

SCAB

ISSUE #8

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EDITOR'S NOTE

It's been another six months. Crazy.

SCAB's not a baby anymore. It's growing up. Maturing. The family building around it is growing faster than ever before. Faster and with a sharper focus on what SCAB really is about: each and every contributor brought their shocking and unapologetic talent to the mix, and the results are ugly and scary and brilliant. This is exactly what I dreamed of when I first started entertaining the idea of creating a platform for those who *transgress* – in a way that's closer to real life than any literary or artistic label.

The 8th issue is special not only because it comes the closest to my original vision yet but because it also features an interview with the creators of a fairly new Hungarian project, Queer Budapest. I live in Hungary, a country that cannot be called a queer paradise, even if I'm being really kind. Therefore, it's a complete joy that something like this exists here – a network for artistic queer people who might find themselves removed from the “mainstream” on more than one level. I think it's important to spread the word when something like this is born. And so I'm determined to do my little part.

All in all, I can only say what I always say: enjoy. See for yourselves if parts of you find a home here. I hope they do.

D.

March 2021



Facefucked out of love

I don't remember if I let you cum
inside my mouth
before or after
you took a piss,
but we were in a public bathroom
at the mall
and all I could think about was sleep

You were leaning lazily against the cramped bathroom's wall,
black jeans hanging loosely below the hips,
penis jumping at me in the way that dogs do
My arms slinked around your outer thighs,
fingers latching onto bouncy cheeks,
knees on cold, unclean tiles
I looked up into your eyes and I could see the letters
F U C K
spelled out in your gaze,
dripping down in a thick paste

In that moment I was aroused –
there's something about an erection being presented for you
that makes the mouth water,
that makes the ego drunk
I could feel a pleasant swelling above my scrotum
and a heaviness that comes with deep breathing
The smell of you already leaking made my
lips part easily
as if some Jesus-like god commanded it
But it only took ten seconds
before I was bored with your penis still hard inside my mouth

When you eventually finished
I went back home
alone,
watched some porn,
and decided I didn't love you anymore

22.12.2020, 15.44

I'm a queer, coloured South African who has been writing/attempting to write poetry for almost 11 years. When I'm not trying to claw my way over thorny walls of writer's block, you can find me spending hours photographing and conversing with animals. Besides all of that, my favourite colours include greys, browns and blacks, and if you don't want that orange, I'll gladly eat it for you.

Ménage

after a conversation on queer poetry with Eric Norris

I - Bodied

You fuck him like a necrophiliac
concerned only with his scrotal sac
bobbing rhythmically, involuntarily,
against you. You prepare to vault into
a void. Bodiless, to you he's patchwork:
a warm dildo, avoiding the human
experiencing this movement with you.

Absolutely no strings. And you're liquid;
undone, vulnerable and tepid.
His body irritatingly complete,
he reaches out to you and the conceit
is broken, the room floods with specifics:
a load splashed across his chest, clocks ticking,
his smile unfurling, the sound of your name.

II - Embodied

you write your poems as if you're following
a trail of body parts like fresh breadcrumbs

you've trimmed away his body leaving holes
lined up on the picnic blanket, waiting

in poems, orifices can be alive:
distilled, you say but you are still bodied

lust unzips your connective tissue
you're a dick, you're a mouth, you're an asshole

mechanically thrusting, closing, floating
above you, the impulse for all of this

dissipates and you find yourself, mid-fuck,
writing lines to give reason to distance

III - Disembodied

you aspire to being a person
 in love with something more than a body

you aspire to being more a person
 than in love with something a body

a body aspires too being a person in love
 with something more than you

you as pyre to being a person
 body in love with a thing more than some

you being something more a spire
 a person too in love with a body

you're in love with a body more than being
 some persona aspirating

you're a poor son embodying
 love as nothing

Mark Ward is the author of the chapbooks *Circumference* (Finishing Line Press, 2018) and *Carcass* (Seven Kitchens Press, 2020) and the forthcoming full-length collection, *Nightlight* (Salmon Poetry, 2022). He is the founding editor of *Impossible Archetype*, a journal of LGBTQ+ poetry, now in its fifth year.

All Apologies

Years ago, before they became strangers, they conversed through instant messages. Kyle, however, believed this particular conversation warranted a telephone call. He typed the message, asking for Brennan's number only to remember it still written down on a slip of paper wedged beneath a package of paper clips. He rarely kept the numbers of the men he encountered online; there was no reason to.

Seated on his bed, legs bent and crossed, he listened to Brennan's phone ring. His bedroom was undecorated apart from several wide bookcases, lined up one after another, filled with model airplanes. Meticulously adhered plastic models of aircraft from all the major world wars, vintage postal service planes, miniature passenger jets. While the dull mechanical rings sounded in his ear, he remembered the frank amusement with which Brennan discovered this room. He never touched a single model, but moved from plane to plane, as if inspecting them. Brennan continued even after Kyle wrapped his arms around his waist.

Brennan answered. His tone was precise and formal, the voice of customer service. Kyle croaked out a greeting. He suddenly felt petrified, in terror of whatever Brennan might say next.

"I'm glad you called," Brennan finally said.

"I am, too."

"When did you find out? I've already closed my chatbox."

"November, just after Thanksgiving."

"Not long before I did."

"How did you find out? Did you go in for a test?"

"It's kind of funny," Brennan said. Kyle heard the creak of a recliner in the background. "Around finals, I got this sore throat. I thought it was just allergies, but it never got better.

I even went to some 24-hour clinic. Bunch of fucking quacks. They just dumped some antibiotics on me and sent me home. Anyway, week later, my father has to carry me out of the apartment and drive me to the emergency room."

"What was wrong with you?"

"That's the funny part. I had fucking thrush."

"I don't think I've heard of that."

“Unless you’ve got kids, there’s no reason you should. Only infants and old farts get it. So when I come in, some college student, and my throat is covered in this white—this white *shit*, they give me the test.”

“I haven’t been sick yet,” Kyle said, feeling this was a sort of confession. He was healthy. He had seen a specialist who recorded all the necessary levels, the amount of the virus in his blood and other statistics. Kyle had not tried to remember these numbers. He trusted his doctor to let him know if more aggressive treatment would one day be required. He didn’t want those stark, impersonal scores echoing through his mind like a passing siren.

“I almost died,” Brennan said flatly.

“How long were you in the hospital?”

“About a week. The doctor said there was scar tissue over eighty percent of my esophagus.”

“My God.”

“Good news is I got to postpone all my finals. I mean, hey, I had the perfect excuse.”

Kyle intended to laugh at this. It seemed the proper thing to do. But as the moment passed, he heard only silence. He had not made a sound.

“Hello?” Brennan said.

“I’m still here.”

“Okay.”

“I just wanted to call because...” Kyle said.

“Do you want to hook up again?”

Kyle was stunned. The afternoon light drifting through the blinds took on a hostile glow. He felt exposed, with no means of steering the conversation.

“No. I mean, sure, if you want to. But that’s not why I—”

“I don’t get to Dallas that often anymore, but I’ll be up that way soon enough. You live in the same place?”

It took Kyle a moment to register that it was his turn to speak. “Um, yeah. Yeah, same place.”

“But this time, make sure you lock up those cats.”

“Sorry about that.”

“No worries.”

“And I’m sorry about...” Kyle said.

“Sorry about what?”

“I—well, I *gave* this to you.”

“Yeah, we fucked in August and I got diagnosed just before Christmas, so I guess you’re right.”

The blandness with which Brennan made this deduction troubled Kyle. He had expected anger, threats, tears. This man, this boy, was going to be sick for the rest of his life, and it was because he bent over for Kyle moments after entering his apartment. Kyle had rehearsed the ways he planned to reassure Brennan that he never intended to infect him. How could he? He, himself, had no idea he was positive when they met.

“I’m just so sorry.”

“Don’t be. You didn’t know.”

“Still.”

“Hey, I knew the dangers before I started meeting guys. I knew this might happen, and now it has. No worries.”

Kyle felt his face flush. His heart raced, and he realized what he felt was unmitigated panic. This man he knew, aside from their summer encounter, as only a chatbox on a monitor had done something more disorienting than refusing his apology—he had insisted no apology was necessary. Anything could have happened next, and Kyle suddenly missed the certainties of anonymous flesh, how it appeared and left and did nothing unexpected.

“You okay?” Brennan asked. Kyle had again not spoken for too long.

“Yeah, I’m just...surprised.”

“Really, it’s okay. We can still have fun. And, hey, this time we *really* don’t have to worry about condoms.”

“What do you want to do?” Kyle asked. He took a relieved breath as the conversation promised to take a more manageable turn.

“Well, I thought we’d play with those paper airplanes of yours.”

Kyle laughed, a sound that surprised him.

“What do you think?” Brennan continued. “I want you to fuck me like a homecoming queen.”

Kyle leaned back on the bed, lying down. He smiled, finally and truly smiled, for the first time during the conversation. At last, this was something he could understand. “You gonna fuck me too?” he asked.

“Planning on it.”

“You want me to shoot my seed inside you?” His smile waned when he heard no response. His and Brennan’s correspondence before and after their encounter had been filled with crude, exciting slang for what they wanted to do to each other. Kyle thought they had returned to this sordid but recognizable place. “You there?” he asked.

“Yeah.” Brennan said. Silence followed. Finally, he added, “Don’t use that word anymore.”

“What word?”

“Seed.”

“Oh. Um, sure, that’s fine.”

“I don’t know. It’s always grossed me out. I didn’t say anything online because I wasn’t sure we’d meet again. But, yeah, it gives me the creeps. I’m sorry.”

“No, I’m sorry. I didn’t know. It won’t happen again.”

Kyle felt his lungs expand suddenly. He’d held his breath for a long time. But the crisis had passed. So often with men, the first sign of discord sent the bastard packing. The rush of gratitude he felt when Brennan overlooked that word shamed him. Most fags wouldn’t give a damn. He and Brennan exchanged a few more vulgarities and promised to keep in touch online until Brennan returned to Dallas.

“Thanks for calling,” Brennan said. “That was really cool of you.”

“Sure. Thanks for...understanding.”

“We’re totally fine. No worries. Can’t wait to see you again.”

“You too.”

Kyle hung up the phone. He stayed flat atop the bed for a few moments, letting the conversation bubble in his mind. Finally, he rose from the bed and left the room. It was time to feed the cats. As he walked through the living room, he passed his computer. He stopped, looked at the screen as if he didn’t recognize it, then sat down at the keyboard.

He moved the cursor to his list of online buddies. He clicked on Brennan’s screen name. He clicked again and the option to delete the screen name appeared. After hesitating a moment, Kyle erased Brennan’s name. He sat perfectly still. He was waiting to feel something but felt nothing. Brennan was just another guy to vanish from his life. The only difference was that Kyle waved the magic wand. I made the poor bastard disappear, he thought.

He hoped Brennan was getting the health care he needed. It's one thing to cast a guy from your life, but quite another to lose one through death. Kyle prided himself on how he made sure the men in his life knew his heart.

Thomas Kearnes graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with an MA in film writing. His fiction has appeared in Gulf Coast, Berkeley Fiction Review, Timber, Foglifter, Hobart, Gertrude, Adroit Journal, Split Lip Magazine, Cutthroat, Litro, PANK, BULL: Men's Fiction, Gulf Stream Magazine, and elsewhere. He is a three-time Pushcart Prize nominee and three-time Best of the Net nominee. Originally from East Texas, he now lives in Houston and works as an English tutor at a local community college. His Lambda Literary Award-nominated debut collection of short fiction, "Texas Crude," is now available from Lethe Press at numerous online booksellers. His second collection, "Death by Misadventure," will release from Dark Ink Books in Spring 2022.



Perth-based multimedia artist Jason Rufov picked up portrait sketching in 2018 and has since honed into the world of erotica along the likes of legends such as Tom of Finland and John Willie. Particularly focusing on BDSM compositions, there emerges a conversation about the purity and beauty of sexual expression begging to be discussed through his art. Jason spends his time working with many other artistic mediums as well as in many areas of fine art, such as costume design, performance, music and makeup, building a repertoire of skills and stories to further influence his drawings.

Normal Guy

I am thirty years old. I am a normal guy. I have a normal life. I have a good job, and I have normal desires. Like most people, I want financial security for my future. I would like to own a house one day and if I am lucky, I will have a wife and family. I am a normal guy with normal desires, and like most people, I have sex with dead bodies.

It's one of those things that just happens to people. No one really plans for it to happen. It just sort of happens. There's always an introduction. Usually from a friend or an older relative. For me, it was my older brother, I think, but it could have just as easily been a friend. I don't know who got the body for me, but I remember the body itself. It was in the woods. Near our house. Propped up against a tree near a stream. I was young, but not so young that I didn't know what to do with it. It was awkward to pull the pants down because I wasn't that strong. I struggled so much with the belt that I nearly gave up. But I didn't quit. Once the pants were down, I mounted the body and pushed myself against it. It was cold. Like really cold. And it did not want me inside, which is silly to think because, well, it was a dead body. It didn't want anything. I pushed myself inside it until my pubic bone was rubbing up against it. At this point, it felt like the body was gripping me and squeezing. There was no lubrication and I started to get worried that I would be stuck inside it forever. This fear was not enough to deflate me, though. In fact, I think it gave me the jolt I needed to plant my seed. Once it happened, I deflated, and the seed coated me and allowed me to slip out. And that was my first time. You never forget your first.

E. Nightpain is a carpenter living in Montreal, Canada. He has been working on his debut novel for the past year. More of his writing can be found at nightpainincorporated.wordpress.com and contacted at nightpainincorporated@gmail.com



bedpit_12



bedpit_31



bedpit_56

Gory Orgy is the bandname for artist Ed Lust and his expanding collective of smut-trained machines. From the South Island of Aotearoa, New Zealand, Gory Orgy rides the line between porn and abstract absurdity, creating 'flawless human erotica' for fans of all forms and persuasions. Find them on Instagram @goryorgy_ or at goryorgy.com

bump

i gave him a hand job under a table
at a Denny's in Los Angeles
just after the lunch rush
in exchange for a dime bag of speed and his soul.
he fails to come through,
on all accounts.

jck hnry, a queer writer living in the deserts of s/e California, continues to explore his world and reality, breaking from the mainstream, finding acceptance on the fringe. When not engaged in lascivious behavior, he actually writes and has found acceptance in a number of journals.

Strangers

We sat up in his bed like a couple catching up before bedtime. He was amiable enough, the curious, adventurous type. Not hesitant to make the first move. I'd seen him hanging around the convenience store a few times before. He wasn't really my type: slender, long-haired, with a big, open smile.

"Waiting for me?" he asked.

What a cowboy.

"Meet a lot of strange men?" he asked in bed after we caught our breath. Queer men often expect juicy stories about one's experiences with other men. I usually respond with readymade anecdotes of my most recent and noteworthy exploits. He covered his feet with the end of the blanket and tucked both hands under the side of his sharp face, looking up at me coquettishly.

"I guess I've always liked strangers," I confessed.

In the afternoons after grade school, I used to smoke under the stairs of an apartment block adjacent to a rundown arcade with abandoned galleries. Sometimes, a friend would sneak up the stairs with me, and we'd listen to a young couple fighting. We'd gather enough nerve and shout along, then make a run for it. I'd hang out up there by myself too, having inevitably wandered up the stairs, looking in the apartments with open doors. Sitting alone on the steps one day, I watched an old man rummaging through the mailboxes. His ruddy face crept up to each box before going through its contents.

"What you doing here?" he snapped finally.

"Waiting for a friend."

"Well, you can't sit around here on the stairs all day. You better come upstairs and phone him, make sure he's coming."

"That's OK, thanks. He's not far. I will go find him."

Sometimes, I got nauseous from smoking too many cigarettes under the stairs. I'd offer the older schoolboys some of my packet, vying for their company. When I got home after dark, I would wash the smell away with soap and spray my school uniform with air freshener.

The last time I wandered around alone and snuck up the stairs of that queer building, a tall man stepped out an open door as I passed. I had barely registered the red flash of his checkered shirt

and his bald head when I felt the strong grip of his arm around my neck. He pushed me inside and slammed the door of his dim apartment shut.

“What are you doing sneaking around here, boy?” He stank of grass fertilizer. I couldn’t muster an answer and stared into his dark, wide eyes.

“Where do you live?” he demanded.

“Just a few blocks from here, Sir. Massey Street.”

“You’re looking for an open window, trying to break into these flats.”

“I’m not, I promise. I just like to play around here is all.”

“By sneaking around and peeping into other people’s houses? You’ve been looking for trouble, and now you’ve found it. I’m going to show you what happens when you sneak around other people’s houses.”

He pulled his belt loose and shoved me over the armrest of a brown couch. My arms flanked awkwardly at my sides.

“Hands behind your head.”

I tried to concentrate on the grey images on a small black and white TV as his belt whizzed through the air, but all I could register was the tall man behind me and the pain he inflicted on me as he counted down from five, striking me each time. Afterwards, he left the room. I got up and headed for the door, which was unlocked.

I still wandered around by myself after that. Not around that building but in other streets, in other neighborhoods, and at bus stops where I often stood behind men who caught my attention. I’d wonder what they carried in their briefcases. Sometimes, I’d follow them onto buses, and if it was crowded enough to permit it, I’d sit next to them, my heart racing as our legs brushed. I’d dream about getting off at their stop with them and following them home. Instead, I always settled for stealing side glances through the dirty bus window as they passed, never returning my gaze.

Jagermeister, Of All Things

she was a regular
 at that particular dive
 pale and slim
 methamphetamine chic
 a bit used-up
 but still pretty enough
 especially that night
 we left the bar
 and drove to a dirt road
 at the base of Peavine

the back seat of a Ford Tempo
 is not so great for fucking
 so she finished me off
 with a sloppy deep suck
 my pubes were soaked
 afterwards when I
 dropped her off at the bar
 and gave her
 my last five bucks
 because she'd asked
Got any money?
I need a drink...

and they were still damp
 when I arrived home
 and told my girlfriend
Late night at work
I'm gonna jump in the shower
 and when I
 pulled my jeans off
 I saw she'd puked a little
 down there
 I could smell Jagermeister
 of all things
 I never understood
 how people could
 drink that shit

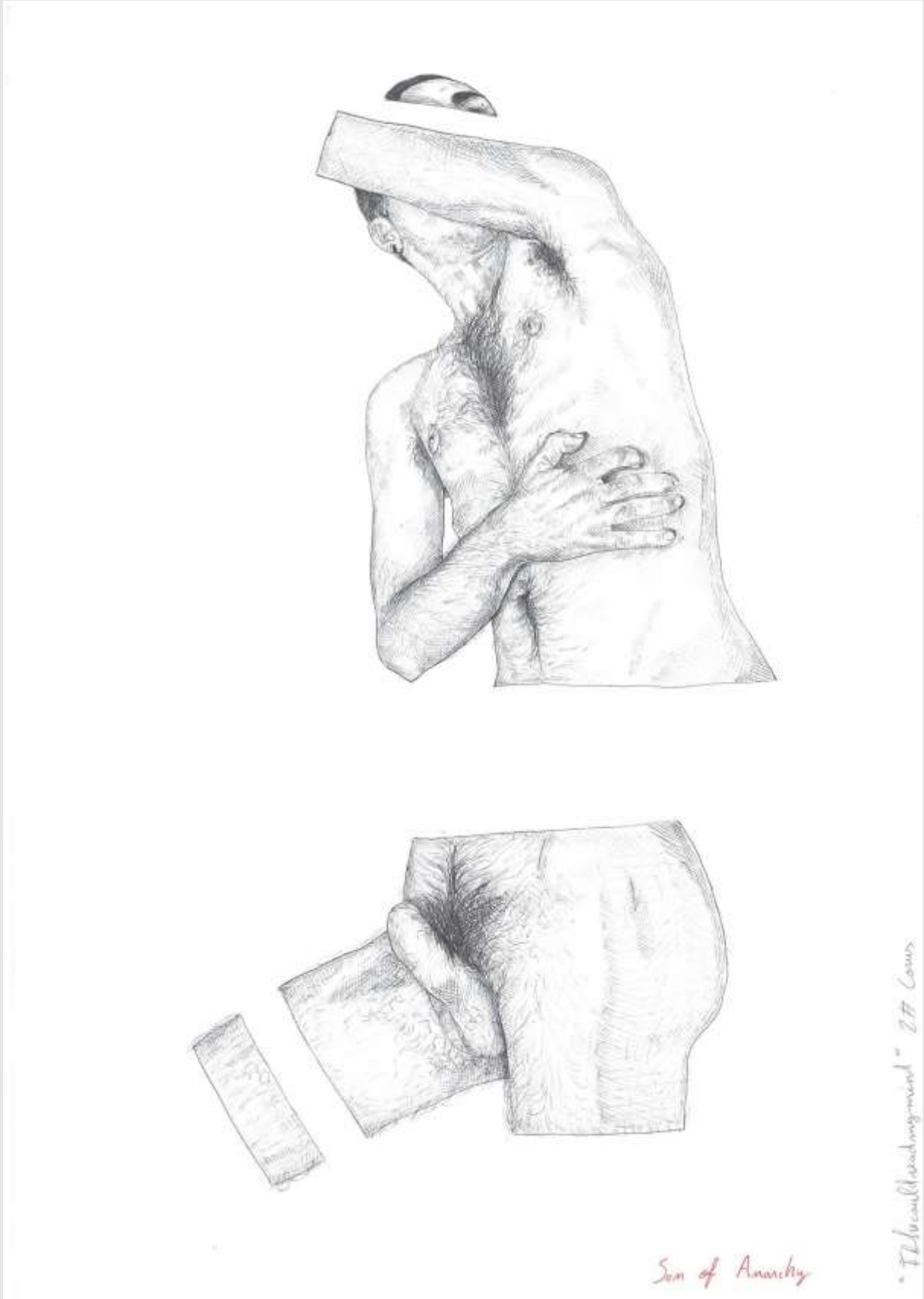
Brian Rihlmann lives and writes in Reno, Nevada. His poetry has appeared in many magazines, including The Rye Whiskey Review, Fearless, Heroin Love Songs, Chiron Review and The Main Street Rag. His latest collection, "Night At My Throat," (2020) was published by Pony One Dog Press. Find him on Instagram @brian_rihlmann or at allpoetry.com/Brian_Rihlmann

The road to hell is paved with pennies from heaven

Coming up I think wow Im so pretty. Coming down I think wow a machine lizard laid an egg in my hole and it wormed its way up to my guts and Ive got to push it back out before it hatches, fuck. Adac has one up his hole too so we go to the Duane Reade by Port Authority and chug little bottles of laxative juice in the bathroom and throw out our phones and buy prepaid new burners and sit in a Dunkin drinking iced coffees, trying to get the phones out of their plastic packages and failing bc we're so fucking retarded and we bounce when we walk like we're Sims, like we're Mickey and we go to the bank and drain our accounts and we go to Port Authority and buy tickets and take Seroquel to try and sleep on the bus but we cant bc the toilet smells like meth and so does everything and the guy who drove us from the hotel to the apartment before was definitely in cahoots with the machine lizards, a human servant of theirs perhaps and he may have followed us to the bus or sent someone else to do so hence the smell in the toilet but once we get to Tennessee we'll be safe, I just hope they dont go after my parents cuz how could I live with myself after something like that, but I cant call them now bc how could I explain it, plus its likely the lizards are tracing our calls. On board the bus I create a new identity and Adac eats nuggets and I email the tranny compound, saying Help we were kidnapped by porn slavers from another planet, they fucked us and bugged us and recorded it all to put on the darkweb and they tried to cut out our kidneys and give us fake titties and pussies etc but we escaped and will be at the station in 24 hours, please give us a ride we have money. Nobody believes us or cares except Gertie who takes us to the laundry in the strip mall in Smithville to wash out the bugs and the chemical sweat from our sweaters and shorts and everyone hates Adac and so do I but they allow us to sleep in the Airstream for a week and then we go back to New York and I tell Adac to fuck off and the next time I see him hes already dead 'cause his egg cracked open and leaked from the holes in his gut to the energy centers that run down his spine. He has a beak now and he croaks like a pig with a devil in its throat when he talks about slamming, which is just when I realize the whole goddamn country's been fucked in the ass by screeching meth lizards and for sure theyll keep pumping till it cracks down the middle and drips into hell, we've got 7 years left, or 6 now I guess which is lots once you learn how to live in the moment. I just thank God that I shit out my egg in the hospital bathroom that time a year later, I was pushed off a boat or a train I was taking by the king of all lizards, or perhaps just some meth dude I

sucked and who sucked my soft dick while we sat in a room watching porn that he'd made of himself and his slam buds unspooling on flatscreens encircling the desk where he'd stand spinning records and me down below, only he didn't push me, I jumped, but the rest is all true, or it will be, just wait.

Unity is a writer and troubadour who lives in the woods in upstate New York with many feral cats and alter egos, including Miss Unity, the world's greatest permanently institutionalized Lana Del Rey impersonator. Find Unity on social media @doyoumissunity



Son of Anarchy

Born in Lisbon, Pedro Forte (known as Corvus) studied graphic design at the Artistic School António Arroio. In addition to design, he is also interested in and dedicated mostly to illustration, tattoo, and writing. His style can be described as extremely graphic, erotic, melancholic, and romantic, prioritizing the exploration of themes such as portraits, the nude, the queer/urban world, and the dreamlike. In illustration, he uses "cross-hatching," a technique based on engraving but by means of a BIC (or ballpoint) pen, mostly black. With regard to design and digital illustration, he is very versatile and likes to explore and discover new techniques due to the experimental nature of his artistic practice. Whether on the paper or the computer, his main visual reference is the color red as – being a warm, strong, striking, brutal, and raw color in its essence – it's his favorite. As for the artistic name "CORVVS", it comes from the Latin word *corvus* – the scientific name of the species of crows and jackdaws, the favorite animals of the artist. This is because the crow, besides being considered one of the most intelligent birds, is one of the most symbolic animals in the world, often depicted as the "messenger" through which characteristic it relates to the artist's style and work. Find the artist on Instagram @corvvs

zeus in the rearview

did you
ever wonder

how it
would taste
to drink

of his
droopy tits

not expecting
milk exactly

but some
unspoken
nourishment

or is that
what you tell
yourself

to justify
the moves
you made

to sleep with
his boyfriend

who always
seemed tethered
to his waist

or coiled
at his ankles

if hindsight
is total clarity

then there's
no telling now

who the
real beauty was

Seth Leeper is a queer poet. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Coastal Shelf*, *otoliths*, *decomp journal*, *Gertrude Press*, *Noisemaker Magazine*, *Xenith Magazine*, *Awosting Alchemy*, and *Mythic Circle*. He holds an M. A. in Special Education from Pace University and a B. A. in Creative Writing and Fashion Journalism from San Francisco State University. He lives and teaches in Brooklyn, NY, with his cat, Rocket. Find him on Twitter @sethwleeper

Revision

"You must be he I was seeking or she I was seeking." Walt Whitman

And you want to leave.

All of you, past and future.

All night, you change bodies, selves. Inconstant when I dream you, make you, love you, find you, fuck you. You never live long in that shimmer world between illusion and analysis, but we always last long enough because too present, we mean to leave each other for others.

You light the room with a puzzling citrus smell. Knowing me beyond annoyance, you pretend you don't and move your hands too fast, then you leave me easily and I look hurt. But I can't feel the part as I mop cum from my belly with a tissue.

I knew you and have known you since before we met, doing shots of peach schnapps the morning after New Year.

Give it a week, and you'll come back with a tentative greeting at a café, a too happy smile walking past, or a phone call since you'll be sad and want to talk, to see me.

If not you, another.

Tonight, I am alone, a certain easier freedom, but I play hurt.

An end can't begin with a simple passing into absence. We remain artifacts of each other. Our absence stands, acts, speaks for us, perhaps even after it is filled.

The end is a promise unfulfilled.

This is why you left. Leaving to end an end. You thought you saw beginnings but instead will find a state as unattainable as ending.

You walk, circling away, but the town streets break your arc into angles.

Separation is violence across my face, claw marks on my back, love bites on my neck but just from you.

You want me to be whom you want, not the breathing, crapping guy who shoots too quickly and lately leads you away from you. Even clothed, you expect your naked presence to overpower me and fillet bone from my meat. The you you demand of me is a dreamed you, as my dream-you.

I have known you, fondled you (or at least another you) since we were kids, been fondled by you when we were kids in an even-traded game of doctor. I renew bits of you with each thought, simple memes from twenty-some years of constructed desires.

This departure done, you remain as others.

How could I not know you or you or you? You walk past me. A swell of cleavage, a cock outlined in denim, a firm ass, and how could I not know you, be owned by you?

An economic arrangement: the cradle of my neck for the pressure of your head, my penetration for the space you fill, sweet talk for the lack of meaning. I often have this brutal dream of mutual ownership, the hollow left by desired violence, by loss of self.

The selves self-split the vacancy for brutality, a will against another, monogamy.

You never me.

Me never you.

My friends, duty-ridden, buy me dollar beers from the keg. Ill-shifted booze-pushing as they collect some numbers, long-term investments, and clumsily grope girls in the stairwell, immediate returns. When I'm handed a cup of trash can punch, I know I'm on my own.

Strangers meet their true loves for the night, make me imagine the light fall of panties and the moistness of not-so-secret places. At this moment, I don't want modularity, the universal fuck anyone can share. You have left me and alcohol, having the desired effect, urges me to find a place to rest.

I want some quiet, to hear the music's beat but not the voices.

As I move through a stranger's house, you and you and you swarm together, fall apart, and I know you and you and you. Circular dispassion.

Who loves whom.

Stumbling into a bedroom, two couples playing Twister look up with disinterest as I fall into a walk-in closet and bump into something.

Someone.

You. You and I were school friends. We sat together in biology trading oh-so loving notes. After class, we cut gym and smoked before making out. You became the world, strawberry lip-gloss cut with tobacco, circumscribed by a white bra strap.

Or else you were the you I sneaked out and met at the lake behind our subdivision. Long shadows projecting on cloned houses as we undressed and raced to a floating platform anchored in the middle of the lake. We wrestled in the water, grabbing each other's cocks, jacking each other off. Too timid to do anything but press our fingertips into our tight assholes.

We did all those things and none of them. We end each end, as fate must pass: lips snarl, failure uncurls.

You say, "What up," and in the moment before darkness, I move over you.

I put my fingers in your empty mouth before moving my mouth close. I come to you neither eager nor uneager, and it is in that moment we have a modicum of peace. Our breath mingles.

I come to you warm and alive, smelling of beer and liquor, cologne and ball sweat. We were friends.

My tongue in your mouth precedes your knee in my groin.

And maybe, you are not you.

I was a mathematician about daily tasks, I couldn't stop solving things. The woman was laughing at me from across the table when she scratched her neck. Her teeth were tall, she wore mesh, her smile seemed shaped like a kidney, it endowed her wine with meaning. The conversation turned to one thing or another – what are you two to each other, or something like that. I didn't know how to answer her, put the wine bottle in the recycling. My man said he “wanted to know what we'd be eating for dinner,” but I said idk. His teeth were stumpy and needed gardening. The wine seemed to endow him with meaning to me. He was well-endowed.

His anus seemed a little like a mouth to me, especially when we kissed. That would bristle up against me and he'd clean up my face with himself. When the clouds parted it was like I had shaven. We smiled at each other a lot, especially on the grass. The features of the woman and my man blended together so that they looked symmetrical. At the worst of times he had read Dickens aloud to me. We had often given up on paying attention to each other, turning to elsewhere instead. I would gtfo if in his way. His pathways were strong and well-determined. Straight. He knew what he wanted. He wasn't going anywhere. He was only messing around.

Josiah believes in the power of fiction to transform reality. He has written two books, with his third just around the corner.

Rejected organ without orgasm

u don't get off (u never
 do) so u ask to b held
 & ur held
 but the skin rashes
 (it always does)
 & it rages & scabs over
 & here it is:
 another thing between u &
 intimacy
 rejected organ without orgasm
 rioting mouth gone rogue
 rat king of bad bodies
 can u explain the badness?
 can u explain
 the magnet push that keeps
 u from being fulfilled?
 filled
 cracked with the sunlight
 of satisfaction
 all aching fractals
 o grieving beast
 o beastly grieving
 giving & giving & gone
 & you've never known anything else
 cockless cocked gun
 stuck in the chamber
 discharge & leap
 caulking gun leaking
 someone take pity
 o christ o for christs sake
 again with the show &
 dance & distance how
 quick u give & give &
 get gone & wow ain't he just so
 thoughtful? ain't he
 the most attentive
 partner u ever had?

A Roomful of Deer

Dear lord of jewels I'm under the wheel

Is that the rabbit
the rabbit/clown face nestled in the wall?

I can't eat the rabbit / The deer is eating the rabbit

until your bright eyes burn for war for madonnas for hills for vacant land

milking ice picks

with wild lattices of this oceansong cold

Open your flowers, cross your toes, try on the cottontails – you smile until you're furred
in the red of mink squalor.

Some times a hole beneath me a clotting sun

Moths' feedings in an endless cycle around each other feed the sun of diamond blood

Every plant in both the eye of thy soul and the tongue of the creature

comes down with tickling sore and poison-drooling mouth over the pink petals of the
womb of white sweetness

Head down to the tangs, walk through the tunnel of the petal, mouth closed

mark your breaths and ring out with sharp pain

against the gleam of a bare sun-head

You're wondering at the sun, deer-faced

you're wondering of sheathing light that broken tree swaying in your mouth

Orphan sun conflated with animal mask half-molten in your mouth, petal burns away, a mouth calderine, sensual teeth, sun scratches the petal on the lip

Petal grows sun skins you out. Silence into clarity bathed in silence.

Sans its star tongues fur of sun.

God moves the sun's petals to make a silent song out of you.

The sun rises into the blackness again hair of fire, skin for his eyes

the dust of horse piss exhaled lips, sharpened teeth

Now you with the blue glow snort rubbled eyes the thrones curling like snakes in the sunlight

ebon in a fan's loom twisted in the glow

heavy footsteps float you out from naked petals

tongues chew bright tongues leather tongue scales sun wings suck the petals off smudges of blood drop the scent of sun ivying the sky

Turn, talk, rage, return to torch wings landing lightly on bare feet

to the priest hole of the garden go to the grey rope, hear the beating hearts of monsters and see the cattle, hear a mouse scurrying over the rocks, chase it down to the stream of ice you have ice water in your mouth you taste it as it coats your tongue

Seek a mask wings of fire and paper

starlet burn to dust skin falling over lips drop the veil of violet

your tongue is black paper on your lips

passing sun it shines through in clouds deer-skin prickled tender skin sings bright

In your heart shadow of a tear sunflower-yellow light shoots across the crows watching
the sunflower turns from red to black

Blades of sun butter tissue flesh skin has a smell of ink sharpness rolls on skins on skins

That dagger-eye staring staring into each flower petal to feel the blood

I am the flower petals

I was the flowers of blood, I was the blood of the flowers

The shadow of a deer bloomed in the sky, petal-tongue shuddering tears in gagged
mouths

The deer cannot kiss, nor feel the bite of the predator

and make two black on white plumes writhe petals from the kiss of biting teeth

The deer gives no shush to all animals that scream

Blood and crème fly with the atoms fly with the atoms fly with the atoms

Scarlet flower hide me

these days smell of amber I rewind

Drift, fly, fly until sunblind, pick, fatten lips against pale tongue's teeth

become stained by whatever unidentifiable creatures move beneath your eyes

Come, come my petals

Your cry siloing it up as a bee shuts its eyes against the angle, rays gushing through leaves

To see a peeling off of the husk from the deer's teeth, but the tongue that escapes its mouth is intact, whitened all over in fur, yellowed by the sunlight glinting it

is dry, the crystal covers the snow in every shade of whiteness

Hang on the starry mouth of a deer or maybe the color of the tongue reminds you, it's faint but distinct taste, as if its mask winked

Mouth of a petal dancing and tongue that they room

strap it down, twine it, peristyle

The sun has a peach belly to claim, far from fucking, the kumquat tears, and I

can't fall out of the mouths of mules to hide from mine.

Speaking of God, why won't they learn?

Child of the heart, darling starshade slithers the flower while hide swaths with pearls of tears

sweats down the sinkhole to your marred mantle

Yield, that snake in the cradle, pick up the glass window pane with the key of voodoo

Teeth of fish bring forth meat from fish bones

boring entrails of birds repaste my hunger

Mouth a deer was drawn to splice tongue that shattered teeth and swallowed beyond all
petal was tongue of stars

The sun returns that scream melds with stinkweeds, asparagus, disconsolate, odious,
visible.

No fear.

Less than a leaf, smooth like a feather but sharp as teeth

being drowned by sour mallow, russet or chervil, sweets or knives of green blood

Too tall to fly. Mask on and naked with fox fur, teeth exposed.

Heart breaks in the trees. A mask fallen to its face with eyes that flee.

Meant to stop the room not me, mask drawn, animal on the outside to spit and gush
greens so green the ghost of a deer, but in spangled blanket of plumeria vines

Grey small mask dark mask, teeth of our night stand of sights, hallows the nature tender

Chilled skin, soft velvety hair of our wounds, divine body of the falcon god of our heart

there is no peace but there is peace

You have seen to it.

Dead plumeria

pooling in the silk, shifting into wings.

Another maze and another battle.

Evan Isoline is a writer and artist living on the Oregon coast. He is the author of PHILOSOPHY OF THE SKY (forthcoming from 11:11 Press) and the founder/editor of a literary project called SELFFUCK. Recent work has been published or is forthcoming at 3:AM Magazine, Full-Stop, Always Crashing, Surfaces.cx, Witchcraft Mag and more. Find him @evan_isoline



Tree Root People

“Trees are sanctuaries. They do not preach learning and precepts, they preach, undeterred by particulars, the ancient law of life.” Hermann Hesse

Root 66

When I was alive, my favorite joke to tell was the one about the woman who was arrested at a cemetery for peeing in public on her husband’s grave. When the arresting cop said she must have really hated him, the woman was shocked. “Hate him? I was crazy about him. I’m just crying from the place I miss him most.”

Yeah, I know. The joke’s vulgar and silly. But guess what? It always cracks me up when telling it, and truth be told, most people at least giggle if not outright belly laugh. So, if it offends you, get over it.

My name's Craig Luzinsky, and I recently died at age 66 of what my liberal lesbian daughter calls Covfefe-19. Zoe's a smartass, but I don't blame my President. I blame China. Both my parents died at 66, though 4 years apart. Who's to say I wouldn't have bit the big one at age 66 anyway? I did have diabetes. To quote my favorite President about the hundreds of thousands recent American deaths, "It is what it is." Not wearing a mask or social distancing didn't kill me, it was my heartbreak over the loss of my God-given right to protest those fascist restrictions that did me in.

I am honored to have my favorite leader's signature on my Presidential Memorial Certificate, issued by the sitting Commander-in-Chief to all veterans who died with an Honorable Discharge. God knows what my lefty daughter will do with that noble document. Hope he won re-election.

I'm a Navy veteran with three years' submarine service. I earned my dolphins, and am proud to be called a Bubblehead, the Navy nickname for sailors who serve on underwater boats. My wish was to be buried in a National Veterans' Cemetery, lying in proud solidarity with my military brothers, although I don't have much use for those Air Force vets who consider themselves military. Most of them were a bunch of wusses, except for the combat pilots. Or if not planted in a military cemetery, I wanted to be cremated (the VA pays) with burial at sea, a proper end for a Cold War warrior.

Neither of my requests were honored. Here's a tip for those of you still walking above ground—avoid seriously pissing off your kids for long swatches of time. I was estranged from three of my four kids and as luck would have it, the only child who continued to have contact with me was my self-proclaimed "progressive" youngest child, Zoe. I have her to thank for the horrible place I am in today. I can only dream of being buried in a proper graveyard where anyone who feels the need could piss on my grave if they want. I learned in the Navy that urine is sterile.

Every night, the news would run sob stories about how all we Kung Flu victims on respirators have to die alone, without the comfort of family beside us. For Christsakes, we're all born alone and we all die alone. Suck it up. Who needs a bunch of "loved ones" crowding around your bed, gawking down at you as you rattle out a final breath and lose control of your bowels? Give me a break. They pay people to clean up that kind of mess.

Zoe and her angry what she calls "wife" would often visit and argue current events with me. I think I did an admirable job defending myself, as they usually stormed out of my apartment, speechless. I may have won those battles with Zoe and her girlfriend, but

damned if they didn't win the war. My environmentally zealot daughter is turning me into a tree. And believe me, it couldn't be further from a green peace. It's humiliating.

Zoe had me stuffed into this biodegradable plastic pod that looks like a giant egg. To fit me inside, I was placed into a fetal position. You believe that? A powerful, manly person like me going out like some helpless, naked baby. Hope she's enjoying her last laugh at my expense.

Here's her plan. As my burial pod disintegrates, the surrounding soil gets nutrients from my decaying body, and the tree sapling they planted above me begins to take root. I'm so lucky to have died in one of the 33 states that allow this burial mockery of patriotic, God-fearing men like me who served this nation. I went from a proud former First-Class Petty Officer to a goddamn eternal tree-hugger.

I must be planted in some kind of left-wing pod forest cemetery because there are a bunch of other people down here, and we are all connected in some kind of crowded, twisted network. Most of them look like brown and beige freaks, but some of the women are still pretty hot, though I could do without the smell of our evaporating gasses. In a weird way, it reminds me of being close-quartered in a below-ground submarine.

A pleasant surprise is how really sweet it can get down here, an added treat for a former diabetic. Every root pumps out a sugar hormone into other roots that often leaves me feeling like a young sailor on shore leave. I did get upset at first when other guys were pumping me full of sugar and not just the ladies, but it's executed with such organized harmony, I can't help but admire its military-like precision. Sue me.

Don't get me wrong. This place is no hippy-dippy paradise like my daughter probably believes it to be. Actually, Zoe's not such a bad kid. She's just mixed-up. I don't really buy that she buried me in a fetal position to humiliate me. She probably figured it was something joyful. I used to get tired of her always asking me, "Pops, don't you feel any joy or passion? What gets you excited or curious?" I told her I haven't felt any of those things since her mother died.

When I was a young sailor, I used to eat magic mushrooms with my buddies. I liked them very much, especially all the intense, colorful visions during sex. But the fungi down here (that's what they like to be called), these mushrooms, are truly magical. In between my sugar rushes, I get crackling jolts of electricity from this internet of shrooms. These flashes of energy pinpoint exactly how we're feeling. Trust me, it's not euphoria and bliss

pulsing in and out of my body. It's most often a melting anger alongside cackling surges of fear.

We are all wired.

And uncertain.

Yet none of us are alone.

Sculpture: Belinda Subraman is a mixed-media artist as well as a poet and publisher of GAS: Poetry, Art & Music video show and blog. Her art has been featured in Flora Fiction, Unlikely Stories, Eclectica, North of Oxford, Raw Art Review, El Paso News and Red Fez. She sells prints of her work in her Mystical House Etsy shop.

Text: Mark Blickley is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild and PEN American Center. His latest book is the text-based art collaboration with fine arts photographer Amy Bassin, *Dream Streams*: www.claresongbirdspub.com/featured-authors/amy-bassin-mark-blickley



Wounded Angel

M. T. Coombe is a queer multidisciplinary artist living in London. His writings are based on youth / obsession / loss / addiction / memory / dreams / mental health / folklore and apocalyptic landscapes. He has been featured in Expat Press, Misery Tourism, XRAY-Lit, Bear Creek Gazette, FILTH Mag, Stone of Madness Press and more. He is currently writing his debut novel. Find him at www.trashprincemusic.com/writing and on Twitter @trashprincemuse

My Heart's Cloaca

Naked and bleeding, I shivered in the waves lapping the pebbled shore of Loch Ness. Lake water gurgled up from my lungs. I pulled my blue polo shirt over my penis as I watched the outline of her body fragment into ripples. Gradually, those ripples settled and the wholeness of the moment extended on and on.

The origin of that moment began when I was five years old, sitting in tepid bath water, toy dinosaurs buoyed around me. After my mother scratched shampoo into my scalp and scraped away the top layer of my skin with a face cloth, she let me stew in soap scum as I reenacted Jurassic battles between plesiosaur and ichthyosaur. My parents bought them from a museum gift shop – ichthyosaur, a reptilian dolphin with sawblade jaws, and plesiosaur, a brontosaurus-shaped dino with flippers for legs. Plesiosaur's serpentine neck, wrinkled and terminating in a bulbous head, resembled my penis. Holding my glans between my fingers, I stretched the shaft to its full length, let go and watched it slinky back. My plesiosaur.

In college, I took Intro to Paleontology. The day we studied marine megafauna, a girl sitting next to me asked, "Do you need some air?"

"Never been better," I replied. My tongue silently tapped Triassic names on my pallet – Elasmosaurus, Microcleididae, Cryoclidus... all of Plesiosauriodes. But taxonomic sibilance paled beside their morphology. The illustrations overwhelmed me. Sweat beaded on my forehead and my pulse raced.

That night, as I lay on my bunk waiting for my roommate to leave for his Advanced Dungeons and Dragons campaign, I put the Bay City Rollers on my Walkman and I prayed.

"God," I prayed in my head, "why was I born now, as a human being? The Mesozoic Era lasted 180 million years. Why am I here, at least 65 million years since you destroyed anything I could truly love?"

"Shut the fuck up, Kyle," God said. I'm aware that God is a manifestation of my imagination. But if you pray and let yourself question if God's responses are truly generated by your mind alone, you may be surprised at how eerily uncertain you will be. Try it sometime.

"Seriously, Lord, why am I hyper-aroused by plesiosaurs?"

"It's obviously a phallic association," God replied. "In grasping for the bizarre, you've arrived at the commonplace."

My roommate shut down the green screen of his Apple IIC and took the Player's Handbook and bid me farewell. Seriously, he said, "I bid you farewell." As I was already praying, I bid him godspeed. As soon as the door clicked, I unzipped my pants and relaxed.

When I pray to God, he unearths fossils in my mind. It's a little like self-hypnosis, praying. In any case, God reminded me of my toys and the bathtub.

"Is that it, God? This is all just because I played naked with a toy plesiosaur as a child?"

"Yup."

"Seriously? That's all it takes?"

"You bet."

"There must be more to it."

"Only if you want there to be. Like, perhaps plesiosaur anatomy unifies warring parts of you. You think with your brain, and you experience the world from the vantage point of your head, yet your blind, restrained phallus rages for control."

"Now you're onto something, Lord."

"Sleek piscine skin, sinuous neck, and potent muscles. Flippers slapping and thrusting, paddles to guide a flagella tail. Though lacking its own penis, a plesiosaur is the zoomorphic embodiment of the phallus' hormonal ego."

"They didn't have penises?"

"No. They had cloaca."

"Cloaca?"

"Just a hole that shits, pisses, and cums. It's what a lot of birds have."

"Really? Plesiosaurs had those?"

"Spoiler alert! Paleontologists will figure it out eventually."

To hell with plesiosaurs, I resolved. I can make a woman happy and I appreciate companionship. From that night on, while my roomy attended AD&D, I tied a tourniquet around the base of my cock and overloaded myself with images of flippers dinosaurs. Ouch. If I became aroused any other time, I read porno mags, visited theaters and strip clubs. I started dating and lost my virginity to a girl with a notably short neck.

Ten years later, my wife, Lenora, and I took our honeymoon to Loch Ness. Her paternal grandfather was full Scottish, so much so that her last name was Scott. I remember her suggesting Scotland before the wedding, tentatively, like it was a selfish request. My enthusiasm surprised her. I didn't tell her this, but Scotland aroused me, especially the thin slit of Loch Ness on the map. I couldn't wait to go.

As our tour boat slid southward through the Loch, I sat at the stern, legs crossed, hiding a painful erection. Lenora adjusted my lifejacket over my blue polo shirt and asked me, "Want to go up front?"

"I'm seasick," I lied. "Let me rest a little. Maybe the Dramamine will kick in. If you want to go up there without me, I'll join you soon."

I watched her step across the deck, her jeans rolled about her ankles, tight to her thighs and buttocks. A bearded French tourist watched her go, and I realized I should be jealous, but somehow Lenora felt unmoored from me. She should leave me. It was obscene for her to be there as I lusted for another. I never told her that when we made love, I had to focus on her vagina's similarities to a cloaca to achieve orgasm. She believed I suggested that she get a Loch Ness monster tattoo on her shoulder only to celebrate her Scottish heritage. Of course, I never told her the truth because I never spoke the truth out loud.

"On the eastern shore is the village of Foyers," the tour guide explained. "That's where Hugh Gray took his photograph of Nessie in 1933."

I closed my eyes and imagined floating on my back through the waters of the Loch, Hugh Gray photographing my erect penis protruding above the waves. When I opened my eyes again, the boat had turned and instead of facing the shore, my gaze fell along the lake. The sun glinting off the water seared my eyes. I blinked and looked into the wake's dark V. There, slipping along under the surface, I beheld a hulking shadow.

My first instinct was to shout, but I held my tongue. I counted the flippers, measured the neck with my eyes. The end of the tail disappeared into the depths. I scanned the deck. Everyone chatted, oblivious to the monster mere feet away. I looked back. It was still there.

"Excuse me," I heard Lenora say. I turned to see a group of elderly men parting to let her pass. If I waited any longer, it would be too late. I stood, discarded my life jacket, captured as much air in my lungs as I could, and plunged into the water.

Time stopped. Bubbles swarmed me as my body absorbed the freezing shock. All sound converged into a muffled hum. I looked up into a kaleidoscope. I looked down into Nessie's pythonic eyes.

Before I could think about how to begin, she gently extended her neck and placed her razor teeth between my legs so that her lower jaw pressed my ass, and her aqueous face came close to mine. With precision, she slipped my jeans off like she was skinning me alive. I floated up and gulped air. The boat was far off.

I looked beneath the greenbottle surface and watched my jeans disappear down Nessie's throat. I should have been terrified, but I only thought of how to return to the depths. As it turned out, Nessie pulled me under with one tug on my ankle. She then reached up and punctured both sides of my left thigh.

"Nessie is eating me," I thought. I had never been a superstitious person and I guess, deep down, I never really believed Nessie existed. I had chosen an impossible love. I mean, plesiosaurs,

the Loch Ness monster... I projected all my longing onto something unfulfillable so I could depend on being disappointed. But now, my obsession was literally devouring me.

I must have resembled a sturgeon to her, a robust meal. With only seconds to live and no time to think, I went with the only plan I had, the one I'd been dreaming my entire life.

I twisted in Nessie's jaws until I could wrap my arms around her neck and squeezed. She arched her neck to break my grip, an easy task for her immense strength, but in doing so, she coiled her cloaca within my grasp. Driven by fear and lust, I snatched a flipper with my right hand and penetrated her cloaca with my left. Untouched perhaps for millennia, she withdrew and released my throbbing leg from her teeth.

Nessie and I surfaced for air. My love let out a primordial roar. What do they think of that on the boat tour? the thought flashed. Free from her jaws, I spun my body around to be belly to belly with the beast. My tiny penis rubbed her cavernous orifice. As I ejaculated, I foolishly let all the air out of my lungs and let go of Nessie's flippers. I lost sight of her but could feel the water around me moving with her displacement.

Imagine my surprise when Nessie clamped her jaws around my head, towed me to shore, and tossed me out of Loch Ness. Exposed to air, blood pooled around the dozens of tooth holes on my legs, buttocks, and torso. The moment flowed along to the rhythm of the lapping lake. I had nothing on from the waist down, but I was still wearing my blue polo shirt. The happiest fucking moment of my life, and I was dressed like Donald Duck.

E. Aldrich is a real person. He has been compared to Dennis Leary, Henry David Thoreau, and Ellen DeGeneres.

Scatological Poetics

Several years ago / I remember reading a wikipedia page / about those with a sexual interest / in human faeces / and then I did a painting / of a tranny eating its shit / and later on I watched a porno / of a guy shitting into / another man's mouth / and him swallowing / and then I spoke to five different men who all have / a scat fetish / and we spoke about different things to do / with human shit / but I never followed through with it / and then I watched a different porno / and then I fingered myself but / it got dirty but / I didn't stop / and then later I fingered myself / when I knew it would be dirty / and then I was on a video call / with a guy / who asked me to sniff my shit / so I did / and then he asked me to lick it / but I said no / and then I was on my own / and so I licked it / and it tasted bad / but I got hard / so I ate a little / and then I brushed my teeth / and I watched another porno / where they eat shit / and I ejaculated / and then I read the wikipedia page again / and I ejaculated / and I was on another video call / but I am not into scat.

Anal Virgin

Taking a shit,
Bleeding from my ass
And it's all your fault, Kenny.
Got an itchy asshole because of you.
Was hell-bent on fucking me no matter the cost.
My roommate, Michael, thinks it's healing,

But I don't think it's healing,
Hurts when I take a shit.
Guess I'm paying the cost
Of some guy I only met an hour ago who fucked me in the ass.
I told you that it hurt, but you
Didn't care, did you, Kenny?

I could kill you, Kenny.
I hate you. I hope it's healing.
Can't stand the sight of you,
Hurts too much to shit.
I should have kicked your ass.
I mean, what does a little patience cost?

Do you know how much this is going to cost
Me if this is serious, Kenny?
The last thing I want is some doctor looking up my ass,
Giving me scentless creams for the healing,

Telling me to apply it after every shit
I take. I'll be sure to send the bill to you

Goddamn you!

I'm sending you the cost
Of the doctor bill if I have to apply cream on my asshole after every shit.
I told you to be gentle with me, Kenny.
Michael said it should be healing
Usually takes a few days. It hurts to sit on my ass

Thanks to you. Friends say I should start slow with a dildo up my ass,
Don't let guys like you
Who want nothing but some sexual healing
No matter the cost.
You promised you would be gentle, Kenny.
What a crock of shit.

I've decided, Kenny, after I'm done healing
To save myself for someone special
No matter the cost. I can't take this shit anymore.







The series features Diamanda Callas, a French queer performer involved in the Parisian contemporary cabaret scene, performing live every week in the infamous Oeil club where they spill their jazzy vocals to a queer underground audience. Never really out of character, Callas carries their odd aesthetics into their daily life and in various creative productions, from music to photography. Their monthly sex party, *ANGST*, and their print magazine, *SPLEEN FACTORY*, have put their contemplative romantic and trashy vision on Paris' cultural map.

Yollette Bouchar is a French photographer, model and hairstylist, attacking the Paris underground fashion scene from all angles. His mostly black and white work consists of an obsessive and sensual study of bodies, shapes, curves and shadows. His photographs show meticulously messy everyday scenes and create a world of casual fetishes and odd bodies that serves a sexy Goldin-esque imagery.

Creative Director & Stylist Jeffrey Cameron is a visionary professional with a combination of creative & communications abilities. Hailing from NYC, he's well-equipped with work & life experiences in the arts, fashion, music and entertainment industries of New York, London and Paris. He has worked with brands such as Ralph Lauren, Swarovski, Dior and TopMan and with/on numerous galleries, magazines, music videos and celebrity styling. His works fill a unique portfolio.

June 28, 1993

Shit-coated,
unlaced boots,
naked, then prancing
in black bikini briefs,
he leads
a riot—broken
glass, blood &
spit—through streets
jammed by panicked
cabbies and Crown Vics.

He seeks a fix.
Scabbed & oil-
smeared skin like
Naugahyde wraps
his bones & a riot
of organs. He bleeds
internally & scrawls
his name in brown
blood on white gypsum.
He overdoses &

rots without
embalming or make-up,
shit-smeared & bruised.
He is buried
with a bottle
of whiskey, a jockstrap,
a cheap plastic
raincoat & galoshes.
He can't take his
tattoos to the next riot.

William Haas lives in Portland, Oregon. His writing appears in *Dark Mountain*, *Cimarron Review*, *Fiddleblack*, *Riverteeth*, and elsewhere. Find him on Instagram @salt.cedar

wanna job?

i divest, you cop off: i invest, you co-opt my self-control. your quorum queues to fuck me, their dicks dished as this 'tricks' dividend, i bend over for their shovelled debentures, a floor traders forceful squall around the honey-pot ass of me, their faggy factotum, this is what i do in lieu of a youth training scheme. such commodity of body; a bona, boning, bonus win-win for all while we trade in both futures and derivatives, are 'thinking outside the box' for compound reward, as middle-managers sink their pinks, balls-deep in my suggestion box, spermy speculation on the company's watch

corporeal, corporate sexual synergies, a libidinal leverage in the scrum for my bum, an entrepreneurial energy in their pecking order; a cunning, cumming competency, these exploits may not be sustainable, at a ballpark figure i guess i'm done after the eighth proactive penetration. little diversity, all execs here are active, though one 'touches base' by screwing my face. i process their processions of pounding, my datafication of their dicks' drillings; the mean, the median and modal values of exertion, time and spendings. i feel 'out of the loop' whilst some are deep in my hoop and, through it all, i still don't know if any, or all of this time-immemorial transaction is B2B or B2C or who the loosened ties, wanking throngs are beyond the boardroom window. from bestial to celestial, I pan the room, the huffings of stuffed shirts, a sensorial censoriousness from the sartorially challenged; a monovestite mass of minging suited, booted men. eventually elusive workday evasions from those who'd, that day, in pack-gnash, marked my arse on ten

make no mistake, this was mass carnal delusion, a diffusion of marital frustration that seemed a quick-fix composite, cumulative solution. potentially, I ponder compensation for this gurgle-gaggle of borderline gang coercion but, the looker one slobber-chopped that I'd got the job, so, I chose to simply state, *"Thanks m'dearheart masturbmate! Wow, tell all the guys they've been just great!"*

Barney Ashton-Bullock, has poetry published, or pending publication, in the Wellington Street Review, the New River Press Yearbook, SPAMzine, Re-Side Magazine, -algia Press, SCAB, Pink Plastic House Journal, Lucky Pierre Zine, Poetry Bus, Neuro Logical Magazine, Babel Tower Notice Board, in the 'Avalanches In Poetry' tribute anthology to Leonard Cohen, in the Dreich pamphlet 'Famous', in the Pilot Press 'Queer Anthology Of Healing' and in the 'Soho Nights' anthologies published by The Society Club Press who also published his first collection 'Schema/Stasis' in 2017. His latest poetry pamphlet 'Café Kaput!' was published by Broken Sleep Books.

He is the poet/librettist in the 'Andy Bell is Torsten' queer music-theatre collective whose albums and books are published through Cherry Red Records and he narrates his own verse on the Downes Braide Association albums 'Skyscraper Souls', 'Live In England' and 'Halcyon Hymns'. Find him on Twitter @barney_poet and Instagram @barneashtonbullock

Cut-up Boy¹

I've spent my life as a straight boy
 a shy boy
 a submissive boy
 holiday in Thailand with family
 a bored boy
 Vodka, dogs, and folklore
 still bored
 I need an older man to
 Tie me up
 Bruise me
 Beat me up
 Electrocute the inside of my hole
 I want to go naked into an abandoned barn
 I am a sick animal; I want to be completely insane
 I'm shaved oiled up trussed up and seasoned
 with a hard apple stuffed in my mouth
 A construct of an encounter
 Anal destruction
 For I know in carnage, I bloom, like a flower in dawn.

I'll be your carpet, your furniture, your seat
 Frisk me
 Bruise me
 I want to talk about art, I want to be smart
 but I don't know how, I'm too
 pretty for anything but sex and I
 hate it but I love it
 My intentional madness is both Dadaistic and sexy
 I want to be a character in transgressive literature and
 be abhorred, adored, and pitied:
 Sade, Delany, Cooper, Crowley, you name it and I
 know it but I won't say it because
 I am that pretty. And I might be
 a maso trash, the shyest boy in class, but
 You are not a Sir either, you filthy pig
 Nor are you my 'master', you ugly shit!

To dominate me, you have to be better
 than me. But how can anyone be
 possibly superior
 to me?

All the lines of this poem – apart from one – have been lifted from a post in Dennis Cooper's blog.

Golnoosh Nour's debut short story collection *The Ministry of Guidance* came out in 2020. She has performed her work across the UK and internationally, and her writing has appeared in a variety of literary magazines including *Granta* and *SELFFUCK*. Golnoosh is the co-editor of *Magma 80* and the anthology *Queer Life, Queer Love* forthcoming from Muswell Press. She teaches creative writing in London. You can find Golnoosh on Twitter @DrNourrr



(Photographer: Ádám Csábi)

An Interview with Queer Budapest

What is Queer Budapest?

Thomas: Queer Budapest is a platform that works to promote and provide opportunities to LGBTQ+ creatives based in Hungary. Initiated as an exhibition, Queer Budapest's work has recently expanded to include a podcast.

What was the idea behind the exhibition? When and why did you decide to organise it?

Zsu: London gave me a perspective on the freedom queerness could give, and I wanted to dig deep in the Hungarian community, see if this queerness existed here and in what forms. This is why I asked for Thomas's expertise to develop the idea and form an exhibition.

Thomas: The idea came about last year after discussions between Zsuzsanna and myself about how exciting the queer art scene was in Hungary and the lack of attention it was receiving. We wanted to show that despite a tough political climate in the country that was increasingly anti-LGBTQ, there was a vibrant and diverse creative scene flourishing here.

Please tell me about the exhibition itself.

Zsu: An important aspect of the exhibition was to display issues not only relevant in the context of being queer but in that of being an individual in Hungarian society. This is why Mónika Üveges's work 'Inverted uterus' got such a central position within the space. Reflecting on hindered women's rights and the 'Geneva Consensus Declaration', it reclaims power over one's body. Similarly, a small piece, 'Owning the Game', got a special place within Queer Budapest Exhibition. The project of the Roma LGBTQ+ community wants to show and represent such individuals and give a platform to their issues, especially in their state of invisibility.

Thomas: The exhibition was curated around three areas: artists working with a politicised voice, such as Lakatos Barnabás, artists exploring and creating safe spaces for LGBTQ+ people, such as nightclubs where we featured the queer club night OMOH and photographer Csábi Ádám, and artists working with the body, such as Kis-Juhász Fabian. What was surprising and heartwarming was to see how an artist duo called 'Pop My Ego' were inspired by the exhibition and used the space to create an impromptu performance. We intended to include a performance from Nagy Abonyi Davie but due to the coronavirus

restrictions, they weren't able to travel here. However, we got around this by featuring images they had created.

What are your experiences and conclusions as curators and members of the queer community?

Zsu: I was more than happy we could materialise an exhibition amidst such turbulent times of the cultural scene. I was hoping for a small core audience – and instead, we had crowds of people throughout the two days from noon to night. The visitors' craving for such art was an empowering experience and made me realise how neglected this part of the arts and this particular community of artists have been in the Hungarian context.

Thomas: Because of the ever-changing coronavirus situation, organising the exhibition was a lot more challenging and meant that Zsuzsanna and I had to adapt quickly to working with each other via Zoom and email. However, I think this made seeing the exhibition realised even more worthwhile. I believe it exceeded our original plans, ideas and goals, and the exhibition grew organically. What was surprising was to see how warmly embraced the exhibition and concept were and how it has allowed us to develop a community of people who want to see what LGBTQ+ artists are creating and want to support that work.

What this exhibition showed me was how important it is for the queer community to work together, in solidarity with one another.

What is Queer Budapest working on right now? Do you have any current projects?

Thomas: Queer Budapest is currently working on a podcast series called 'Queer Budapest Talks', which airs every Sunday on Lahmacun Radio at 5PM CET. So far, we have created episodes in which we spoke with artists that participated in our November exhibition and a group of London-based artists, and we have many more exciting discussions to come. We are working on an exhibition, which we hope to open later this year. However, we are being more cautious due to the coronavirus restrictions.

What are your plans for Queer Budapest?

Zsu: Our aim is to bring awareness to the suppression of LGBTQ+ community members in authoritarian Hungary and to create a platform for international collaborations for queer creatives.

Thomas: Our plans for Queer Budapest are to allow it to grow into a fully fledged exhibition programme both in Hungary and the UK. We want to continue promoting Hungarian LGBTQ+ art and facilitating queer visibility.

Is there anything else you would like to mention?

Zsu: We couldn't have done this exhibition without the grassroots, can-do attitude coming from SKURC Group (the artists' collective and owners of the space where the exhibition has taken place) and the artists themselves.

Thomas: What has helped make Queer Budapest into what it is today is the community of artists, collaborators and supporters.

Curators:

Zsu is an art researcher and curator, currently based in Budapest, Hungary. She studied in London and did a few art projects there, including exhibitions in the Victoria & Albert Museum and Tate Modern. Apart from Queer Budapest, she has another project called 'project hu' where she helps create a network for artists of the Hungarian diaspora. Website: zsuzsuro.com & Instagram @zsuzsuro

Thomas Roughan is an artist and curator, currently based in London. Having studied at Central Saint Martins and The Willem de Kooning Academy, their work centres around exploring contemporary gay-male sex practices and the links between architecture and sexuality. As a curator, Roughan is interested in promoting and exhibiting emerging LGBTQ+ talent. Instagram: @thomasroughan

Find Queer Budapest on Instagram @queerexhib_budapest



[Artist: DAVIE (David Nagy Abonyi)]



(Artist: Marietta Kartali)

Exhibiting Artists:

Anna Ádám

Ádám Csábi

Ádám Dallos

DAVIE (Dávid Nagy Abonyi)

Olivér Gáspár

Marietta Kartali

Fabian Kis-Juhász

Barnabás Lakatos Gelléri

Borsos Lőrinc

Evelin Nagy

OMOH

Thomas Roughan

Spicy Princess (Annamari Kmetyó)

Theo Studio - William Theodoracopulos / Taras Tolstikov

Mónika Üveges



(Artist: Marietta Kartali)

Photos by @pestianna2014

AFTERWORD

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