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Saturday in the Park / Melanie Martinez

**CHANGING THE WORLD
THROUGH WORDS AND ART**

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Refraction

Heikki Huotari

Jacob, seeing Rachel, husbanded his mother's brother's sheep. I knew the minute I ran into it it was a wall and not a well. Disturbances of atmospheres restricted me to hallowed ground. Penultimate? Is that your final interjection? An objection asked and answered interfaces in a cloud. Exceptions may be made for seven or more chickens or

a road is long and winding or a type is strong and silent so with Gertrude Stein I beg to differ. Father Nature loved a vacuum, a parade. I called the one who stayed a lazy bones, the one who took the special breakfast lightly and the one who wanted to be left alone. I shall continue contemplating peer review or quantum blue until I have a quorum or

I'm slowing photons and remotely diagnose the alien with schizophrenia, advise the alien to be in limbo only with the nonjudgmental alcoholics or the outer measure of the apparition may be smaller and the inner larger but by god that apparition is no plaything. Contraindicating popular opinion, you may have your thorns and thistles without bells and whistles, your goats neither fainting nor in trees. It is when midnight light breaks into prison that refraction happens.

My Treat 2

Heikki Huotari

Give me a sidewalk to sit on and I'll connect the dots or equally improbably be written off. This cubic corner is a cubic corner spiders might belie. It's only an electric eye, it's not an outrage what Bob Dylan's done, that's not Bob Dylan's name and those with real names, those whose needs to eat and sleep are in remission, seek to simultaneously eschew and consume. The human form is taken—do you, unborn, have a backup plan?

We called it beauty rest and in the colors of a second sunset we were two thirds of a person and one third of us would storm a barricade if there were further innocence to lose and in my ice age I'll grow into your opinion, your solution, even as a worker ant, when given insulin, becomes a queen.

You wonder where that phantom hand has been, in what repose. Your marching orders include humans left and right. The scissors put their teeth in and the scissors sing. The branches meet above your street, the roots below. It's out and back and there's a hairpin turn. Because your name is on a list no one will talk to you but if you tell me what your optics are, I'll see what I can do.



Michelin Boy (With Rabbit Ears) / Gabriel Embaha

The Letters

Victoria Shannon

Sheila sent me back all my old letters, the ones I wrote from my college to hers, back when we were each learning about tequila shots and how cool we looked under party lights. The letters came to my office last week in a big manila envelope. I didn't know what to do with them.

We had become friends in high school, validating the maxim that opposites attract. Her auburn curls, flowing saris, and boho style all reeked to me of antiestablishment intellectual. A radical and free thinker: That's what I wanted to be. But I also wanted to be a horse trainer, a playwright, a passenger on a houseboat floating through Europe, a folk singer, a habitu  of the West Village, and a helicopter pilot. I wanted to be anyone but myself, whoever that was.

Sheila and I were both sixteen going on twenty-five like the wind. We were trapped in 1990s suburbia, salivating for the day we could leave home and get on with our lives. But Sheila always seemed older, more sophisticated, more knowing. She would wax on about Susan Sontag, Naomi French, and Mother Jones, lecturing me on the perils of capitalism and patriarchy. I was caught up in Salinger, and suddenly embarrassed by it.

"Religion, property, and government enslave us," she'd wag at me as we sat by the creek in the woods behind her house. "It's obvious this political system doesn't work, but our parents are blind to it. We need a revolution."

Sheila had her nose straightened that year. I had never noticed anything wrong with it. Before the operation and after, I stared and stared. It was a nose, for crying out loud, and it looked fine, even on her slender frame. "Just because," she smiled at me. "I just wanted to, you silly. It'll make a difference later on."

She talked me into cutting class one afternoon, promising a surprise. We ended up in my parents' basement, and she pulled out a plastic bag of white powder and a ten-dollar bill. I'd never seen cocaine before.

“Oh my God! You brought this to *my* house? Sheila! How could you?” I was panic-stricken. I was sure my brothers would come home and find us.

“Oh, Peaches, don’t agitate. Just go find us a mirror,” she laughed.

My heart thudded in my chest even before the first snort. Still, I managed not to breathe too much of it away. Afterward, I felt like an adult, smug and experienced. But the power trip and the paranoia canceled each other out, leaving me too scared to ever try it again.

Her parents were divorced, a novelty for me. I met her dad one weekend, and he seemed like a perfectly fine father specimen: balding, glasses, sociable, professional. “What’s it like?” I asked her later. “Not having your father around?”

“Like all men,” she said, fixing her scarf into a chic double knot in front of her dresser mirror, “my father is an oppressor. He’s an embarrassing role model. Darling, I’m not missing anything without him.” I’d never heard a father so reviled. It made me rethink my entire, normal relationship with my own.

I was a bit crushed when I found out Sheila was a good student, a hard worker, and aiming to graduate from high school early so she could start accumulating college credits. Her manifest-destiny mindset made me wonder why she wanted to hang with me – me with all my loose ends and hers tighter than a drum. I didn’t know what drove her, but I wanted some of it.

Toward the end of our senior year, I saw her less often; she had graduated that winter and was taking classes at the community college. But we were both still in a hurry. I couldn’t wait to stand in the middle of a sidewalk, any sidewalk, anywhere, and scream, “I’m here!” She was racing toward something, too, but I couldn’t fathom what it was.

“We are going places, girl!” she crowed as we sat on her front steps a few days before the senior prom.

“Yeah,” I said. “You sure are.”

“Oh, come on, Peaches.” Her big, rust-colored eyes flashed with excitement. “Big stuff coming. You’ll be there for me, yes? We’ll take on the world. We’ll show them how it’s done.”

I nodded obediently. What was she seeing in our future, and why was I so deprived of vision? *Baby, we were born to ruuuuunnn!* she scrawled across the inside cover of my yearbook.

At Sheila’s graduation party, I marveled at her ability to acquire people; I didn’t know a soul there except her and our history teacher. But I met a guy. At eighteen, Cary was super serious and way above me. He was practically a political consultant already, working on campaigns and planning his next steps up through the ranks. Still, he thought I was “interesting,” and we played at dating for the summer.

Sheila outdid me, as usual. Her boyfriend was older, a teaching assistant at the community college with a receding hairline and his own apartment, where he lit incense and let us drink beer. He nodded a lot and spoke philosophically, warning us often that “life is short and time is swift.” I felt like we were actors on a set.

And then, in a flash, high school was history. Sheila went off to Berkeley, and I went to a land-grant college in the Midwest, the farthest place from home that would accept my rotten grades. We charged ahead like racehorses without a bit, heading toward a finish line hidden in mist.

That’s when we started writing letters. Hers made fun of what she called Moo U., and mine sagged with jealousy over Berkeley and tried to make my life interesting.

It wasn’t, no matter how much I yearned for it to be. I went with the flow, did what my roomies did, tried to follow the classwork, found little that engaged me. What had I expected from college, from life on my own? Romance, stimulation, and adventure, for starters. I looked for them under a few rocks and came up with nothing but dirt.

Sheila met a guy, a native of California, an egghead getting his PhD in transportation engineering. I spun through Mark, then Jimmy, then Joel, then a guy whose name I can’t remember, and I think there was

another Mark. My letters must have burbled about boyfriends and tequila, while hers interpreted Rothko and Emma Goldman.

Something changed when I fell into an intro-to-architecture class. I sat up straight. Even the tools of the trade turned me on. Vellum and Mayline straightedges. Pen plotters and 3-D software. Rules that must be followed, yes, but creativity, too. Oh, my. I could do this. And I did, obsessively. I became fixated on Gehry. I felt purposeful.

Sheila dropped a bombshell one day, by telephone. She would be getting married to her egghead as soon as she got her degree, and she wanted me to be her maid of honor.

I hung up the phone in a stupor. It was bad enough that she couldn't come up with someone better than me, among her wide and eclectic group, to stand by her side. No, what kept me awake that night was the idea that Sheila, my radical sophisticate, my free-thinking Sheila, was getting married at all. Marriage was what our parents did. A wedding belonged in the pages of a fashion magazine. It was as if Marco Polo had opted out of that trip to China; he'd rather stay home and mind the books, thank you very much. *Is Sontag married?* I wondered. Our furious charge into the unknown was faltering. The mist had cleared, and...it was this?

I went along with it, like I always did. I have some adorable photos from the reception: me in a lavender floor-length country dress mock-punching her groom; an arty shot of Sheila reaching out to stop me from spilling a glass of champagne; the bride and myself, with the cute best man between us, dancing our version of the hora. Her husband was sane, even ordinary, she was blissful, and I never asked her what the hell she was doing. When I come across the photos from time to time, I shake my head. Who *were* these people? What *were* they thinking?

Getting a degree took me a couple of semesters longer than planned. Outside of drawing classes, I never became much of a student. Afterward, I took design jobs on the East Coast, first Boston, then New York, then Washington. Sheila stayed West, doing some Silicon Valley marketing thing, got her master's. We still wrote letters, but my heart wasn't in it. It dwindled into Christmas cards, clipped and

routine. “Chica! How’s the Left Coast?” I wrote. “Miss you! Talk soon!” Every one was a lie, and I hated doing it.

Then I stopped even that. I still got postcards from her trips to Europe, her son’s birth announcement, then one for her company’s I.P.O. I read them, threw them out, felt terrible, and went off to my pen plotter. My latest prophet was the Irish landscaper Mary Reynolds, and I was percolating new ideas for melding stone buildings with earthen berms. I had clients who saw value in my vision, and I had a budding reputation.

When we were in our thirties, Sheila finally quit writing. I was relieved, more relieved than I thought possible. For almost twenty years, I had been supportive and agreeable. I shared secrets and Springsteen and first-time everythings. But my heart sank with the weight of the truth. It was never real. We were never really friends. I was just a groupie, a parasite.

Last week, that fat package postmarked California appeared on my desk with Sheila’s return address scrawled in a familiar handwriting. Our letters. Scores of them. All wrapped in youth, energy, desire, and anarchy. How naïve and pathetic and hollow they must sound. It had been years since Sheila had even crossed my mind. I circled around the envelope on the kitchen table, wondering what to do with it.

On a whim, I made an excuse to visit a prospective client in San Francisco. Yesterday, after my meeting, I rented a car and drove to Walnut Creek. My curiosity was vague, not malevolent, neither bold nor fearful.

Her neighborhood was on the grand side, with sprawling acreages, double garages, a backyard pool visible here and there. Number 225 was on a large corner lot, not far from an office complex. I parked in the shade across the street and rolled down my window. A leaf-blower droned in the distance. Her yard was a mess of bright orange dirt, obviously under repair, with the outline of something like a rock garden taking shape in the middle. A Subaru with mud on its flanks was in the driveway.

Another SUV pulled in next to it as I sat there. Sheila emerged in a tight black skirt. Standing for a moment with her hands on her hips, she surveyed the yard work. She'd straightened and streaked her hair, but I easily recognized the languorous pose and spare proportions of two decades ago. She turned halfway in my direction, shielding her eyes against the sun. I didn't duck or flinch, but neither did I consider approaching her. Maybe the letters were her way of sealing the past, closing the circle on something that had never ended agreeably. My need was visual: to see her, to absorb the aura of her life, to prove to myself that she had lost her way. Or maybe that I had found mine.

She turned back to the yard, kicked the dirt, and headed inside, no doubt to open the mail and peel the carrots. The door clicked shut. I started up the rental car and headed to the airport.

When I got home today, her manila envelope was gleaming on the table, caught in a ray of the mid-morning sun. I tossed it in the trash without a second look. There was nothing more I needed or wanted from Sheila. I have a trip to Dubai coming up, a big project at work, and my partner's birthday to plan.



Gaslighting / Johnson Bowles

Promises

Dave Malone

*You made me promises promises
You knew you'd never keep.*
Naked Eyes

Your red hair thick as bisque
smelled of bourbon and smoke
in our hangover mornings,
the breeze through the Indiana corn
snuggled your bedroom window
at dawn. We held each other
ladled in cream sheets, burning low.
Once, we pinkie-promised to shave our heads
as the wind picked up and tossed your curtains,
radish and arugula onto the chopping block
of your nightstand. The cold front
slipped into the barber's chair beside you
later that morning. While I, I kept a silence
in my palm. And curls to my shoulders.

The Heated Mission

Laurence Williams

Before Alexa Plowden threw the covers off, she knew the heat had stopped pumping. Her six-year-old Jonathan stood at her bedroom door shivering and her baby Isabella whimpered in her crib. Son of a bitch landlord, she muttered. She seized her son's hand, scooped the baby up, brought them to the kitchen, handed Jonathan his coat, hat and gloves, and wrapped Isabella in a blanket. She pressed her hand to the radiator and yanked it away. The boy coughed, the baby cried. The heat had been off all night, third time this winter, and that bastard was gonna pay.

She made hot chocolate, plopped Jonathan down in front of the TV, threw on her sweats and her hoodie, stuck her feet in her boots, hoisted Isabella onto her shoulder, stuck a pacifier in her mouth and down the steps she went.

The super, Ivan Milovic, had an apartment on the first floor and he stood in the hallway with some of the other tenants, his arms splayed apart in a hapless gesture, his woolen hat pulled tight over his head, his shared predicament evident from the way he kept blowing into his hands. He mumbled that he called the landlord who said he would take care of it.

Yeah, right, just like he did the last two times, Alexa said.

She hiked back up to her apartment and dialed 311. They placed her on hold for fifteen minutes. She registered her complaint and they promised to follow up. But unless they sent an oil truck over to make a delivery, the heat would stay off. Bastards, all of them, her deadbeat ex, the landlord, the mayor, the city, they didn't give a shit about anybody.

She ran up the stairs to check on her neighbor. Mrs. Simpson had just turned ninety last week, and was homebound in a deteriorating condition. What a way to start a decade. If someone didn't do something soon, she would freeze to death. Alexa knocked and let herself in with the key Mrs. Simpson had given her. The old lady had turned on the oven and all the burners and sat in her wheelchair by

the stove warming her hands, and invited Alexa to join her. Alexa blew cold steam into the air. She'll blow the whole damn building up, and there's probably twenty other tenants doing the same thing. They'd all be toasty then.

Alexa turned the oven off, bundled Mrs. Simpson up in a coat and some blankets, ran back downstairs, checked on her son, and with the baby still on her shoulder ran back into the hall and banged on doors, raising hell, urging everyone to call 311.

Thirty-six families resided in the six-story building and most of them on some sort of public assistance, in a section of the Bronx everyone liked to forget about, which meant they were at the ass end of the priority scale. Didn't mean the landlord and the biggest city in the world could treat them like this, and Alexa would be damned if she let them. If the super couldn't get the oil here, then she wanted the number to call.

One of the tenants informed her Milovic sought refuge at the corner bodega. Back up to her apartment, zipped the baby up in a coat and hood, grabbed her son and still in her sweats and hoodie, the fire in her belly keeping her warm, Alexa marched down to the bodega with her kids in tow where Milovic cowered behind some boxes of Captain Crunch in the back of the store, a cup of steaming, hot coffee in his hand.

She demanded the name and number of the oil company, and he stammered in his broken English, which broke more and more as he spoke, that tomorrow was a scheduled delivery. What the hell were thirty-six families supposed to do tonight, light bonfires in their apartments, Alexa screamed? If Milovic could have climbed into one of the cereal boxes, he would have. He sputtered something unintelligible, and Alexa assured him that she didn't blame him. It wasn't his fault; it was the scumbag who sat by his fireplace somewhere out east on Long Island that wouldn't pay for the oil and dozens of other repairs that needed to be done. She wanted that number. She stepped toward him and he fished in his overstuffed wallet and handed her a card.

Back in her apartment, she dialed the emergency number and told the dispatcher that she was the landlord's representative and he had authorized an emergency delivery today. The dispatcher got hold of a manager on duty who informed her that not only would there not be a delivery today, but there would not be one tomorrow because the scumbag landlord, (Alexa's words) had not paid the bill for the previous delivery. Alexa demanded the oil and said she was the new super and had a check from the landlord for payment. She hung up, doubting that an oil truck would rumble onto their block any time soon.

Once again, she strode through the hallways, banged on doors, her hair matted to her head, her hood flying out like a superhero's cape, dragging her boy, and toting the baby. She gathered the tenants in the lobby. She inquired who in the building had cars, or knew a neighbor who had a car. About fifteen tenants raised their hands. She also told them that what she had in mind would most certainly get them arrested but it would get these bastards' attention.

A young couple, Robert and Precious, who shared an apartment and each other, stood there with their hands at their sides. Alexa knew they had a car because they had given her a lift a couple of times. She glared at them. Robert glared right back and told her she was loco and that her hair needed brushing. Precious held out her keys and Robert snatched them out of her hand. Alexa let go of her son's hand, grabbed hold of Robert's arm and escorted him down the hallway and whispered in his ear, asking if Precious knew anything about Robert's little visits to Apartment 5F.

The baby whimpered and Robert cursed her, creating a disharmonious chorus. Precious, in a trembling voice, informed Alexa she was scaring the baby. She shook her head, continuing her hold on Robert's arm while the rest of the tenants stood there stamping their feet, too cold to worry about one of their neighbors losing her shit. Alexa told Precious it was her hair that freaked the baby out. Robert handed the keys to Precious. Alexa ordered everybody that had a car to get ready.

By this time, the news of the building with no heat had spread through the neighborhood, and like the old game of telephone, by the time it

reached the Laundromat two blocks away, the story was the landlord had evicted people into the freezing cold. That got everybody seeing red. Alexa ran up and down the block, her hood flapping against the wind, asking anyone with a car to help her get the heat back on, warning them of the likely consequences. When she had another ten rebellious volunteers, she told everybody to meet in front of the building.

Alexa made the first call to 911. Fire on the sixth floor. Seven other tenants followed at one-minute intervals. Alexa ordered her co-conspirators with a car to assume their positions. The fire chief's SUV followed by an engine and ladder roared onto the block, their tires screeching and sirens and horns blaring. Another fire truck stopped at the top of the street blocking traffic. The firemen jumped from the truck, got their equipment and hustled toward the building. Alexa stood in their path, baby squirming on her shoulder, her boy twisting in her hand, her hair stuck in her mouth, and her hoodie zippered up against it all.

She told them there was no fire. She didn't know if they were shocked more at her statement or her appearance. The chief spoke into his radio and the truck up the street pulled away. The men got out of their gear and the chief turned to Alexa and demanded to know what the hell was going on. Alexa told him the building had no heat and that's why she called the fire in. His face turned red, and then purple as he radioed for the police, and informed her she wouldn't have to worry about heat where she was going.

At this time, ten or so cars rolled into place on each end of the block, four and five deep, blocking both ends of the street. One of the firefighters on the rig called out to the chief, and his face turned all kinds of colors now. Alexa told him again, we need oil and you're going to help us get it.

The first patrol car showed up and the officers were none too happy they had to get out of their car at the end of the block in this frigid weather. They screamed at the drivers blocking the street, banging on their windows with their sticks. Everybody on the sidewalks had their

phones out recording the scene, and the cops stepped away and called for backup.

That's when the news crews showed up, trudging down the street with their cameras and microphones. The chief screamed at Alexa pointing his crooked finger in her face, when one of the firefighters came over and draped his coat around her shoulders. The chief approached seizure status now and wanted to know what the hell this firefighter was doing. He walked the chief back to his truck, as the news reporters held microphones in front of Alexa's face. She cocked her head to the side, told them how nice of them to come down, and the building needed oil. Alexa repeated the address three times nice and slow.

Then the news people ran up and down the block filming the police and firemen and doing sound bites for the six o'clock news. The firefighter who had given Alexa his coat came over, took off his helmet, wiped the sweat from his brow and his nice eyes, and smiled at her. What's your name, he asked.

Alexa Plowden.

He told her his was John Driscoll, told her they needed to leave so they can save lives. Alexa smiled at him, told him that's exactly what he was doing right now.

The street teemed with reporters from all the major stations, and the minor ones too, sticking microphones in the faces of Alexa and the fire chief, but walking right by the nobodies with plenty of stories that nobody wanted to hear. A man in a shabby gray overcoat, a rumpled blue suit, with a lavender shirt, and a pink tie flicked a card from his hand into Alexa's like a conjurer pulling a rabbit out of his hat.

We can sue, he said.

We need oil, she said.

You need a defense attorney, the chief said.

There were other lawyers now mingled among the crowd, distributing cards to prospective clients.

Driscoll, let's go, the chief ordered, and then turned to Alexa. See what you've done, lady. You're so concerned about these people, they're all going to be arrested.

A reporter stood behind him and asked for a comment, and the chief scurried away. Driscoll pleaded with Alexa to end the madness before another call came in, otherwise she'd be in serious trouble, and he told her the chief would ram those cars like they were tissue paper anyway. The reporter begged for a statement. Alexa told her there was a ninety-year old ailing woman in Apartment 6F freezing to death, while the Interstate Development Company, a/k/a Devlin Brown, sat in his palatial estate on Long Island. He knew how to collect the rent but he forgot how to pay for the oil and the broken pipes and the exterminator and the roof repairs. Why don't you run out there and ask him about it. The reporter moved away, having gotten her thirty second blip for tonight's news.

Driscoll offered to let Jonathan sit in the rig to keep warm, and then Driscoll and the chief got into an animated discussion; Driscoll with his kind eyes, the chief with his colorful face, and then the police captain trudged down the block and brought his red face into the conversation. The brass got on their phones while two police officers ordered Alexa to follow them.

Don't you see I have a freezing baby in my arms, she said while cameras and cell phones captured the moment.

The cops looked at each other. Maybe it wasn't a good idea to drag a woman in a firefighter's coat and sweat pants, with matted hair, and a baby on her shoulder away in cuffs, one whispered to the other.

Driscoll asked the officers to give him a sec. Alexa said she had to go check on Mrs. Simpson, make sure she didn't blow up the building. Driscoll told her no worries, that he sent some men up with some hot soup and blankets to look after her. We're working on getting an oil truck here. Can you ask them to move the cars now?

She blew the hair from her eyes. You giving me your word, she asked.

He nodded. I am, he said.

She had told the drivers when she gave the signal to drive away and keep driving. The cars pulled off and the police drove down the street.

Anything you can do for those people, Alexa asked. I scared the shit out of all of them. Driscoll laughed. I bet you did. I have some connections. I'll see what I can do.

There were now dozens of people running back and forth, and a helicopter hovered overhead. A loud honking drew everyone's attention to the corner, as an oil truck made the turn and thundered down the block

The street grew quiet and everybody watched with their mouths hung open as it pulled up behind the fire truck. The people parted like the red sea for the oil man who approached Alexa, her hood fluttering out from the huge fireman's coat draped over her shoulders. Even the chief gaped at the scene, Alexa standing over the oil man, like Emperor Augustus greeting one of his generals after a great victory.

You the lady who needs the oil, the delivery man said.

No, the whole damn building needs the oil, she said.

The oil man nodded, and he unleashed the hose from his truck like a giant snake, and the flow of black gold poured into the building. A cheer went up from the crowd.

A limousine flanked front and back by cop cars paraded down the street and pulled up behind the oil truck. The driver ran around and opened the door, and the mayor stepped out. All the media people ran to him, as he pontificated on how he came to the rescue of his constituents, and would hold the landlord accountable, and send a message to anyone that would dare do harm to his great city.

What a guy, Driscoll said.

Alexa tilted her head and smirked. "Really?" and they both laughed.

Driscoll shuffled his feet, looked around and down and then up into Alexa's eyes.

Do you have someone to take care of the children for a little while, he asked.

Yeah, I already asked my neighbor, Carmen. Time for me to go, I guess, she said.

You should be out in a couple of hours. Like I said, I have connections. Here's my number. He handed her a card and she handed him back his coat.

The police allowed her to go upstairs and get dressed, and then put her into the back of the patrol car. It pulled away and she turned to look out the rear window at Driscoll tipping his helmet to her, at the mayor shaking hands, at Robert flipping her the finger, at the chief screaming at no one in particular, at the people dispersing, their lives not important to the news outlets, at the oil man, the lone player with no allegiance to anything but his hose, at her children, who at least tonight would be warm.



Equal, Opposite / Jerome Berglund

The Trees

Mitchell Nobis

America,
I've been trying to write a poem
about trees for three days, but
America, you keep shooting
people. I want my boys to
appreciate the trees too, but
how am I supposed to teach
them about the trees when I
don't even know how to keep
my boys alive?
I do my part.
I feed them. Hug them.
Teach them how to treat
others with love.
I play basketball with them. Snuggle them.
Teach them the difference between right
and wrong. And America, you make that
last one hard. I want my boys to know the
woods, to know some rivers, to have some
favorite books, but America, it's awfully
distracting that you keep shooting people.
I've been trying to write a poem about
trees for three days, but I can't, America,
when you shoot up another school &
show a Black man getting shot live
online by an officer but let his killer
go free— both of those in just this
week.

Someone said “what is it when a
death is ruled a homicide but no
one is responsible for it” and
America, that's a helluva good

question. How do I teach my boys
about trees when we don't have an
answer for that.

I want my boys to know
right from wrong, and
most of us have a good
grasp on what that is, but
America, why don't you? I
want my boys to know that
they matter. I want my
boys to enjoy this life too.
And that's easy right now when
everyone thinks they're cute, but
what happens when they're
taller than you, America, and
need deodorant and their skin
becomes a weapon and their hair
becomes a threat to you. I want
my boys to solve problems with
thinking and words. I want my
boys to love you.

America, I've been trying to write a
poem about trees for three days, but
you keep shooting people. America,
you keep letting people shoot people.

I want my boys, America.

Leave me my boys

I want my boys

I want my boys



Drop / Tonissa Saul

Sierra Leone Poem

Renee Elton

The Village of Waiting

*Kpekelei a vala ngi gowui-huvei ma lo,
a kpangui lalewe*

1. White Light

No bird as beautiful as its song, no woman singing
 Early in the harmattan, November morning
 A memory of music, raining
 Showers of silence on rice fields, dancing
 Slowly arms bent to skim the ground first
 With one hand then the other, swaying
 Bodies sway. Perhaps it was the chief who gave
 The signal, I did not see. We sat on mats, drinking
 Palm wine and eating salted mangoes.
Ngì pimbili gaa, ngì pambala gaa, ngì tea fee, ngì gbahanga...
 We sat for hours, until Sentu took my hand
 And led me toward the river.
 In the water you are formless, weighted
 Only by feathers of hair.

The casualties are not only those who are dead. Gutters
 Of grief flow through the village, sewage washed
 From a common wound. The clamor of flies in torn
 Flesh, we cannot hear each other speak. The fleeing soldiers burn
 Forty homes, killing fifty people, raping girls between
 The ages of fifteen and twenty. I will show you fear
 In the eyes of this child, stripped from her mother's breast.
 I will show you fear in a handful of rice.

Ngewo calls us
 Amma calls us
 Soko calls us
 Nyame calls us
 And we do not hear.

Are you looking into the same dim, green
 forest light, are you looking for me?
 I waited by the road-block, the menace of bright
 Day clear as the blade of a knife piercing brilliance.
 You did not come.

Grown old without wisdom, generations of dire disconnection.
 Sacrificial yam in villages of night-singing and night dancing,
 Who creates the symmetries here? What beast
 Devours the children? Bintu dances in the red dust, reads
 The night sky. "It is all the same," she tells me, "the world
 Is not good for anybody."

Preponderance of acacias
 Hart's-tongue fern on oil palm
 All sorts of lovely things whose
 Motions of fluency speak
 Through tongues of claret
 Orchid, voices of river grass,
 Lively young crocodiles playing like kittens,
 Words seep from the color of things,
 And we wait for just the right dim shade of twilight,
 To strip off dusty lappas, and pour
 The murky brown river water over our heads.

Chrysalis of vermin my sweet malarial nightmare lioness of palms
Sande woman *Bundu* woman your dancing initiates white with kaolin
 Bleed in imitation of climax onto the soapstone fertility heads of the
 dead

II. Black Mask

“Lie down!” cracks the order, and the uniformed
Arms descend. Dove gray walls, dove gray days,
Broken slate that gravels the floor, prisoners’
Soles dripping red strands, uncoiling from a skein
Of terror.

The snake was wrong.

The chameleon was wrong.

The spider was wrong.

Kerosene smiles, Kofi is not properly dead, the dog’s
Teeth still embedded in his neck, saliva of confident
Dogs. White Master.

The thigh should be round,

A bit fleshy;

The calf should be long, drawn out, and shapely.

It is the duty of the mother to ensure that her child’s legs are
straight.

A major concern about a female’s legs is their position—

They should be as close together as possible,

With no space between the thighs.

Little Mende girls go about nearly naked, so they must learn

To protect their modesty by keeping their thighs closed.

Village of memory, murmur of mothers’

Songs—“buy you one cup sugar, buy you

One cup ginger, make you ginger beer sweet,

So town boy go buy em.”

Lead me to the river, Bintu, lead me

To the water, daughter of the river,

Your watery tongues welcome my legs,

My arms, my outstretched hands.

Twin mask of the *Sowo*

Carved of bombax

Shiny black spirit

There is no woman here
 Who does not love your cut neck
 To have such a neck
 Ringed in flesh, when all
 Your charms have faded,
 Tell them to look at the back
 Of your neck, old woman,
 Tell them you danced the *Sowo*
 Mouth of silence
 Eye sleeping in the head, dulled
 Eye and mouth of the blind,
 Bird and snake,
 Melody and poison, birds
 Are speaking, calling us
 To the river, *Sowo* is a woman
 Black as cooking pots
 Wet jet to the eye

Bintu, the village dead are calling us
 Bintu, Nyame calls us to the river
 Bintu, Soko calls us to the river
 Bintu, Amma calls us to the river
 Bintu, Ngewo calls us
 Calls us
 And we do not hear.

Notes

Epigraph. “Man-of-the -town, you must be very sure of the strength of your legs before you knock at the door of a *Sande* shrine.” *Sande* saying.

Line 10. “I have danced far and wide, I have danced round and round, I have leapt into the air, I have sunk onto the ground—I give up. I have done my best but failed.” *Mende* proverb of *Gonde*.

Ngewo/Amma/Soko/Nyame. African deities.

Bintu. Woman's name in West Africa.

Mende. Ethnic group in Sierra Leone.

Sande/Bundu. Female secret societies in West Africa.

Sowo. Spirit of Sande-female God.



Color Burn / Hayley Patterson

Inception: Best Opening Contest

Winner and Finalists

The Lungs are the Seat of Grief

Winner, Inception Contest

Novel by Elizabeth Marian

When she thinks back to that night much later, she will wonder if it was the hinge upon which her life turned, and if she could have changed things, how much else might have turned out differently. And then she will make herself another vodka martini and light a Salem because that's useless now, all the imagining, and she has always prided herself on being a practical person.

But no, that isn't true—she has always been eminently a dreamer, head in the ether. Or now am I thinking of myself?

Her name is Joann Frakes, and in December 1949 she is the publicity director at the Camelback Inn when the Shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, comes to visit the United States for the first time. This is the story the newspapers will print: The Shah sees Joann across the room, red rose in her blonde hair, and sends an aide to ask her to dinner. They eat and dance into the night, and then she goes to bed, pretty head abuzz with the events of the evening. He stays for three days, playing tennis, swimming, riding horses, attending receptions, and then he is gone. A royal encounter, over as swiftly as it began.

The Shah of Iran's first American date, Time magazine will say, a willowy blonde from Oak Park, Illinois.

Citrus Sinensis

First Runner-up, Inception Contest

Essay by Cynthia Belmont

Down in the wash, in the chalky railroad bed at the bottom of the canyon, we laid pennies on the tracks. No trains rolled the slick black rails. Smashed eucalyptus leaves cracked in the dust everywhere. We were small but we knew how to get back, by the path through the sudden oranges like fruit trees in a tapestry, to where the yucca started at the foot of Nanna's hill. Glowing Valencias clustered around us, walking together up the quiet dirt rows, don't eat, don't touch, watching for snakes.

Our mother lived in the San Bernardino foothills above these Redlands orchards in the 1940s, and she was a ringleted blonde, a single child, she was never allowed down here alone. She told us the farmers used to fumigate the orange trees and tent them to keep the mist in. One time some children lifted a tent like a skirt to see underneath, and they were asphyxiated. The end...

Magnets

Finalist, Inception Contest

Poem by Barb Reynolds

Your coat is dusted
with magnets, aphrodisiacs
sewn into your hems.

Cheonjimun

Finalist, Inception Contest

Novel by Kat Lewis

천지문 | *Cheonjimun*

In Korea, they call me *Jeoseung Saja*. They say that I appear in black *hanbok* and a wide-brim *gat* hat, that I hunt down ghosts and send them onto the next place. In the west, there is no traditional clothing, no hat with a brim as wide as a crow's wing. There is only a scythe and the bleached bone hand wrapped around it. In some corner of your internet, there is a comic about how Life gives gifts to Death—her lover—and Death keeps them forever. None of these interpretations of who I am are completely wrong, but neither are they right.

Now, I can't tell you everything that happens when you die, but I can tell you this: you will meet me in the last place you lay, and what I will look like depends entirely on you. Sometimes, I am your mother, your father. Sometimes, I am the childhood dog you still dream about at night. Other times, I am a swing set, a park bench, the door to your childhood bedroom. No matter who or what I am, you will know what you have to do: take my hand, take a seat, take a step through the doorway to pass on, and in your passing, your thoughts become my thoughts, your memories my memories, your fears, hopes, and dreams all mine. But it won't feel like a betrayal or a violation. It will feel like your gift to me, the final gesture to a friend before leaving.

The Mad Scientist's Husband

Finalist, Inception Contest

Novel by Eric Roe

His name was Charlie Rabin. He was a photographer for KBHI News Portland, but his lazy-afternoon dream was to make an epic feature film of St. George and the Dragon. He believed that the lush forests of the Tualatin Mountains, near where he and his wife lived, could serve as a surrogate for the woods of England (he'd never been to England), and on solitary hikes he imagined the dragon crashing through the old-growth trees in its furious attempt to devour St. George and his white horse, who were impeding the dragon's intended meal of the lovely Princess Sabra. But Charlie Rabin would be remembered for something else entirely: He was the husband of Catherine C. Rabin, MD, PhD; he at first collaborated with her on the project that would make her infamous and then, after he changed his mind, tried and failed to stop her.

They met courtesy of a paper mill mechanic whose arm was caught in a machine and turned into a gory horror movie prop. Charlie's news team covered the story when the accident occurred, and they came back for a miracle-of-modern-medicine follow-up. "First doctor wanted to amputate, all the way up at the shoulder," the mechanic said. "I wasn't having that. They finally sent me over to Marquam. They bring in Dr. Rabin, and I tell her, Look, I need my arm for work. I can't lose my arm. She just gives it a once-over and says, Okay."

Before and After

Finalist, Inception Contest

Prose by J. Brooke

If I did in fact utter those words she swears I did, it would have occurred just after my father died, just after I ended that dreadful relationship I never mention, just after she told me she was divorcing the depressed man who no longer slept in her bed. This was before we travelled to Paris and never left the hotel room. It was before we gave a real estate broker fake names to disguise our identities. It was before the wedding in another country. It was before some of the children fell apart and before we glued them back together. It was before we made a lot of money and spent a lot of money. It was before her middle daughter stopped speaking to us. It was before we wrote checks to 12 therapists and 5 lawyers. It was before the "Happy Hanukkahs" and the strained Thanksgivings. It was before I started getting published. It was before we started fighting and before we stopped fighting. It was before 3 kids went to six boarding schools. It was before we were interviewed sometimes and misquoted always. It was before we started using moisturizer on our necks. It was before I stopped and started and stopped and started and stopped and started drinking. It was before we installed the alarm system. It was before we went to the Bronx zoo -- just last Summer -- and saw the gorillas in their habitat napping tenderly endlessly effortlessly intertwined...and I burst into tears.

Maddie Wants a Man

Finalist, Inception Contest

Prose by Kim Diaz

Maddie wants a man. He has to be tall, good-looking—no weak chins, bad teeth, or thinning hair. In good shape, muscular, and he's got to have some smarts. He doesn't need a college degree if he's a self-made man. He should be worldly, well-traveled and well-heeled. He needs to be the same political party but she says it's not polite to talk about politics on the first date. I'm thinking when the Amazon and president's pants are on fire what else is there to talk about?

Maddie keeps changing her profile username and photos. Right now it's BrainyLady and the picture is from her college graduation. When I asked her why the old photo, she said, "I still look pretty much the same." Thirty years and thirty pounds seems pretty different to me.

In Maddie's profile she says it's important to her that the man "share her faith"—which happens to be a very old, well-established religion that's been getting a fair amount of bad press lately. I'm more about the Law of Attraction but Maddie dismisses it, calls it "Magical Thinking" while her religion relies on an intermediary and a busload of saints.

She wants a man but needs a reality check. She's an unemployed teacher with anger management issues and three cats. I know, because she talks nonstop about herself. Mostly about how unfair it was that she got fired after saying, "For God's sakes, just shoot me," and walking out during a faculty meeting.

Young Authors

Creative Work from People Under Eighteen

Trailing Childhood

Sidney Muntean

I popped out dead. When I was born, I died, or at least, I tried to. Perhaps I could already sense the downsides of life: grief, isolation, people who wear socks with sandals.... Or maybe it just overwhelmed me, all of that *life* at once, the sharp birdsong outside the hospital room, the doctor's look of distaste at me, my mother's sigh of relief after the delivery; it all left me literally breathless.

Whatever the case, my arrival into this world prompted how I would navigate the rest of my life: emotional and constantly learning lessons.

As a baby, I didn't do much, but my parents still kept me around. Because at the time, coils of hair rested atop my head, courtesy of my dad. I became known among my family and their friends for my dark curls. But my father grew jealous. He too had world-renowned curls that, with time, withered away until nothing was left except for a naked head.

On my first birthday, my father snatched me from my bed to the bathroom. There, the monstrosity occurred. A gentle buzz sounded, and I saw a razor gleaming in my father's hands. I tried to cry for help—a scream, a whine!—but it was useless. It was over for me from the moment I saw that sinister smile stretched across his lips.

That day, my own father had shaved off all of my hair so that I looked like a mini him, bald head and all. Once my mother got home and scolded him, he made up something about reading an article and how shaving a baby's head helps its hair grow back thicker. But I knew

better. That was the day when I learned to be careful about where I place my trust.

Two years later, I found myself getting into a stranger's car and telling them where I lived. It was summer. A light breeze shimmied between the trees and the sun stroked the earth with just enough heat to comfortably warm it. It was the perfect day to walk to the library.

I grew up going to the library three to four times a week, either in a stroller or on my two feet. The walk was short. All I had to do was exit my neighborhood and walk up a hill. I found comfort among the towering bookshelves or between a stack of books to read.

That day, my parents were at work, and my grandma wouldn't take me. I begged, pleaded, threw a tantrum, all in vain. She still said no.

Stubborn even then, I set my mind to go to the library myself. It would be the first time running away from home and rebelling against authority (but certainly not my last). As I stepped out of my house, I felt liberated. Even at three years old, I knew that it was unusual for someone so young to venture out on their own, and I felt proud. Walking along, I started to notice. It was my first time noticing—I hadn't done so before.

I noticed the bees dipping into the flowers beside me and the muffled sounds of children giggling from the park. I noticed the grass blades quivering in the wind and the smell of dog poop drifting in my direction. I felt like I had gathered power through my observations, like I had an edge on life that I didn't have before. Like I knew myself better, knew the world better.

I was interrupted by a car that pulled up beside me. I heard a growl saying, "Hey kid, come over here! Where do you live?"

I peered into the window to see a woman. "I dunno." I pointed towards the direction I came from. "Somewhere over there."

The woman frowned and said, “Get in. It’ll be fun.”

The woman opened the passenger door and I hopped in. The front seat was forbidden at my age, so naturally, I was delighted. As the woman approached my home, I hummed a Katy Perry song. Right before my cul-de-sac, I sang, “This one!”

Once she pulled up to my driveway, I ran to the front door to ring the doorbell.

My grandmother opened the door and cried tears of joy. She had been looking for me for the past fifteen minutes. The woman smiled at my grandma.

“Hi! I saw her walking alone on the street and I was really concerned and she kind of looked like Alex! And I knew that his mom was pregnant a few years ago, and his sister would be around that age, and I figured that she was related to him because they look so alike!” She seemed to speak a mile a minute.

My grandma blinked and said, “No speak English,”

They settled in broken English, with my occasional attempt to translate my grandma’s Romanian the best I could.

That day, I didn’t learn the danger of talking to strangers, or how dangerous it is to walk alone. However, I found the magic of spending time with myself. I started to learn who I was as a person and how I could interact with the world when alone. It was the first time I had gotten to know myself and became a project I focus on even to this day.

Now, I’ve been trying to teach myself the art of appreciation. It’s too easy to live in negativity. Stress latches to my life and never seems to let go. But I don’t mind. I just do the same as I did when I was three- I observe. I observe how the sun waves between the tree branches to say *hello, welcome, you’ll be okay*. I observe how some people hold

the door open for others who have their hands full, how people are still capable of being considerate and thoughtful and good. It is only through appreciation that I can muster the courage to get through the day.

Untitled

Weatherall Crump-Kean

i knew it
the moment i saw
those sincere gentle brown eyes
coup de foudre
i would be in love with you until my death

The Haunted Asylum

Robert Fitzgerald Beavers, Jr.

It's been decades since this lonely haunted asylum had been filled with the emotional sounds of laughing or crying. The mackerel sky is the only light source for miles along with the shocking lightning that flashes and strikes every waking second. It's possible to fill the lifeless suffering of the rejected and the forgotten with even more horror from their daily lives. They can't even imagine life without hearing the never-ending crying and pain of the mental patients as they try to find an escape from the house of torture. Their reality is the ever-expanding darkness all around them as they are forced to swallow and inject medicines into their bodies. They are forced to live in wheelchairs while viewing hallways with blood, spit, and doctor coats. They enjoy the comforts of padded rooms while smells of rotting corpses with flies, bacteria, and decay cover all over the dead bodies. The torture tools used with the insane people are covered in blood and have a history of entering inside the patients or, in other words, unsuspecting victims. This place is the unfortunate resting place of many unlucky victims that didn't know what was going to happen to them. The outside of this madhouse is deceiving because it is filled with trees and mountains. The front door is huge with granite steps leading up to it. The moon stands guard on top of the Asylum watching anybody who dares to enter this haunted placed. The ground crumbles and breaks apart with the lack of water, overdose of waste, and the blistering heat. The grass that barely exists around the asylum sweeps and weeps the ground as sudden low winds hit the area giving a chill to anyone that even sets foot on the ground. Stairs bust and crack as winds enter through the broken windows and hits the stairs that scream every time someone sets foot on the broken wood.

Contributors

Robert Fitzgerald Beavers, Jr. is a rising junior at a private school in Fairburn, Georgia. He is also a sports enthusiast, scholar, and one who dabbles in writing to amuse himself.

Cynthia Belmont is a professor of English and writing at Northland College, an environmental liberal arts school on the South Shore of Lake Superior, in Ashland, Wisconsin. Her creative work has been published in diverse journals including *Poetry*, *The Cream City Review*, *Terrain.org*, *Natural Bridge*, *Oyez Review*, and *Sky Island*.

Jerome Berglund graduated summa cum laude from the cinema-television production program at the University of Southern California, and has spent much of his career working in television and photography. He has had photographs published and awarded in local papers. A recently staged exhibition in the Twin Cities area included an extensive residency at a local community center.

K. Johnson Bowles has exhibited in more than eighty solo and group exhibitions nationally. Feature articles, essays, and reviews of her work have appeared in forty publications including *SPOT* (Houston Center for Photography), *Sculpture*, *Fiberarts*, and the *Houston Post*. She is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Individual Fellowship and a Houston Center for Photography Fellowship. Recently, she served as an artist in residence at the Visual Studies Workshop in Rochester, NY. She received her MFA in photography and painting from Ohio University and a BFA in painting from Boston University.

A published poet and essayist, **J Brooke** is the previous nonfiction editor of the *Stonecoast Review*. With an MFA degree in Creative Writing from the University of Southern Maine, publications include *Harvard Review*, *TSR-The Southampton Review*, *The East Hampton Star*, *RFD Magazine*, *Hartskill Review*, *Rubbertop Review*, and *Mom Egg Review*. Brooke's film work includes *The Bed*, a short documentary, and two features cocreated with partner in film and life, Beatrice Alda.

Weatherall Crump-Kean is a sophomore currently attending the University of Texas at Austin High School. Her first book, *artificial affection*, was recently published and she is looking for more opportunities to be heard.

Kimberly Diaz studied creative writing at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida. Her work has appeared in *Montana Mouthful*, *Eckerd Review*, and

Fleas on the Dog, and is forthcoming in Ariel Gore's newest anthology. She is currently working on a collection of creative nonfiction.

Renee Elton is a poet and teacher currently working on a poetry manuscript about Japanese design in response to nature and ritual. She earned her MFA in Creative Writing from George Mason University and has a biology degree from Kent State. Her recent poetry and art have appeared in *Every Writer's Resource*, *Every Day Poems*, *Snapping Twig*, and *Literary Mama*.

Through a continual mixed-media interweaving of acrylic, graphite, digital imagery, performance, film, and writing, **Gabriel Embeha** engages a diverse range of persons, places, things and ideas involved in different forms of disability and violence. His process involves an ongoing series of interrelated sacrificial acts and quasi-ethnographic confrontations with scientific representation, the state, conscience, and futility. He lives and works in Berlin.

In a past century, **Heikki Huotari** attended a one-room school and spent summers on a forest fire lookout tower. They are a retired math professor, have won two poetry chapbook prizes and published two collections. Another collection is at press.

Kat Lewis is the author of the short story collection *In and Of Blood*. Lewis graduated from Johns Hopkins University where she held the Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund Fellowship. In 2018, she received a Fulbright Creative Arts grant in South Korea. She is currently an MFA student at the University of South Florida.

Dave Malone is the author of nine books, including *You Know the Ones* (Golden Antelope Press, 2017). His work has appeared in journals such as *San Pedro River Review*, *Plainsongs*, and *The Cape Rock*. His poem "Spring Dress" was featured on Michel Martin's NPR program Tell Me More. Dave lives in the Missouri Ozarks and hosts the weekly Friday Poems series at his website, davemalone.net.

Elizabeth Marian Charles is a recent graduate of the Arizona State University's MFA program. Her work has appeared in *Bird's Thumb* and *Fiction Southeast*, and is forthcoming in *Minnesota Review* and *Running Wild Anthology of Stories, Vol. 4*. She lives and writes in Texas.

Melanie Martinez is a BFA student at Texas State University in San Marcos. She lives in Austin and grew up in the Army town of Killeen. Her early life led her through many worlds from journalism to horticulture, then music and historic preservation. Now she focuses on interior design and

painting. An interest in society and American Studies led her to examine the ways we live in the world today. Her style evokes the attractive, illustrative yet disturbing style of Rene Magritte while the subject matter places her in the world of contemporary social realist painters.

Sidney Muntean is a high school student in the creative writing program at Orange County School of the Arts. Her work has been recognized with second place in the Freedom to Read Art & Poetry Contest, and has been published in *The Phoenix* and *The Loud Journal*. When she's not writing, she's probably dancing up a storm. She firmly believes she was a ballet dancer in a past life because the routines she'll come up with in the rain feel like a distant dream.

Mitchell Nobis is a writer, teacher, and adoptive dad in Metro Detroit where he lives with his family. His poetry has appeared in *Exposition Review*, *Hobart*, *The Wayne Literary Review*, *English Journal*, and others. His poetry manuscript was a runner-up for the 2019 Hopper Poetry Prize, and he coauthored the teaching book *Real Writing: Modernizing the Old School Essay*. Find him at @MitchNobis or mitchnobis.com.

Hayley Patterson is a New York artist with a portfolio that displays achievements in both analog and digital media. Hayley's knowledge of art history as well as current trends is reflected across all animated and illustrative work. In the coming year, other illustrations will be published by Flying Ketchup Press and *Meat for Tea: The Valley Review*. A recent college graduate who finished summa cum laude, Hayley spends most of her time doodling and working and doodling some more, looking for the next challenge.

Barb Reynolds spent twenty-two years as a child abuse investigator. Her chapbook *Boxing Without Gloves* was published by Finishing Line Press. Her poems have been published widely, and she founded & curate the Second Sunday Poetry Series in Berkeley, CA.

Eric Roe has won *Chautauqua's* 2018 Editors Prize and *The Bellingham Review's* 2015 Tobias Wolff Award for Fiction. Work has also appeared in TulipTree's *Stories That Need to Be Told* anthology, the Best American Fantasy anthology, *Petrichor* (forthcoming), *The Tishman Review*, *South 85*, *december*, *Redivider*, *Barrelhouse*, and other literary journals. Eric lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and serves as the editorial assistant at UNC's Marsico Lung Institute.

Tonissa Saul is a writer and photographer from Arizona. She is the managing editor for *Bodega Magazine* and an editor for Rinky Dink Press. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Write On, Downtown, The Comstock Review*, and the anthology *Miles to Go, Promises to Keep Volume II*. Additionally, her artwork has appeared on the covers of Rinky Dink Press.

Victoria Shannon has worked as a journalist in New York City, Washington, DC, and Paris, France, and now lives in the Hudson River Valley of New York State.

Laurence Williams writes, plays bass guitar and worked in the courts of the Bronx. He has been published in *Middle Church Literary Journal, First Line Literary Journal*, and *Read650*.

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