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To Vince Priblo, who was inadvertently omitted from the credits of last semester's GLR, yet has continued to do a fine job in his duties as treasurer all year.

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Back cover: Untitled, Photo, 9 x 6, Michael Campbell

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Words are like passengers on a train -- complete with their baggage --
Open to interpretations --
Scrutinizations
by observers --
Subject to the subconscious
Influencations
that infect them
and everyone catches colds
using public transportation

— Amy J. Hoggblom
Great Lake Review
Spring 1987
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A Breakfast Haiku

Buttered toast; bagel
and cream cheese and juice and milk
and Captain Crunch, too.

— Amy Hoggblom

Raspberry Leaf Tea

We sat at her kitchen table
Just my sister and me,
Talking of silly and important things
And drinking raspberry leaf tea.

The tea was good for her uterus
For she had a little one on the way,
So we sat crushing cumfrey leaves
To save for that special day.

That day was coming very soon
And we still had much to prepare,
The birth was to be at her very new home
But her home was still very bare.

Sanding and painting and decorating
Still needed to be done,
I had volunteered my summer over
To help in the reconstructive fun.

At the table we tried to decide on paint colors
For the bedrooms, pantry, and kitchen,
And after an hour of conflicting interests
We decided upon her decision.

Next we discussed the garden
Which still lacked squash, pumpkin, and dill weed,
One month had gone by; it was already July
And the planting was my responsibility.

My sister relieved my worry
“You can still plant in July,” she had said,
“The only thing that might give you a problem
Is the clearing of the garden beds.”

“The weeds have grown thick on the unsown portions
It’s surprising and in such little time,
But I’m sure if you clear them out and keep them out
That the garden should do just fine.”

And reassured I was as I always am
When my sister tells me not to worry,
The garden would be fine, the house done in time
Though she knew, as I, we’d have to hurry.

Questions, I had, about the birth of the baby
“What should I expect; what is in store?”
“It’ll be fine, alright,” she said, “Don’t you worry.
Just remember, I’ve done this before.”

I remembered and chuckled then looked at my hands
The cumfrey had turned them both green,
We continued to talk about silly and important things
And drank one, maybe two more cups of tea.

— C.C. Ellis
Only the Rain Dances

Drowned in a puddle are her worn leather shoes and soul.
Cold raindrops make dots on her pantyhose.
Stiffly, she sits on a park bench.
Her blue, floral dress from Salvation Army is pasted to her skin.
She holds a soggy brown A&P bag above her head.
Only the rain dances
Drenched with sadness she waits for sunshine.

— Janine Kaste

Self Portrait

Camera on self-timer—
the shutter will wait ten seconds
And snap
My portrait.
I’ve focused it on the space where I will be
in five seconds.
I compose myself for the picture
But it beats me at my own game
And takes the picture
Before I wipe the Tears from my Face.

— Amy J. Hoggblom

thin line

the warmest thing in my life
is this teacup I hold
and because things are the way they are
even the tea is stale

— kim akins
The Chances Taken

Lying, drunk and dying, beside my wrecked car.
Remembering rock-hopping days in the country,
when my brother and I would explore long stretches of stream,
ever being very careful about getting our feet wet, despite repeated
warnings,
jumping from large grey rocks on the side to smaller ones in the middle
where, every now and then, a seemingly sturdy stone would sink under
my feet, sending me into the water,
chasing swift salamanders and green bullfrogs through mud and leaves,
at times catching them and at times winding up wet again,
climbing up rough waterfalls and down cliffs, grasping trees that
aren’t always as strong as they seem, until...
“Careful.”
“I’m O.K.”
The boy tightly grabbed the young tree. As he moved
his feet along the steep ravine’s side, the tree’s roots
slipped from the rock and the two fell to the stones below.

Lying, drunk and dying, beside my wrecked car.
Remembering party-hopping days in the suburbs,
when my friends and I would go on physical and mental trips into
geographic and psychedelic states,
ever being very careful about getting lost somewhere, despite repeated
warnings,
jumping from large, crowded keg parties to smaller smoking sessions on
backwoods paths where, every now and then, a little too much would
send me laughing into unconsciousness,
chasing hopes, experience and future memories through houses and city
streets, at times finding them and at times losing myself,
driving when walking is difficult and vision is unreliable, until...
“Careful.”
“I’m O.K.”
The drunken young man grabbed the wheel and left the
party. As he drove down the winding road he followed what
his eyes thought was the way home, which actually led into
a large and sturdy tree.

Lying, drunk and dying beside my wrecked car.
I can’t say I regret my way of living.

— Martin Steinberg
Red.

It is red in the night it is light it is warm and it walks;  
Bathe there in Crimson and feel your blood.  
It is red in the night it is light it is warm and it walks.  

— Paul Austin

Gulping gap
Gulping poison
Temporary
Sweating pore
Sweating salt
Temporary escape
Roughened hand
Roughened gently only in manipulation
Temporary
Persisting drive
Persisting to part intoxicated limbs and lips
Temporary escape
Striding gait
Striding with false security going nowhere
Temporary
Mocking laugh
Mocking love, truth, all that he fears
Temporary escape

— H. Gartner

The Playground Game

Boy on the street  
Tough kid's life.  
He carries a gun in his lunchbox,  
And scares the little girls to death.  
He spits  
And fights the older boys in the bathroom,  
And drags the fags  
Wears dirty clothes and swears.  
Torn at the skin  
Bruised from head to thigh  
Shirt torn at arm  
Runs home to cry.  

— Ron Throup

Stosh B' Gosh

By gosh Stosh you live in a box  
All the town talks and by gosh mocks my poor old Stosh  
Stosh B' Gosh funny little man  
You do odd jobs for pennies, B' Gosh you give the liquor  
store ownerra hand  
My poor old Stosh when Christmas came  
Stosh B' Gosh was left cold and alone  
A little boy caught wind of Stosh's moan  
handed him his new fire truck  
and ran home crying,  
Mom why do some people have such bad luck?  
Mom said B' Gosh I just don't know  

— Carrie L. Rogers
Hurry Dear

"Don't shut the door; I'll be right there."
"C'mon my dear, don't have all night."
"Okay, just wait. I'll comb my hair."
"Again? You're fine; your hair's alright."
"I hate this dress; my arms look bare."
"It's just a party, who will care?"
"A lot of people, my sister's date."
"Now hurry dear or we'll be late."

"Oh no! My nylon's got a tear."
"I knew they would; they looked too tight."
"You called me fat; now that's not fair."
"Did no such thing; don't get uptight."
"I'm not upset; you're wrong, I'm right."
"Why can't we stop this dumb debate?"
"It's no debate; it's called a fight."
"Now hurry dear or we'll be late."

"Don't call me dear, now don't you dare."
"Oh lord, please save me from this night."
"What's that? You asked for help? That's rare."
"Those words I said, they seemed so slight."
"You called me fat, an ugly sight and wonder why I'm so irrate."
"Your bark is worse than your bite - now hurry dear or we'll be late."

"I say that's black; you say that's white. Why can't we stop these fights I hate? If saying sorry works, I might. Now hurry dear or we'll be late."

— Lisa Kean
"What you gonna do, Missy?" she would have jumped if she had had the energy. As it was, she just stared down at the little man who spoke. He was a very little man, only six inches tall. He wasn't green and he didn't have pointy ears, but he was an elf just the same.

"I'm not really sure," she replied. He giggled, because that's what elves do, and asked:

"Well, why have you come?"

She thought for a moment. "I didn't really plan on coming here specifically," she said. "I could be anywhere right now except that I left where I was, so I couldn't be there."

"So you don't know why you're here?" he asked and giggled again.

"No, I haven't thought much about it." He giggled and giggled, for he liked talking to young women in the forest. Then he said in his little elf voice:

"Perhaps that is why you're here."

Her forehead scrunched up in confusion and while she was pondering his remark, he took the opportunity to take his leave. When she turned back to ask him what he meant, she didn't find him there. She looked from her log, then stood and looked under mushrooms and behind stumps. He most definitely was gone, she decided. Perhaps he never really visited her, she thought, but had been a product of her over-active, hunger induced imagination.

"I'm hungry," she moaned. "I'm hungry and cold and if I didn't know that I was here, I'd surely believe myself to be lost." She sat on her log, crossed her arms, and pouted. She sat in a pout for quite some time remembering days in the palace when she sat pouting until she realized that nobody was going to try and make her stop. She saw no sign of the funny little man and she knew certainly that the forest animals couldn't entertain the pout from her face, nor the worry from her mind.

"Hello," said the wolf, "What's your name?"

"What business is that of yours?" she asked, for she grew tired of her trying situation and did not try to find her manners.

"No need to be so touchy, is there? What's matter, did you forget your way to your granny's house?"

"Foolish wolf," said the princess, "I am too rich to have a grandmother in this neighborhood. Or rather, I was. In any case, be gone. I have too much to worry about to waste time with the likes of you."

With a harumph, the wolf slunk off. And just in time, too, for a white rabbit popped his head out of some thicket and said:

"Is it safe? I mean, is he gone?"

"Yes, he's gone. What do you want?" asked the pouty princess.

The rabbit rubbed his ears, licked his back paw and stood up straight. "I've been sent to give you a hand in figuring out what you should do for your supper and bed," he said.

"And how, pray tell, are you going to help me? You're just a little rabbit." Then an evil glow escaped from her eyes. "Perhaps you could be my supper."

The rabbit didn't twitch. "And how, pretty lady, do you intend on making me your supper? Have you a knife? A pot? Wood for a cooking fire? Or did you intend on eating me raw? And would you mind getting my warm, red blood all over your beautiful white dress?"

Her pout turned angry, for truth, when recognized, burns. "What do you want, Rabbit?"

"I really haven't a choice about what I want, dear girl. I've been sent to help you." He hopped closer to her. "If no one helps you, pretty princess, you will surely die tonite."

She gasped, for what beautiful, young woman ever believes her death is imminent? "I beg to differ!" she said. "I won't die!"

"Prove it!" said the rabbit, and off he hopped.

Well, she sat on that mossy log and stared straight ahead. Her pout had slipped off her face for lack of having any effect on anything. She wondered if leaving Prince Charming had been the right thing to do. If he was here, she thought, he'd take care of everything. She sniffled.

"He was a good man," she said aloud and then realized she spoke as if he had died. "Am I forgetting why I left him because I miss him now, or do I miss him because I have forgotten why I left him?" Sheulked because she couldn't answer her question. She decided to work it out aloud.

"Why did I leave him?" she mumbled. "Well," she said loudly, in a speech-like tone, "I could never even leave the palace for fear he wouldn't be able to find me when he wished to deliver a present. I missed Father and running in the fields and riding Nastasia, Father's mare. And Charming would never let Father visit.

"I did have fun at those balls, at least until midnight when that funny sick feeling would come. The oddest thing. Happened every time, too. Hm. And those curlers and all the maids buzzing about. What a bore." She sighed.

"The dream!" she exclaimed. "That dream I had. That's why I left. How did it go? There was a butterfly. That's right. I was sitting in the field when a butterfly came and sat on my shoulder. She touched where he had alighted and pretended that she again felt the tiny feet on her skin. "It's no use. I can't remember what he said. But I know I had to leave, so I did, and now, here I am." She sat for a moment silently, almost startled that no one reacted to her tale, now that she had finished it.

"I won't die," she muttered softly. "But then again, how should I live? The dream!" She thought for a moment. "I didn't really plan on coming here specifically," she said. "I didn't really plan on coming here specifically, so I couldn't be there."

"So you don't know why you're here?" he asked and giggled again.

"No, I haven't thought much about it." He giggled and giggled, for he liked talking to young women in the forest. Then he said in his little elf voice:

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"And how, pray tell, are you going to help me? You're just a little rabbit." Then
very quickly, much too quickly, into fruit. It was a fruit she had never seen before: red, but not strawberries, pear-shaped, but not pears, and they had no skin.

Slowly, she left her perch on the log, her hand outstretched, reaching, slowly approaching the bush with a great, cautious awe. The fruit tickled her fingers when she touched it.

“They look like hearts,” she whispered to herself. “This must be a heart bush.” She felt much better now that she knew what it was. She plucked off a large heart-fruit, brought it to her mouth, paused, then bit into the soft, red pulp.

“Mmm,” she said, juice dripping down her chin and staining her dress. She ate the entire piece, save one heart-shaped seed that grew in its center. This she decided to save and plant later. She put it in her pocket, then plucked another, and another, and another, until no fruit hung from the bush’s branches. She licked her lips and sighed, stuffed.

“I’m so sleepy,” she said to herself, and sat on a patch of moss. She sighed, then layed on her back and rested her head on a large, squat mushroom. She closed her eyes and soon after felt chilled. The grey twilight had turned black sometime during her supper. The full, yellow moon rose early, dropping moonbeams through branches. Still, the cold crept in; her chattering teeth chased away sleep. Groggy, her stomach growled and she wished she hadn’t eaten all the fruit the night before.

“Ouch!” she screeched, and brought her hand to her face. She felt the wet throats grew dry.

“Thorns!” she said, annoyed. Then she smiled. “I wish I had the tools ... ” she said, and rubbed her cheek against the leaf.

“Don’t you believe that it’s possible?” He asked with a wink.

“Indeed, that’s true, but it won’t get you any water,” he said.

“Do you know of my past situation at the palace?” she asked.

“Yes,” he said.

“Do you know my father?”

“Yes,” he said.

“Do you know why the moon shines, or why cats chase mice?”

“Yes! Yes!” he answered, bursting into giggles.

“Well, why, then?” asked the princess, growing cross.

“Why simply because they do!” answered the elf.

She sighed, for it appeared that no water would touch her lips, nor feed the bush that day. “Well, Elf, you can’t know everything!” she said, exasperated.

He giggled, and giggled, for he didn’t mind losing, and led her to a stream so clear that she could see the sky of the world underneath it. The elf did a jig, and wandered off to do his duty elsewhere. The tune he sang danced in her mind long after he was out of sight.

She sat by the water’s edge and weaved a basket out of the sweet grass that grew there. When she had it filled, a tap on her shoulder made her spill the contents onto the bank. She scowled at the wolf.

“Sorry,” he said sheepishly. She saw that his remorse was sincere, muttered her forgiveness, and refilled the basket.

“Did you enjoy your meal?” he asked her.

“Yes, quite, but how...” She looked up at his scruffy face.

“The forest whispers,” he answered her unasked question. Then he laughed at the confusion on her face. “You see, I had a talk with my supper before...”

She gasped, and cried a little and questioned his cruelty.

“What cruelty?” he asked. “Is it cruel to be hungry? Was it cruel to eat from the heart bush?”

“Yes,” he said, and giggled, for he liked to play games. He sang:

“Tell me something that I don’t know,
And I’ll show you the way to go!” and he giggled.

“Something you don’t know? How could I know what you don’t know?”

“Don’t you believe that it’s possible?” He asked with a wink.

“Well, I suppose it is...”

“Try, Princess. Why not?” He giggled.

“Did you enjoy your meal?” he asked her.

“Yes,” he said.

“Do you know my past situation at the palace?” she asked.

“Yes,” he said.

“Do you know my father?”

“Yes,” he said.

“Do you know why the moon shines, or why cats chase mice?”

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She gasped, and cried a little and questioned his cruelty.

“What cruelty?” he asked. “Is it cruel to be hungry? Was it cruel to eat from the heart bush?”

“The heart bush? Of course not. It couldn’t feel or speak like that poor rabbit.”

“Are you quite certain?” he asked. “Perhaps it just didn’t talk to you. Or maybe you weren’t listening. Tell me, Princess, did the rabbits you ate at your palace ever talk?”

“Of course not,” she answered. “Why that’s preposterous.”

“You see, that is my point entirely. You princess types think you cause no pain when you use other living things. That if things don’t act like you, they can’t possibly
be real. Yet, let a rabbit talk and his death is cruel. It's not, Missy. It's just another death. I was hungry and so I ate, but I respected his life.”

“I respect life,” she stated nearing poutiness. “That’s why this water is important. I need to help a bush grow.”

“Why do you need two bushes? There’s no room for greed out here, Princess.”

She huffed in indignation. “I am not greedy, Mr. Wolf,” she stated. “I happened to finish the first bush and so I need another.”

The wolf whistled. “One whole bush in a meal. Hmm. That’s not greed?” She glowered at him, which made him laugh, which made her glower more fiercely. “Well, it’s finished now, dear girl. No need to be so upset.” He chuckled and then cleared his throat. “Might I accompany you to the clearing? I’d like to witness the growth of this miraculous bush.”

She replied that he could do what he pleased; it was a free country. And so resumed her journey with him following close behind.

When they reached the clearing, she went directly to the planted seed and poured some of the water onto the earth. They heard a low rumble and something resembling a belch, but nothing moved. The earth remained unbroken around the drowning seed.

“What happened?” she asked more to the air around her than to herself or the wolf.

“It doesn’t appear that anything has,” replied the wolf.

“Why, I don’t understand,” she said.

“Apparently not,” said the wolf.

She kaplunked down on a stump and rested her open mouth on her fist. “I just don’t understand. Why didn’t it grow this time?”

“Well, why should it? Who said it would?”

The wolf leaned against a tree trunk and crossed his arms. “Was it ever promised that a bush would grow to feed you every night?”

She closed her mouth tightly. “No, Wolf. It wasn’t. I suppose I’ll have to find something else to eat.” She hoisted herself to her feet, grabbed her leaf shawl, and left the company of the wolf.

In the twilight, she could just make out the shapes of the leaves. She had to pick fast and continue traveling for she had walked quite a distance from the clearing. Being that she was very hungry, she would plop a few heart-berries into her mouth every few steps, but she paid careful attention not to eat too many. She decided to save some for later, or perhaps, she thought, if he was still around, she decided, she would share some with the wolf.

She reached the clearing just as it got dark enough to safely call it a night. She felt the stillness and the quiet cold, and then she felt someone sharing the stillness. She could just make out his outline under the tree.

“Hello, Wolf,” she said calmly. “Are you hungry?”

He turned his big head slowly and a moonbeam caught his eyes and turned them into kaleidoscopes of orange and yellow. “What have you found?” he asked.

“Heartberries. Take your fill.” She walked closer to him to give him the chance of reaching into the fold of her skirt for the fruit. She smiled at him proudly. “Please have some,” she told him. “But be sure to save some.”

He reached out and took hold of one berry which he sucked on and then swallowed. She watched him, still full from nibbling on the way home.

“Might I have another?” he asked.

“Certainly,” she said, and she sat next to him under the tree, so as he would have an easier reach.

“These are good berries, Princess. Where did you get them?”

“Oh,” she said with a flip of her hand, “They were growing throughout the forest.”

“How did you know that they wouldn’t make you sick?”

“Well,” she said, “I was worried about that. After I left you, I started running through the woods; I was annoyed and I thought it would help to make me feel better if I ran.”

“Did it?” he asked, reaching for another berry.

“For the moment. But then I wondered where I was trying to get to, and so I stopped. At that moment, I realized two things: One, that I stood smack dab in the middle of a berry orchard and, Two, that I was hungry.”

“So you ate three bushels and brought back a peck.”

She looked at him tersely. “I’m afraid, dear Wolf, that your Messenger Rabbit Service is out of order. You ate your spy, Wolf. Now do you want to hear my story?”

“The wolf chuckled. “Yes, Princess, I do.”

“All right, then. She cleared her throat. “Where was I?”

“You were hungry.”

“Yes, I was hungry. But the berries could have been poison. I had to test them. So I took one in my mouth, prepared for bitterness, in which case I would have promptly spit it out -- delicately, you understand.”

“Of course.”

“But it was not bitter. At the same moment that I recognized the taste, I saw the leaves. So I knew.” She smiled, popped a berry into her mouth, and crossed her arms, taking the posture of one who has finished victoriously.

“Knew what?” asked the wolf.

“That they weren’t poison,” she said, hitting both his words out of the air. “I saw the leaves. They were hearts. Heartberries.”

“Like the bush,” said the wolf, pointing to its carcass.

“Precisely,” she said. “Only...” She fell silent.

“Only?” he began licking his berry-red fingers.

“Only, I didn’t expect it. And I appreciated them filling me up.”

“Well, good,” said the wolf, rising to his feet.

“Are you leaving?” she asked, looking up at him.

“Would you like me to?” he asked softly. She looked away from him.

“I’m cold,” she said, slightly whining.
“Well, build a fire,” he told her.
“Build a fire?” she stared at him blankly. “I don’t know how.”
He chuckled. “Learn,” he told her.
“Teach me,” she said.
“Well,” he said, sitting back down. “You’ll need some wood.” She stared at him, waiting, and then stood and began searching for dry logs. She carried what she found into the clearing, and he showed her how to stack it correctly. Soon, they sat together on the patch of moss watching the demons growling in the fire.
“Thank you for supper, Princess,” he said after a moment.
“You’re welcome, Wolf. Thank you for your help.” She paused, and then said, “Tell me, if you will, although I don’t want to mention this for fear that it has slipped you mind, but tell me, Wolf, why didn’t you have me for supper?” The wolf smiled into his lap, then looked at her and answered softly, “I don’t need to devour you in order to prove that I’m a wolf. I already know that.” He laughed gently. “If I did that, then who would I be talking to right now?”
She felt her face loosen into happiness then. “I’m glad,” she said. “I’ve been getting tired of talking to myself.” She laughed a little laugh, and then grew somber. “I’m sorry if my quick temper has hurt your feelings, Wolf.” And then, quite impetuously, she kissed his furry cheek.

You may think all this point that he turned into a handsome prince, but he didn’t, and for that, she was quite glad; she had had her fill of handsome princes. No, he stayed a wolf, and he stayed the night and in the morning, they set off to discover new things alone which they shared with each other when they happened to meet again.

— Deborah Land
Bon Matin

It is a day like any other, cloudy and yet full of promise. She busily prepares her silverware, counting, counting, counting, polishing just a few for extra measure. Suddenly the bell rings and the tranquility of the moment shatters. Pieces of the calm go flying, now into thousands of pieces radiating over the expanse of the ceiling only to fall in desperation to the floor. Perhaps later they can be swept up into a pile, taken care of, removed. But for now small diamonds and cut gem stones bounce off the walls, lights, chairs, windows, napkins, and centerpieces. Such a disturbance.

"It's alright, I shall try to balance the boat," she thinks to herself as she approaches the intruders, kicking away small sparkling stones as she walks.

"Yes, yes, yes, it's alright, do come in," she forms these words using her sing-song voice, each syllable caressed in equal order. From behind her now, trail three faceless creatures ready to do her bidding. Each of the three unaware of the debris scattered over the rug which she must daintily push aside.

Once the three are firmly planted in their positions, she notices that one has sprouted two eyes, one other is growing a rather large nose, and the third has acquired a pair of pouting lips. These lips part and issue forth a blast of desire. Without warning the other two have acquired the same ability. All three now possessing lips of various size and color, each with the capacity to push her this way, then that. The blasts sometimes tickle her, at other times they slap her soundly. She is propelled by them, quite accustomed to the various tones and demands.

Picking up the three menus as she takes her leave of them, she notices without any surprise that the floor is quite smooth and bare beneath her feet.

— Meg Barone

Houston.....It's wonderful
Comeback Capricorn 1...........give us earthbound people an idea of what's up there........
Everything and nothing........
it's just so big and........wonderful........
Capricorn, we're losing contact........repeat........
So big........
last........
wonderful........
transmission.
so free...........and all the eyes of God shining down on me...........watching...........calling...........the helmet........
Capricorn 1, emergency transmission........he's disengaged from the ship.
Alone...........darkness, yet so much light,
so much...........company...........hello Sun........
your lover is here........Mother moon........
I miss you........the helmet........
Houston he's........his my God, he's reaching for his helmet........I won't reach him in time.
All the eyes of God are watching
...........breath........
I must breath........
Jesus, Houston, I won't make........
So alone........
so free........
It........
Ain't it wonderous........
In

Capricorn 1

Time

Capricorn 1

do
you

copy?........

— Bob Searles
Em brought her attention back to the minister in front of her. She squinted, trying to focus on his face, or on the yellow stole he wore around his neck. She couldn’t hear what he was saying; her feet were itchy inside her shoes. She pulled one shoe off with her toe and rubbed the bottom of her foot on the kneeling bench. Her belt was too tight, but she couldn’t loosen it. She had stapled it together earlier so it wouldn’t slide. She scratched her ear.

The minister said something and people stood up around her and began to sing. She moved her mouth, but couldn’t sing. She moved toward the door with the rest of the congregation.

“How are you Ms. Manning,” the minister was saying.
She smiled politely, “Oh fine, thanks. Wonderful sermon.” She smiled broadly again.

“Thank you...how are the boys? What are their names again?”
“Fine, they’re fine. John and Paul.”
The minister beamed. “Oh, yes. Good saintly names.”
Em shrugged. “I guess so. They’re named after the Beatles.”
The minister just nodded and started to move away. “Fine, fine, see you, take care,” he was saying.

Em walked along with the rest of the people, her arms wrapped around her coat, hugging it to her. She looked up ahead of her at the carved white wooden saints on the ceiling. Each of them smiled gently down at her. They bored her. She walked past them without smiling back.

The church doors were open. The air was warm and there were shrinking snow banks around the parking lot. Em threw her coat over to the passenger seat of her car. Before turning the key, she rolled down her window a little, and ran a hand through her hair.

She sighed. “Won’t be long now — ” she started, and turned the key.

When the engine turned over, the bomb went off and it was a horrible noise. A strong, sick smell rose with the blue smoke. There was someone screaming thinly as from a great distance.

Em checked her rearview mirror and drove away from the burning church.

— kim akins

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Baptism

Sipping cold water
I think that the pureness will clean me inside.
Then I taste the bitter that the ice keeps, and I know that I’ll need more than cold water.

think pureness need water that I taste I that cold water keep Then ice the more me I’ll the I and bitter than know Sipping clean will the that cold inside

— Deborah Land
The Sky was Never Bluer

The sky was never bluer
and words, never
so out of place

Mountain dust clouded
the steep path, the rocky path
behind us
as four wheels, one chassis, and
two lives struggled
to climb to the highest place,
where even trees don’t dare
look down

Growing warmer,
a priceless bottle of cheap champagne
(younglove’s Perignon)
tumbled restlessly in the backseat

Prickly bushes smiled
and spotted chipmunks
scurried as we inched upward —
my tired car sputtering,
my foot to the floorboard, and
her bare feet playing in my lap
saying,
This looks like a good place

— Michael P. Zizzi

Late at Night

Listen, I’d like to stay here with you but I really have to go
flip that album over, will you? More wine? I think there’s some in the fridge
needs to be cleaned, my cat must be starving, probably waiting for me
and you, you and me. I like the sound of that. How bout you?
know what? When I left for work this morning I think I left the radio on
that shelf behind you are some old fireplace matches,
they should work
drives me nuts; the boss screams if I’m even five minutes late
at night, the best time to talk, isn’t it? So glad you’re here, too
hyper, that’s what the girls at work tell me; that’s not what I think
I’ve always loved your eyes the most; this firelight makes them look so bright
and early, 6:30 a.m., that’s what time I have to get up in the morning
is really only a few hours away. Why don’t you just stay?
here with you? I’d miss work and all the things I have to do
do you know tomorrow’s Sunday? So what if you left the radio on all day
time isn’t as nice as the night, you’re right. Maybe I will stay
right there, don’t move. I’ll get us a blanket, maybe even two or three
a.m. Is that the time? I didn’t think it was that late, did you?
and me, me and you. I still love the sound of that.
There’s something I’d like to ask you
know, I really don’t want to leave. I mean if you don’t mind, it’s kind of late
at night is the nicest time. Aren’t you glad we are spending it here, together?

— Lisa Kean
Private Property

The glow hadn’t completely left the screen of the television set opposite the foot of the double bed. That one annoying dot remained so clear that it seemed as if Johnny Carson could stick his head out of the set and blow his audience a kiss goodnight.

Frank Osbourne was on his back, on the left side of the bed — his side of the bed — with his arms folded behind his head and his jaw hanging open. His eyes remained fixed at the television dot in case Carson appeared.

His wife was lying with her back facing him. The curtain was pulled out from the window and draped over her lamp to shield the reading light from her husband. Frank didn’t mind the light. He was usually asleep before the weather on the eleven o’clock news was over and never knew when Sara went to sleep. But tonight he made it through the news, Carson’s monologue, a bad comic, gay actor and child millionaire. And sleep wasn’t even approaching.

“What’s the matter? Don’t you feel well?”

“Huh?” she yawned. “You awake, honey?” There was a pause, the sound of pages sliding through fingers and a slight intake of breath.

“Sure, let me know — ”

“Oh,” Frank said and turned on the light at his bedstand.

“Lights, Frank? It’s almost one o’clock!” She sat up in bed and looked her husband in the eye. “What’s the matter? Don’t you feel well?”

“I feel fine. I want to talk to you about something.” he said. “The property.”

“What property?” she asked, sinking into the sheets.

“I’m thinking of selling,” Frank asked his wife.

“Huh?”

“I said, I’m thinking of selling.”

“Selling what?” Sara asked and propped her head up with her right hand.

“All of it; the barn, the fields, the lake,” he said. “Get Rosi the hell out of there. It’s all of it.”

Frank got out of bed and paced back and forth in front of the bureau. Sara saw two Franks, one talking a mile a minute and his reflection in the mirror of the bureau, trying desperately to keep up. “You and I, we use that lake twice a year and the girls haven’t been down there since they’ve discovered boys. Pete and Diane don’t ride or swim and their kids are city slickers now. Our girls will be in college soon and all the while Rose is parading around like he owns the place.”

“Frank! Will you slow down a little, please?” Sara asked. “Have you talked to your brother?”

“Yes. And a lawyer.” he said matter of factly.

“Lawyers? Already? I thought you were thinking about it,” she said, hurt by her ignorance to it all.

like he was a trespasser on his own property. Frank and Sara rarely went down to the barns anymore, especially since their two girls had given up riding for cars, boys, sports and all the glamour of high school. Rosi ran the show now, which paid the rent, which paid the taxes on the hundred acres of fields and woods.

Frank’s father had bought the land for the single purpose of raising his family on it. He wanted his children and grandchildren to have a place to build a home if they wanted to. He wanted all his children to own land. He thrived on that. Frank had built his home up the road from the barns. He had a view of the lake from his kitchen window. He could look down a sloping ten acre field filled with strangeling pine trees of different sizes. He and his father had planted some and the tradition continued with him and his daughters. They planted rows and rows of trees, and of the survivors, one came down each year for Christmas.

The lake appeared at the bottom of the field and rounded out of sight where a beach used to be, before coming back into view near the barns. Above the dam which separated the horses from the water, the roofs of the barns could be seen, and to the left, the chimney of the house he grew up in. The lake wasn’t actually a lake, but a rather huge pond. It was big enough for a few rowboats to fish in solitude, but even one motorboat would have looked ridiculous.

Frank’s older brother, Peter, and his wife Diane, had built their house farther into the property, not visible from the road at all, but they too could see the lake from a different angle. They had two children who had graduated from college and moved to the city. In the winter, when the leaves were gone, Frank could see his brother’s horse across the lake, set up on the opposite hill.

“What do you think about selling the property?” Frank asked his wife.

“All of it; the barn, the fields, the lake,” he said. “Get Rosi the hell out of there. It’s rotting, all of it.”

Frank got out of bed and paced back and forth in front of the bureau. Sara saw two Franks, one talking a mile a minute and his reflection in the mirror of the bureau, trying desperately to keep up. “You and I, we use that lake twice a year and the girls haven’t been down there since they’ve discovered boys. Pete and Diane don’t ride or swim and their kids are city slickers now. Our girls will be in college soon and all the while Rose is parading around like he owns the place.”

“Frank! Will you slow down a little, please?” Sara asked. “Have you talked to your brother?”

“Yes. And a lawyer.” he said matter of factly.

“Lawyers? Already? I thought you were thinking about it,” she said, hurt by her ignorance to it all.
"Nothing's signed or sold, Sara," he said. "We're just talking."

"What did Peter say?" she asked.

"He's all for it. Thinks the money would be nice — and it would too, Sara. We wouldn't have to take out a second mortgage on our house when the girls go to college or take out loans and it'd be nice for us too — "

"Your father would roll over — "

"He would not," Frank insisted. "Dad wanted the land to be used, and it's not."

"No, Frank. Wrong," Sara argued. "Your father wanted the land to be land. To be your family's land. And that's all."

"And you think Rosi using the barn, my parents' house, and the lake makes it our property?"

"Yes, I do. The farm is Osbourne's. Our kids and Peter and Diane's kids can come back here anytime and say they have a home here. They can build anytime they want to. They can say they own it. That they have property to build on. And if they don't want to, maybe their children will."

"And that whole while, it's supposed to sit and wait?"

"Wait for what, Frank?" she said confused. "I didn't know it had a plane to catch."

"I'm supposed to sit here and watch this land do nothing," he snubbed. "Great."

"What's it supposed to 'do', Frank?" Sara asked. "Please don't snap at me. You asked me and I told you what I thought. It's your land. I wouldn't think of intruding." She rolled over, turned off the lamp and shut her eyes. Frank went to her and sat in the curve her body made when she pulled her knees halfway to her chest.

"I'm sorry," he whispered. "It's late and I'm not used to this." He pushed some blonde hair away from his wife's still young face.

"I just want to do what's right. The girls could use the money for college and it wouldn't hurt us any either. Having all this money invested in something none of us ever uses — that's what's bothering me.

Sara opened her eyes and looked up into her husband's worried face. "But we do use it, Frank. We have an amazing view out our windows. We see trees and fields and the lake, not someone's clothesline or doghouse. You grew up here. Our girls grew up here. We have privacy and land and space and air." She paused and took a deep breath. "I'm sorry, it's really between you and your brother. But please don't look at it as money. We don't need money that badly. Don't sell out on your father for the wrong reason." She buried her face into her pillow signaling the end of the conversation.

Frank kissed his wife goodnight and walked around to his side of the bed and climbed into the blankets. He turned off the light and stared at the blank television screen through the darkness.

Frank sat at the kitchen table and stared at the rain through the window. He had one hand wrapped around a cup of black coffee and his chin rested in the palm of his other. He was chewing on the skin of his thumb because the nail had already been gnawed off.

"Pete and Diane have a fire going," Sara said looking over the top of the morning paper. Frank looked up onto the hill and saw a thin strand of white smoke stand out among the gray. It seemed to be fighting the cold drizzle in order to make it out of the chimney at all.

"Uh huh," Frank said replacing his thumb with his coffee.

Sara folded the paper and buttered a muffin. "So, you think you'll sell soon?"

"Yep. Prob'ly," he said.

"And where will they start building?" she asked nodding towards the window.

"Over the ridge behind Pete's house. And to the left," he said and swung his elbow in the opposite direction but kept staring straight ahead mesmerized by the drizzle.

"So, we really won't see the other houses that much, will we?" She bobbed her head up and down in approval.
Frank sensed slight optimism and smiled. “Nah, maybe a telephone wire or a TV antenna but nothing like a real housing development.” He felt appalled to use the words, “housing development”.

“Unless, of course, you get more money,” she said, now with false optimism. “And if you get a bigger offer then what’ll happen?” Her interest was strictly cynical and Frank was once again uncomfortable.

“No!” Frank said and broke his stare from the rain. “The barn and house remain. So does the lake.”

“Yes, of course they will,” she said. “And will Rosi run it?”

“No, absolutely not. This guy we’re seeing today wants to turn it all into a recreation center for the development.” He nodded his head as if enthused over the prospect. “A little park at the lake. You know, snack bar, playground, the works. And the barn will still have horses for renting and stuff.”

“But what’re they going to do with your parents’ house?”

“Oh, the house is definitely staying too!” he said defensively.

“And the barn? They’ll tear that down?” Her totally objective voice was driving him crazy.

“No!” Frank said and broke his stare from the rain. “The barn and house remain. So does the lake.”

Frank drove with his brother for what seemed the millionth time to the lawyer’s office in town to meet with perspective buyers. The guy they were seeing today had already made the trip upstate from Manhattan three times to talk to the brothers. With each trip, the offer was higher and higher than the time before. Frank could tell by the happy beat of his brother’s fingers on the steering wheel that Peter felt it too.

“Good luck with those lawyers today,” she said and smiled.

Frank knew she didn’t agree with his decision to sell from their late night conversation months ago. But he knew she still considered the farm “his” and not theirs and refused to utter any definite opinion or advice.

They drove past the driveway leading down to the barns and Frank looked out Peter’s window to see the barn and house. The fog had settled on the farm covering the fields and ground until they were invisible from the fallen cloud, but the barn and house stood out clearly seeming redder and newer in the whiteness of the fog.

It was all going to be over today, but Frank still felt nervous and uptight. He thought maybe it was the weather. Much too cold for April and the rain was annoying him. It wasn’t raining hard enough to keep the windshield wipers on, but it was too wet to keep them off, so they screeched across the glass with every third systematic click.

“Will you turn those damn things off?” Frank said, gritting his teeth.

“Sure, bro!” Peter said. He turned the wipers off and the radio on and sang along with a much too happy country western tune.

“Hey, hey!” Peter laughed and slapped Frank’s thigh. “Today’s the big day! This rich boy from the mighty big apple is going to make us happy today!”

“Yeah, I think he’ll want to sign too.” Frank bit his thumb nail too low and it began to bleed.

“Want to? He’ll be begging us! We’re in the money now, baby brother!” he said and laughed. “Yep! Gotta love it!”

“How could he be so wound up, Frank thought. He always was too happy; never did think enough.

“Here’s to your lovely daughters and their college careers!” Peter raised his glass of scotch and ice to Frank’s Budweiser, “is to your lovely daughters and their college careers!”

They clinked glasses and finished their drinks. The city man had bought the farm, all of it, minus two and a half acres for Frank and two and a half for Peter. They had lawns now, instead of fields. But Frank realized it was no big deal. and the money was nice.

“Nother one, please, Greg,” Frank said to the bartender. A glass of golden liquid and a bottle of golden brew appeared.

“Here’s to the rec center of Double H Riding Stables and the future Osbourne Park,” Frank said. “The lake’ll be gorgeous, all mowed with a dock and a lifeguard. It’ll be nice, huh, Pete, huh?”

“Yeah,” he said. “All the kids’ll play there on swings and slides and stuff.” He gulped the remainder of his scotch and waved the bartender. “I hope the kids don’t piss in the lake. You think they’ll piss in the lake, Frank? Gosh, I hope they don’t. Maybe he’ll build a kiddie pool. I don’t care if they piss in a kiddie pool.”

“Here’s to all that money,” Peter said and put his arm around his brother. Old Mr. Lambert, a man who worked on the farm when Frank and Peter were boys, walked into the bar and limped up to a stool. He ordered a shot of bourbon and a glass of water and drank both without ever sitting down. He was still dressed as if he was working on a farm. Khaki overalls tucked inside grease stained workboots. He was slightly bent at the small of his back so the flannel shirt he wore as a jacket hung lower in the front than in the back. He had a gray shadow of a

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beard and a full head of thick gray hair. Frank saw him first and noticed he looked the same age he had when Frank was a young boy.

"Mr. Lambert," Frank yelled across the bar. "Come 'ere."

"Well, I'll be," the old man muttered. "The Osbourne boys." He grasped each of their hands with a much firmer shake than their own. "How are you two?"

"We're swell," Peter said. "How 'bout 'nother shot with us?"

"Why, un, don't mind if I do at all," he said and paused. "If'n that you're not in a hurry that is. Don't mean to intrude; never want to intrude."

"No hurry at all," Frank said. He ordered another round and a shot for Mr. Lambert.

"To you, Mr. Lambert," Frank said when the drinks arrived. But Mr. Lambert shook his head and cleared his throat.

"No sir," he said. "To you boy's father - the finest man I ever worked for and the finest man I ever known."

"Here, here!" the brothers shouted and met Mr. Lambert's glass.

"Say, I hear you gotta sell your daddy's farm. Sorry to hear that, mighty shame it is. A fine piece of land that is. Your daddy was so proud." He put his cap on his head and hooked his thumbs behind the straps of his overalls. "Thank you greatly for the drink. You boys take care of yourselves." He turned his back on Frank and Peter and walked out of the bar.

"Fine, fine man that Mr. Lambert is," Peter said. Frank heard his brother but his eyes followed Mr. Lambert out the door and down the street.

"Yo, Greg! We're still celebrating!" Peter yelled. "How 'bout a couple more here?"

It was dark when Peter drove his brother home. Frank refused to glance anywhere but straight ahead and kept his eyes squeezed tightly shut, like a child in a horror film, for much of the trip. He sensed when they turned up their road and felt the car shift when they reached the top of the hill. Staring through closed eyelids, he knew the farm was down on the right. Frank knew if he turned his head to look at the property he'd see nothing because of the darkness. But he didn't look anyway.

"We're here, buddy!" Peter said. He was such a happy drunk, Frank thought. "I'll be talking to you tomorrow." Frank just touched his brother's hand and nodded. He walked into his bedroom and saw that Sara had fallen asleep reading. Frank picked the book up off the floor, folded an anonymous page, and slid it under her pillow. He sat in the curve her body made whenever she slept on her side. She stirred slightly.

"Hi, honey," she yawned. "How'd it go?"

He turned off the light and sobbed into the darkness.

Sonnet #4, In response to Xavier Stone.

And still, herein, I am the Sun, behind
A wall of clouds; I've all the power to burn
Them off, but now they've come into my mind
And given my thoughts a sour and ugly turn.
And on your side you see a grey and broken
Beam of light I vainly try to send:
This disillusion works both ways, and spoken
Word cannot cut through to make amend.
But one, with eyes that see for miles, who high
Above the stratos sits, has pierced a hole
So I might reach to touch the world: now dry
Of tears, upon the world I'll set my goal.

Good sir, thank God you call this spade a spade!
For now, I'll show the Ace can make the grade.

— Paul Austin

— Kathy Mayer
Sidhe

i am trapped
i am caught
i am caged
i am trapped.
the hunted hare has more chance than i
instinct honed to a knife's edge
to throw a lure to his assailants
what have i
cold winter numbed heart
society has been steeped into my bones
so that i lay awake rarely
tho the moon is full and
the light mirrored on my pillow aches
for acknowledgement
i am trapped
i am caged
entagled in half forgotten fancies i
move as if blind
a drugged detachment even on deathless shores
i am blind
i am trapped
the net so artfully
lovingly
woven
has been set
i am trapped
wearing a knowing face
mouthing disinformation
till i question my own ability
to become informed
i am trapped
but i can never be taken
never
no matter what
they do to me
my mind
my body because what is me
is me

(Continued on next page)
and even though they
can make that become a memory
a riddle too hard for me
to comprehend
it will still have been me
and who can differentiate
the was/is/will have been
on the sidhe


ii

Even my passion is not
untainted
Previous lovers
have made me what
i am
a blazing light
laughter
an invoked response
but if you could
see into my eyes
i am trapped
i am caged
i am caught
the harsh metal
twists but will not
break
as my body already
has
a thin stream
of blood welling
from the mouth
that was once mine

— Karen Stevenson

black emptiness
is all i breathe
i can see only
a white light
ahead
i run far and fast
to escape the
black

my feet run
away leaving
me behind
frightened

— Kim Akins
Haikus

Autumn Breeze
Winds break the leaf's bond
to the oak tree and send it
tumbling towards the soil.

January's Silence
Trees stretch their frozen
limbs, naked except for the
surrounding silence.

Growth of Spring
Blossoms change to leaves
that destroy the white flow of
bark on the birch tree.

— Lisa Kean
i.

blackbird soul spring-whistles
in thorn-twisted
(life-giving, mud-loving)
black-apple tree
lunging through
winter's last-rattle
raw-death gasping gusts.

ii.

spring-bud blackbirds
swell trees swaying
in leaf-pregnant march
while canadian geese "V's"
pull southern-sky threads
through silhouette trees,
early-spring sky-tapestries weaving.

the shining

you could never say
i moved like sunshine, sometimes
i shine but it's
just the moon rising in my head

— kim akins

blue satin sky
star studded
faerieland night
breathes
rainwashed spring on
startled green
lake-wind combing maples &
the day old moon
cracks a faint smile
on the dark face of the sky

— Kevin Bolton
Comes the Stalker

I
It shows its prey a warning
glimpse of fiery eyes
and disappears
cloaked in deepening night...
It reappears and flashes
a deadly wink.
Daring, the signs advise the Stalker,
mislead the prey.
Surprise attack and the kill.

II
Noblest warrior of the village
promenades, boldly defies.
Looks the Stalker in the eye
then leaps and struts
through the Stalker’s appetite...
Cut down instantly
he’s shocked.
Never saw the deathblow coming.

III
Now the stalker is the Stalked.
Scared white
screaming
down the dark path...
Path that’s served
a thousand stalkers.
Placemat of the hungry night.

— Michael P. Zizzi

Untitled
Pen and Ink, 6½ x 8½
Jim Gould
"A long night ends to tapping"

cold clear water dripping
from icy black, twiggy tree-tips.
far-seeing eyes strain
as that other world dissolves
with the mist of melting snow
stirring in chill morning air
shivering with silence, silence, silence & then
sun blanches through pallid sky.
Earth takes a breath to speak:
& hoarse crow croaks three times
(first mortal voice) saying
"welcome fellow, brother zagreus.
You'll see no more this day,
rest soundly and well - come."
Then flaps from silhouette tree
to deep green hemlock grove
& pale sun melts the silence
while black & white chickadees chattering
spatters sound like bright colours
on the day's black canvas.
The rest of the world slowly wakens
& dogs bark to the day,
a day like any other.

— Kevin Bolton