside down with us on
top,
And as each of us takes to
such cycles,
We have loves, no enemies,

The idols are real and all
else is an illusion,
There are only obstacles
in holding each other,
Our passion sets us
apart.

Ben**Runaway Horses**

I became used to the
new shapes
That she made in the
bed quite easily,
Even when they changed
with breathing.

Now the sheets are flat
and seem
To go on forever, I re-
member
The way she would block
the moonlight

And the moonlight now
flows
All over me and I am
drowning,
That feeling was never
there before.

Her perfume never smothered,
 Never filled my throat or lungs,
 It reached my heart and mind first

Before taking time to travel and circulate,
 It gave me clouds that I alone
 Could sense on otherwise clear days.

Now I roll up towards her again,
 Can she hear my breathing?
 Has she been remembering my arms at night?

I have been her perfect tourist,
 Making a souvenir of everything given,
 Even the bites and cuts.

One certainty, I have been missing her,
 The question is in other bosom,
 Will she ever miss not seeing me? **Ben**

Empty Squares

The floor was too hard,
 Perhaps under it was better,
 Sleeping with the pipes and rats,
 But I had a sponge put out
 And slept on the division bar,
 Thinking of myself as a remainder.

The sponge was hard too,
 It was trying to flatter the floor,
 I tried to make a field of sheets,
 Where I would be held up
 On a small patch of thin ice.

Of course it was too cold
 And I felt like I had slipped,
 I imagined my pillow was a cloud
 Raining on everything below me,
 It drew the lids down well
 And laced the lashes shut. **Ben**

The Age Demands It

If this is a iron age, so be it,
 A golden age shines,
 But bends too easily for descendants,
 It never breaks and is rubbed thin,
 A silver age stretches time
 Into a lake to sit and glitter,
 But it tarnishes and causes insanity,
 Carrying lead under its skin,
 A bronze age is a stronger imitation
 Of the golden, but an iron age
 Will give us something heavy,
 Something useful for swords and ploughs. **Ben**

Index of First Lines

A cold coming we had of it,
 After the torchlight, red on sweaty faces,
 Although I do not hope to turn again
 Among the smoke and fog
 Of a December afternoon.

Midwinter spring is its own season.
 Here the crow starves
 The songsters of the air repair,
 The winter evening settles down.

The eagle soars in the summit of heaven,
 There are those who would build the temple,
 Let us go then, you and I
 We are the hollow men. **Ben**

A More Perfect Union

The earth is not perfect,
 Not as a flat circle making Euclid and Pythagoras giddy,
 Or a sphere that spins,
 It bulges at the middle
 Like us in old age,
 And why should it not,
 It's got billions of candles
 Still left to blow from so many birthdays,
 Attended by a family of planets
 Growing distant every year.

It does not even travel
 In perfect circles, it does not move
 As Ptolemy and Aristotle
 Tried to choreograph it,
 It does not stay still, silent
 Firmly grounded, because
 It is the ground itself, it had nothing
 To reach out and hold onto,
 The thing comes back to where it started,
 But wobbles in an oval,
 drunk
 On the gravity of the sun.

Everyday perfection is a dull joy,
 Bright for a moment, colors
 And shapes too well defined
 Begin to melt us, break us down,
 We feel apart from the earth,
 And disgusted with ourselves,
 We cannot have such white teeth,
 Happy families, clean bathrooms,
 The world we make was imperfect,
 Off-center, poorly defined, the edges
 Blending into one another, the horizon
 The only straight line to worry about.

Dreams are now our approachable reality,
 The waking life is a mirror,
 Reversed, imperfect, a shadow
 Of a Platonic realm, the veil
 Has fallen, with curtains not far behind,
 What was always present, always real,
 The stench and the grind,
 Is now the treasured thing, the exotic,
 The vanguard and the avant-garde
 Lead us back to the cave.

The perfect things I store
 In a menagerie between my ears,
 On a shelf with the straightest lines
 I've ever seen, I take them out
 When the day is rough, when
 The wobble is too much,
 Or the spin too fast, when
 I want the oval to drag us into Mars,
 Then will be the time for perfect things. **Ben**

A Narrative Maybe
 Let your envy perfect you,
 That flame inside, make it
 Brighter, and burn away
 Those impurities, that heaviness
 That kept you down.

 They spend too much time
 Waiting for chemicals,
 Elements are slow to react
 With words placed on tables,
 There is antidote, because
 There is no poison, all life
 Is non-toxic.

 When I sit and admire you
 Across the room, don't

Take that as a compliment,
 You had nothing to do
 With that nose, those lips,
 (I look around the piercings,
 My eyes are not magnets.)

 I don't understand, we're right,
 We made love, I think,
 And I tried to sell what came out,
 Don't look ashamed, you asked
 For ten percent, but the merchants

Were picky, their dollars smell
 Like vinegar, they want to keep
 Digits constant as their fingers shake.

 Sorry it's blue,
 My chemical companions,
 Do not mourn the loss
 Of synchronicity,
 Remember someone
 Is always finishing your sentences
 Somewhere else,
 No one writes alone. **Ben**

Everyday Life: Social Smackdown at the Supermarket

 The weekend after Veterans' Day, I went shopping at my local Giant to purchase some raspberries and yogurt that were on sale. The one tucked away in a currently bucolic area of Alexandria, formerly and aptly known as the Hamlets, which the City and its partners are now turning into a construction zone and is soon to become a concrete cookie cutter copy of everywhere else. As I checked out, there was suddenly a commotion in the adjoining aisle. Apparently perturbed at waiting too long behind a woman whose payment was government subsidized, a middle aged man "lost it." Her lengthy tinkering with the contents of her cart to come within a certain dollar amount pushed him over the edge and he loudly let loose on how his tax dollars were partially paying her tab anyway, so "here's the difference, let's move the line."
 And with that this sleepy little community store erupted into a microcosm of what's troubling America today. Too many handouts - to the rich and to the poor, squeezing those stuck in the middle to, well, class warfare and a social smackdown at the supermarket. Rapacious residential landlords, in subprime hock themselves, seeing only visions of dollar signs in their tenants eyes, exacting a hidden human toll. Well ahead of schedule, Mark Center is losing its neighborly neighborhood feel. Which is why I, and many others, are leaving. Bah, humbug and Ho, Ho, Ho.

Karen Ann DeLuca

This is probably the best issue I've had in the two plus years of this publication! I would love to see much more of the work of those who have been published on these pages. This is what makes this all the more fun. Getting to read such great work from such great people. I know that I will be getting the very best of each and every one of you. I know this sounds so cliché but it is always true: without you none of this would be possible. Please feel free to print as many copies as you like and give them to your friends. More for you to show them what wonderful writers you are than telling them about the magazine. And by all means if your friends are writers tell them there is always room to submit work and people wanting to read it and consume it as I have! Please check the blog/site to see who has been chosen Featured Writers and for any changes in the future. Plus there is plenty of good reading. Thank you all very much!

Godfrey Logan

Creator & Editor