



THE  
FIELDSTONE  
REVIEW

ISSUE 7, 2014

## Editor's Note

Shakti Brazier-Tompkins

Welcome to *The Fieldstone Review 7*! When we put out our call for submissions in 2013, the editorial team decided to leave it general rather than asking contributors to submit work that conformed to a particular theme, and we received a multitude of contributions that were wonderfully varied in content, form, and tone. It is always difficult to decide where to draw that dividing line between which work will be accepted for publication and which will not, and the contributions offered here represent the very best of many excellent pieces submitted for consideration.

I want to thank the many people who have helped make the 2014 issue of *The Fieldstone Review* a success. Editors Jon Bath, Carleigh Brady, Adar Charlton, Andréa Ledding, Mari-Lou Rowley, Martin Winquist, and James Yeku have worked very hard to make decisions, meet deadlines, work with contributors, and generally keep the journal running so it could produce this issue. Many readers also volunteered their time and energy to pore over the submissions with the portfolio editors, some of them reading in more than one category and some of them taking on reading in one category in addition to their work as editors of another. Thank you for your commitment to this journal Elyn Achtymichuk, Carleigh Brady, Stephanie Danyluk, Sarah-Jane Gloutnez, Adam Grieve, Bonnie Heilman, Michael Horacki, dee hs, Rob Imes, Jade McDougall, James Mulcahy, Jessica Patrucco, Claire Peacock, Jessica Ratcliffe, Jonathan Sherman, Sarah Taggart, Heather Touet, Martin Winquist, and Kevin Ziegler. *The Fieldstone Review* could not exist without so many people willing to offer their time and talents to this journal as editors, readers, and contributors.

I hope that you enjoy *The Fieldstone Review 7*!

Sincerely,  
Shakti Brazier-Tompkins  
Editor-in-Chief

## Poetry

### **One way or the other** **Louise Carson**

The tired woman with the sore ear makes three wishes: that the chartreuse hydrangea clusters stay unopened; that the two electricians, jumping out of matching red vans and shouting in the road, plan their assassinations elsewhere; and that her heart and stomach, feebly trembling, resolve their difficulties one way or the other.

Already the hydrangeas need to be forgiven.

### **Between Cultures** **Ruth Anne Chorney**

The north wind whistles through my wounds  
Windigo, Windigo  
I am torn, broken, cold, and alone  
Windigo, Windigo  
Your needle claws scar my arms  
The moon stares down  
All sharp edges  
A scythe cutting across the sky  
No mercy there  
Oh, Windigo, Windigo  
I seep into the snow, raw, torn, bleeding  
As the north wind whistles through my wounds

**Kundiman**  
**Darrell Dela Cruz**

*"It is called a kundiman, or love song. A very sad song. Filipinos are very sad people."*

– *The Filipino Houseboy*, by Carlos Bulosan.

Remember the young man, the father started,  
from Isabella, warring with some unknown force  
that invaded his old backyard: a lake

filled with the leeches that loved, digested blood  
and soil then were thrown back to the water –  
a splash spreading upward. An open palm caressing.

The old man died in the middle of sheets.  
His head rested on his wife's breast

before the ambulance wheeled him off.  
The EMT asked the wife if they were having sex  
when his heart stopped. They were making love,

but how could she translate his love from another  
language? Her grief sounded like a bell  
rung in the church of an abandoned village.

**Learning to see in the dark**  
**gillian harding-russell**

Things find their shapes in the dark.  
This evening I am learning to see with my mind.  
The trees scrabble messages stark

across the sky. The moon is a bright rim of arc  
buried in clouds, and the stars that semaphore in the night  
are complicated. But things do find their shapes in the dark.

I can make out my bicycle bulwarked  
in snow, the garbage bin slid out under the street light.  
The branches scramble messages stark

across blank windowpane. Most of the birds have gone  
but I see a company of cranes, their necks trombones  
in a comedy of cacophony across the sky  
to hearten their long flight. Things find their silhouettes in the dark.

A raven from northern parts in ten muscular wing beats starts  
over the field overtaking the cranes with devil-may-dare. A sigh  
in the wind and twig-digits tick nothings in the cold. Watch

that moon, a giant pearl hanging in the dark, emerge  
from a cataract of clouds, so silver the feeling there are no words  
for what's seen through this thin membrane of sight.  
Things find their shapes in the light eked out of the dark.  
Against the sky the trees scrabble messages, or nothing, so stark  
voices to be erased by wind.

**Infiltration**  
**Jack Hostrawser**

To describe the house in winter –  
first quarter the stone foundation  
add tin-ceilinged rooms and damp floors.  
Fill the windows with long shards of cropland  
and moulding purple clouds, ice  
shelving in the ditch thick with snow.  
The walls can now be painted a cracked, dank green,  
the doors of the darkened kitchen cupboards  
bent back and torn like fingernails.  
A rind of ice on everything.

In a drawer by the steel sink place a curling picture  
of a timid girl in a cheap dress smiling.  
Sprinkle mouse shit and hardware.  
Let sit for decades.

I like to imagine her  
childish tummy round beneath the polka spot dress,  
big enough to be teased by girls who have  
lost their baby fat already.  
A belly button twirled in itself, linty pink  
with a uterus of fleshy words she half understands  
or will one day in excited confusion  
by flashlight and textbook  
under covers with her self.  
She is, was, will be  
always might have been.

If the setting sun paints the room  
a glittering orange  
it is just as well. She will never know  
that the kitchen floor has collapsed  
and thin wooden teeth line the maw.

**The 12 Aspects of Tragedy in Wolves Hunting**  
**Richard Kelly Kemick**

I.

*Mimesis*

a warmblooded fog  
all shoulder blade and iris  
rolls north through the taiga  
stalks in the shadows of the season

II.

*Agon*

hooves  
swollen to snowshoes  
paws  
iron-tipped and raw

III.

*Hamartia*

the alpha female  
peels from tree cover to behind the hill  
curls off like luthier spruce  
from the rounded back of a cello  
stillness rises to sound  
the season's fugue

IV.

*Brotoi*

starved women of Thracis  
death stings the skin  
and takes the form  
of a writhing body but this  
is the helplessness of violence

V.

*Hubris*

survival is holding still a glacier  
warm hands slick against the glass

VI.

*Nemesis*

in the lapse of arctic dusk  
twilight is an eyelid  
pulled pink and pale  
across long-lashed shadows

VII.

*Anagnorisis*

upon isolation  
the prey is abstracted  
to muscle and sinew and

the gravid glow in her stomach

VIII.

*Stochastic order*

the heart blooms like the purple crocus  
the pollen moves in the veins of wind

IX.

Peripeteia

trailing five lengths and fading  
the pack channels her towards  
the crown of risen earth  
the alpha female  
waiting on the crest's far side  
can already hear both  
the approaching wind  
through her antlers  
and the two hearts inside her

X.

Pharmakos

collision is hunger made audible

XI.

Catharsis

atop the marbled snow  
red bubbles breach from fur  
skin shredded and purged  
as they gather and carry her  
through the conifers

XII.

Prohairesis (Epilogue)

Divinity only decides  
the number of teeth:  
forty-two or  
thirty-four.  
Ordination  
through dentition.



**Waiting**  
**Steve Klepetar**

A man stands by a silver tree, waiting,  
his lean face drowned in shade, his hat  
neither jaunty nor defiant, not quite  
shabby, but clearly dated, out of touch,  
like a photograph in black and white.  
He reminds me of my dad, leaning  
uneasily against the glistening trunk.

I am waiting too, for the phone to ring,  
for email to pop up on my screen  
with its musical ping! For the postal  
truck with its red, white, and blue trim.  
Be assured, I am waiting for my future.  
I am waiting for the sky to open,  
for a long, golden ladder roping to the moon.

**Liturgy**  
**Dan Murphy**

There is no poetry left  
out here,  
no last words,  
only strange sucking stanzas  
strung among the willow branch.

No leaps of faith.  
Gargoyles cackling  
among porch lamps,  
dilapidated bridges,  
storm-strung houses.

Up here, feathers splayed,  
eyes bee-stinged  
by wind.

Up here on the cliff face  
hands sunk deep into uterine pockets,  
lichen moss braced on cold granite.

I study the last fundamental liturgy  
of the land  
and the crumbling scaffolding of an autumn sky  
piling up like cordwood  
against the landwash.

**Context and Perspective**  
**James B. Nicola**

A subject's bound to its object to derive  
the meaning of their verbs. The poet's bound  
to readers likewise; nor am I alive,  
but dead as unread verse, until I'm found.

Likewise are lovers to those whom they love.  
Their verbs – that is, the tactics they deploy –  
may be poetic (invoking the above –  
moons, stars, etc.), crude, or even coy:

but we are bound as poets are. Forgive  
us our infractions, then. They only mean  
to whet the verse, our verbs. So. Have you seen  
me, read, reacted? If you have, I live  
again; if not, then I am of Oblivion.  
But – what – you're here? Aha – you have!

**Wandawoowo Learn to Skate**  
**Kenneth Pobo**

My body and I are barely  
on speaking terms. Friends insist  
that broccoli rocks, blueberries  
and spinach too. I eat whatever they fix,  
but really, give me a rolodex

with pastry names. I'm drawn  
to skating, sit too much before  
the computer's maw, the TV  
huckster's hands on my bra.  
Ice breaks apart,  
heals, shines. Skating requires

a sense of swerve. I never get  
balance right, keel over.  
Knees slightly bent, maybe gravity  
wants me to fail. I practice

falling, more when I'm  
in love, which I rarely get right either.  
Love often works against balance.

Up and around I go,  
Skywinder Pond holding me,  
someone who trusts as she quails  
in motion.

**Aperture**  
**Autumn Richardson**

I have walked until  
water, fire, shelter

a brushpile of birch  
and tamarack

scents of pitch, river  
and earth are left.

Day drains.  
I kindle the fire.

Limbs creak and spit.  
Water eats the grey cliffs.

Stars arrive to pollinate  
the darkness.

I gather driftwood;  
each stick is a solitude.

I hold in my hand  
a wave-rubbed stone

and wait for silence  
to polish me.

**The Tree**  
**Anthony Rintala**

Tree strikes ground,  
grounded, struck stuck standing.  
Branches break, brachiating sky,  
ape-swung, cloud to cloud  
staggering leafless swatch twitches in  
shattering twists. Watch, it buries itself.

Burrowbolts past topsoil blast  
in rooted arc, casting light –  
a fractal chase  
of sinuous dragon scale  
and leather sheaf flea-leg.  
Each earthworm arm of it flails

away from sky – moles' tails  
coil from the headless trunk.  
Earth trails fill with live lightning,  
slow explosion,  
tentacles tense creeping whips  
and the terror of erosion.

Root earth in place, firm the bolt,  
and run the Zeus current-course.

**Mindful**  
**Lorelie Gerwing Sarauer**

i.

I encase my words in plastic, cut them apart and scatter them into the woods. My woods. My words popping up then and there through the moss sponge. How long will they last?

I bottle poems about my mother, throw one into a lake. I liberate her from the memory-taker, bring her here to be inserted into the slit bark of a tree.

One of my favorite spots is a bench on a hill in these woods. Three years ago, while chemicals were pumped through my body, I came here in my mind to sit, to feel the sun flicker on my face, hear the frogs' chorus: *I'm alive. I'm alive. I'm alive.*

I bring my stones here. One stone collected from each place I visit. I used to try to take every stone, weighting my pockets so that I could scarcely move. Allen would say, "I am not carrying your rocks in my suitcase." But I slipped them beneath the lining, tucked them into his woolen socks.

I think of clay squeezed through my hand, oxide-darkened and fired, scattered on the shore of a lake in Tasmania, dropped path-side in Pompeii, tucked into these woods.

The spruce trees, though tall and sturdy, are shallow-rooted. They can't be counted on for support, though I've imagined a tree house with a dropped ladder where my grandchildren might play. Surely these aren't the first hard winds to blow here?

The man who gravels our driveway advises to scrape off all of the trees and start over. We have two and a half acres of trees. I grew up on the bald prairie, was always looking for shade, a place to hide.

My daughters visit during a summer on steroids. Heavy rains have caused the underbrush to build muscle. I stand on my bench to point out The Big and Little Dips, the baby birches I hope to move, the tree suspended above the entrance to the ridge where spruce have fallen, stacked like cordwood.

The girls see hiding places for bears and cougars that would snack on small children. They see a whole lot of work. They travel thirty minutes north to pitch their tents in Beaver Glen.

In the winter, deer plough a path around the hill and up to my bench. Are they curious or reclaiming their hill, their view?

ii.

When she was my age my mother went to France.

After going to France my mother learned French.

After learning French my mother got Alzheimer's.

I've never been to France and je ne parle pas Francais

So far as I remember.

iii.

If my office reflects my mind, it is no wonder I can't sleep at night, with all that clunking inside my head.

I must purge, but every object has a memory and memory has become important. Every nook and cranny on the shelves has been filled and still memories are stacked around the floor. There is a small path from door to chair.

My daughters visit, albeit one at a time. I stand on my chair to reach favorite books, point out finished and half-finished projects. I am a fount of good intentions.

Pinned to a board next to my table are photos of my parents, invitations to exhibitions long passed, a heart-shaped scapular from my childhood, said to contain a tiny relic from a saint long-forgotten.

I dream of a room more zen, with only this chair, that table, my clay jar of pens, a drawer of paper and inks, my laptop and me. Ha. It would last five minutes before I started dragging in twigs, bits of copper, jars of watch findings and buttons, sheets of silver leaf, pages ripped from magazines, and boxes of photographs with origins unknown.

Pressed leaves fall from my books. Pressing leaves is not good for books, causing rippled pages and mould patches. I bought a leaf press that I can't find.

I keep a laminator that died after ingesting half a sheet of plastic, in the hope that it will spontaneously regurgitate its stomach contents.

The closet is filled with old receipts, electronic manuals, deceased laptops, bags that were never quite right, banker's boxes of tzotchkies, and a certificate of ordination from the Universal Life Church. Not even I know what else is buried there. It now requires excavation, not a light dusting and re-alignment, and so I close the doors.

Out of sight. But never out of mind.

Coelacanth  
Matthew Walsh



Grey and scraped like the snow  
from the wheels of the old blue car,  
the portrait of my ancestor wants to loosen  
the more I stare at her. Hovering over the table,  
it hides the story, the loss of her  
middle and third finger in the machinery at the factory.  
Couldn't look at any kind of motor again. She was  
the pianist of Musquodobit road, played tunes for the vets  
to wobble home to. We found her cramped and packed  
up under the TV stand, her hand reaching out from a scene  
at the water. In the albums, photos of her mythical walks  
to the mailbox, or in a crab apple tree. We pulled her out

of the drawer of our grandmother's Singer, unwrinkled  
her skirt and she seemed to stop and consider herself  
in our features, seeing if anything about her had re-emerged  
after disappearing down the line, parts  
of herself she might have admired. We took her in

and left her to the mercy of Zellers' One Hour Photo,  
wondered if the processing might betray her, or choose  
the right shade of green for her eyes. Restoring something as old  
as these passed-down photos would take longer, maybe more  
than an hour. Our grandmother thought the price was too dear,  
but wouldn't it be nice to see her singing with the Players  
hanging from her mouth, or see her swim up again  
in the years that are depths ago.

## Fiction

### Ana's Cupcakes Meghan Rose Allen

#### Ana

Between shifts, Ana makes cupcakes for Joaquin with a half-dozen tray borrowed from the neighbours. She needs five batches and unless she starts now she will miss the bus that takes her to the sparkling office building where she pushes a cart around desks and empties wastepaper baskets into a bag. Being late will draw attention. The priest and the *gringas* who secretly meet with Ana and her coworkers in the basement of her job warn them about drawing attention. Don't walk in groups. Don't argue in stores. Don't get arrested. The *gringas* tell her she should know her rights if they get stopped. Ana and the other cleaners find this funny. If they get stopped, they are sent back. That is the only right they have.

Ana copies a recipe from a cookbook in the library. Her card expired three months ago, but she hasn't renewed it. They might ask for ID. They might phone the number she gives on her application and learn she's put down the bodega's phone number that everyone in the neighbourhood uses on forms. So no more books from the library. No more programs. No more free movies on Thursday nights.

Ana misses the library.

At home, Ana translates, word for word, with the dictionary. *Huevos, leche, sucre, harina*. Same as flan. Ana can make flan in her sleep, she's done it so much.

"Joaquin," she calls out in English. "I make flan instead, okay?"

Joaquin is up and into the kitchen, the corner of the one-room apartment with the milk crates Ana stores food in, the unhappy yellow stove, the bar fridge she often keeps unplugged to save money. He throws the controller, which skitters across the linoleum until the moulded plastic hits Ana's foot. The curtains at the far side, by the door, are drawn. The sun sets. Shadows stretch from the television to here. The room glows a dull orange.

"No fair," Joaquin says. "You promised."

"The cupcakes take so long. If they don't work, think of the waste."

"You're always like this. I bet Jeanie would make them for me."

If she weren't inside on the carpet, Ana would spit. Jeanie. *Puta. Hija de puta*. Then, most insulting of all, *gringa*.

"No," Ana resigns herself. "I'll do it."

Alone, Ana bakes while Joaquin's video machine beeps and groans. She covers darkened patches with a paste made of milk and sugar. She waves old flyers at the smoke detector to shut off its whine. She stacks the cupcakes in a thin cardboard box, separating the layers with

cuts of waxy paper. Joaquin spends his birthday eve asleep on the sofa, the box sitting next to him, ready to go in the morning.

But inside the box, surrounded by the elf-sized cakes, Ana puts a flan set into a red paper cup from the bathroom of the gas station three blocks north two blocks east. The flan sits silently in the centre. Not drawing attention.

## Joaquin

I jiggled the box all the way to school so the cupcakes wouldn't look too perfect. My plan worked because, in the yard, Marcus and Vincent laughed and called them Mexican dung beetles but then Miss McAllister heard them and they got detention on Wednesday which means they can't play in the lacrosse finals so our team will probably lose. The whole school hates them right now. And Ma's not even from Mexico so how ignorant can you get? But they're so dumb they probably think the entire landmass from Juarez to Tierra del Fuego is Mexico. I've seen the marks they get on their geography quizzes. Marcus and Vincent are grade A geography idiots.

Miss McAllister opened the box and knew right away what I'd brought was homemade. She loves when we make things ourselves. She talks a lot about "rampant consumerism controlling our lives" and how we would all be "better if we rejected the system and learned how to survive on our own." I told her I helped make the cupcakes, which I did, sort of. Without me, Ma would have backed out. Then Miss McAllister beamed at me and I couldn't feel the floor under my sneakers and the room tilted sideways. I focused on blinking to stop from falling over.

Teachers aren't supposed to have favourites, but I know I'm Miss McAllister's favourite. I'm allowed to call her Jenny, but not during school hours. After the bell rings, I help her with the cleaning and prep work for the next class. If she gets behind in marking, she lets me enter the grades into the computer which is why I know Marcus and Vincent suck balls at geography.

"Joaquin has brought food to celebrate his birthday. His *cumpleaños*," she says with her terrible accent. I won't tell her though. Let her mangle all the Spanish she wants if it means we spend time together. "Homemade cupcakes, class. You see, you don't need to go and spend money on cupcakes from an overpriced bakery downtown. You can make them yourself and they're," she took a bite, "as good." Miss McAllister turned away as she swallowed. A few black crumbs dribbled down from the wrapper and I could hear a slight crunch as she chewed. "Interesting flavour."

"I baked a traditional birthday flavour in my home country. The dryness means that there'll be no tears in the upcoming year." I smiled at Miss McAllister. She believed me.

"How interesting. Class, you should all be so lucky to have such an interesting cultural heritage as Joaquin. And what's this?" She pulled up a Dixie cup.

I looked over as she held her hand down to me. "It's the lucky flan," I said quickly. "Whoever finds that has to give the birthday boy a hug for good luck in the upcoming year."

Miss McAllister's cheeks turned a slight pink. "Well Joaquin, I don't think a hug works. How about a handshake?" She held out her hand and I took it. Her palm was moist, but smooth. I forgot to breathe, then started coughing.

“Please class,” Miss McAllister said over me, “everyone come get a cupcake.” Stupid Ma. I always cover for her. All she had to do was buy a box of cake mix and follow the instructions and she couldn’t even do that right. Thank God I’m not a dolt like Vincent or Marcus otherwise I’d be up there with my mouth hanging open, staring at a stack of burnt cupcakes and that dumb flan Ma hid in the box.

## **Jeanie**

When Frank and I met, I had no idea he was married. When I found out I said no sir, uh uh, don’t let the door hit you on the way out. But he kept at me, and with Frank, you have to forgive him. Now we’ve been living together almost three years. Yes, he’s still married, but if he gets divorced, there could be immigration issues for Ana, maybe Joaquin too. I’m not heartless. I love Frank and Joaquin and the ring on Frank’s finger keeping him tied to Ana in name only is what I’ve learned to live with in order to keep them in my life. I’m not asking for more.

“Make sure you come home early,” I reminded Frank. “I told Joaquin to come here after school. Today’s his birthday.”

Frank made that noise he does when he’s heard me but hasn’t really heard me. I went over and put my arms around his neck just a tiny bit too tight.

“You heard me Frankie?” I asked. “Come home early. I’m getting a dessert from the grocery. I’ll buy some presents. What do you think Joaquin would like?”

“He’s a boy. He doesn’t like nothing.”

“He must like something.”

“He’s a man now. Dirty magazine?”

“Frankie!” I play-slapped him. “He’s eleven.”

“By the time I was eleven, I had sex with fifty women. They came for miles around to taste what Francisco de Gaspar Alvarez had to offer.” He kissed me, tickling my lips with his moustache. “My best work was with the Sisters of my village. I was known as the great nun deflowerer. Then the priest came and begged me to stop. The sisters would no longer tolerate his small pinches on their bottoms, stolen kisses in the confession after they spend one evening with me. The poor priest was ready to burst.” Frank grabbed his crotch.

“Stop it,” I told him. Frankie makes up all these silly stories about village life but I know he grew up in a nice house in a city with servants and a driver. I mean, Frankie has class that comes from growing up rich.

“I’ll be home early, I promise,” he said.

I bought presents on my lunch hour. Games for the Wii Joaquin keeps at his mother’s house, a new hoodie, gift certificates for the fast food places around his school. I had twenty minutes before I had to be back at my desk, so instead of the Food City, I drove to one of those snazzy bakeries that look like they should be on the TV. All those cupcake flavours and me, being boring, chose chocolate because my boys love their chocolate. I wonder if food preferences are genetic, like me and Frank’s child, will he like chocolate as much as Frank and Joaquin do?

Before Frank left this morning, I asked when we're going to have a kid, a real, live, one hundred percent American kid.

"Joaquin not American enough for you?" he asked.

"You know what I mean. I want us to have our own baby."

But he slammed the door hard on the way out. Joaquin should be here any minute and Frankie still hasn't come home.

### **Frank**

Frank waits on a bench for Ana to come home. Four buses pass in the opposite direction before one releases Ana, who walks firmly up the outside staircase to the second floor of her building. Frank springs to his feet before Ana gets to the top, waiting for a break in traffic. The neighbourhood is busier than when he lived here. Grimier too. Ana and Joaquin should move some place safer.

The tap comes as soon as Ana slips off her shoes and hangs her purse over the doorknob. She checks in the gloom: Joaquin has already fallen asleep on the couch. She latches the door shut, then opens it a fraction. She closes it, undoes the latch, and lets Frank in.

"Good evening to you," he says formally.

"Good evening," Ana replies.

"Our boy grows up," Frank says. He looks over at Joaquin. "Did you buy him that sweatshirt?" The yellow fabric sallows Joaquin's skin. He looks ill in the half-light. Joaquin should wear shirts that button with collars and pants with pressed seams. Frank doesn't need Joaquin looking like a bum.

Ana shakes her head.

Frank follows her further into the room, then sits at the table as if he belonged there after a long day of working. Ana goes to the fridge and takes out two cups of flan. They sit and eat and watch their son Joaquin sleep. When Frank reaches over for Ana's hand, this is the first time in a long time that she doesn't pull away.

Then she does. After a count of eight beats, Ana takes her hand back and tells Frank to get out of her house and go back to his *novia's*. The door locks with a click behind him as he shuffles quickly back down the stairs.

## **Coyotes and River Nymphs**

**Karen Kachra**

Mr. Henschel says coyotes are skittish creatures, which means if you come across one in the ravine near school you should bang on pots and pans or shout or whistle or stomp. Generally make a ruckus. In the classroom, we all stomped and yelled and banged our desktops for practice and Mr. Henschel plugged his ears and nodded.

Nine times out of ten, he shouted, a coyote will turn and run.

All well and good for Mr. Henschel, my mother said later. She unpacked my school bag and held up the sandwich container I'd turned into a slug habitat. Mr. Henschel's not living with Thoreau.

I pointed at the slug. Actually that's Empress Avalon, I said.

That day I had gone to see the River Fairy on the way home. She was on her throne, the log with a watchful eye, where the two rivers split, by the Great Salt Marsh. This was really rare to find her there on her throne, I told Mom. Usually she's out performing great deeds.

Oh? Mom moved to the cutting board and steadied a red pepper.

Humans, I said, are allowed to visit the River Fairy without being invited only if they bring a plant or animal who hasn't received its name.

Oh? Mom said again. She stopped slicing to look over at me. Just be careful, Eleanora. In your enchanted forest.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

The lady was standing in the creek, washing her long pitched-black hair upside down with a white bar of soap. But the water there is brown and silty like in Janitor Jenkins's mop bucket, so I didn't see how she expected to get it clean. When she stood up and saw me watching, the lady turned away.

Hello! I called from the edge of the water. Are you washing your hair?

She didn't answer.

I gave her out and said, Are you looking for jewels, then? There's jewels hidden in this river.

Next to the towel lying on the ground near my feet, something flashed silver. I reached for it.

Don't touch! She splashed over. Don't touch razors! She was dripping everywhere, snapping twigs, hugging her wet clothes against her body. Younger and smaller than Mom, but almost as short as me. Her eyes were the colour of raisins.

Do you live here? I asked her. Are you a river nymph?

The lady's bluish lips stretched into a smile. She had a space between her two front teeth.

I told her about my loose molar and she said she had a sore tooth and we laughed at each other, being so much the same in the middle of a forest. She'd never heard of the River Fairy or Hobgoblin Bob, who stashes the glittering jewels in the riverbed. She'd never heard of coyotes either.

Well if you see one, you're supposed to make a lot of noise, I said. Bang a pot, for example. I don't have one with me.

She thanked me for the warning. I have to put on dry clothes, she said. Her flip flops smacked away.

I'll hold up your blanket! I called after her. Like at the beach, I explained. Like when you don't have a change room but your mom makes towel tent around you and – hey, actually, have you been to the *end* of this path?

She didn't want me to hold her blanket. On the rock where she'd stopped, a pair of pants and a T-shirt were folded on top of dirty white Reeboks. I thought she was gonna grab them, but she just stood there, looking down in a different direction.

Finally the lady said, Please. Leave me alone.

On the way home, I imagined her dunking her head in Mr. Jenkins's bucket on wheels, him cranking that handle and wringing out her long hair, like he did with the ends of his mops.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Another day, she was sitting under one of the king willows, eating from a plastic bowl. I waved.

I forgot to tell you I'm Eleanora Nuttall, I said. What are you eating?

She held out the bowl and there was rice at the bottom.

What's *your* name? I asked.

She chewed for a while. Everybody calls me Amy, she replied.

So that's your name?

My name is Luzviminda.

Luzviminda, I said, trying it out a couple of times. Pretty! So that's what *I'll* call you. I like to do things right.

Luzviminda giggled.

I asked her where she was from and she pointed up the slope behind us, to the other side of the enchanted forest. On that side, *not* the side where Mom and I live, the streets have houses big as airplane hangars, which are garages for airplanes. Dream Homes, Mom calls those homes. Real castles.

That's where my Dad went, I confessed to Luzviminda. My Dad and his Fancy Piece.

Luzviminda said she looked after three boys; ages two, six, and eight.

So where are they now? I asked.

Home. Sometime is with mother.

She asked me whether I found any jewels lately. I didn't answer. I was too busy watching her pack her food containers away into a sack and hoist it high up with a rope she swung over a tree branch. When she was done, she dug out a piece of string from the hockey bag beside her.

My girl like to play this, she said. With the string she made a web between my hands and showed me how to pinch and pull different parts to make string designs. As if I didn't know cat's cradle.

You have a girl too? I said.

Not here. At home.

Home. Home. Lying down to sleep that night, questions about Luzviminda kept bumping into each other in my head. Like, why did she wash her hair and eat rice in the forest when she had a Dream Home so close by? Finally I fell asleep and had a nightmare. There was a coyote running through the forest, chasing Luzviminda and sinking his teeth into one of her bare, tanned ankles.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

When school ended for the year I went to summer camp, then away to cottages of Mom's friends and relatives. So I didn't return to the enchanted forest until nearly the end of August, when the water in the creek is down to a trickle and the weeds have grown up to my shoulders. This time, my neighbour Gus Guffy followed me.

Luzviminda spotted us high up in the climbing tree. Are you OK? She shouted.

Hi! Hi, Luzviminda! We're climbing.

She said, Come down, Eleanora. Is too dangerous.

No it's not.

Come down, please, she said. For me.

We climbed down. Luzviminda took my hand and squeezed it, then said she was sorry for touching me.

It's OK, I told her. Was it? I thought.

She looked a lot older, somehow, and not as clean as before. I noticed Gus's mouth hanging open.

Gus, I said. This is Luzviminda. Or Amy, I guess you can call her.



What? He asked. Why does she have two names?

Gus hadn't gotten any smarter over the summer. I said, In case you can't pronounce the real one.

He squinted at her. So it's an alias.

No! Luzviminda said. Alias is for criminals. I am nothing wrong.

Don't worry, I told her. Gus doesn't know what he's talking about. He just tries to use big words.

Gus squinted at *me*, then, and my throat tightened up. Too late. Gus took off down the path, elbows swinging.

Maybe we hurt his feelings, I mumbled.

Eleanora, did you tell anybody you see me here? Luzviminda asked.

No. I looked in the direction Gus had gone and said, Well, Gus knows. *Did* you do something wrong, Luzviminda?

No, she said. She unzipped her hockey bag and brought out a silky scarf that she unwound from a picture frame. She held it out to show me.

My daughter, she said. Coming from Fillpeens. She wiped her cheeks. Eleanora, I'm too scared.

Oh, I said. I didn't think the girl looked scary at all. I told Luzviminda that her daughter had nice barrettes.

Fillpeens, she said. A place so far away.

I found out Luzviminda was saving money to send her daughter a plane ticket to Canada. She admitted she wasn't supposed to live in the enchanted forest, but she didn't want to use her work money to pay for riding the bus or for another place to sleep. She wanted to pay for the plane ticket. She took back the framed picture and wrapped it carefully. So don't tell anybody I am here, she said, or else my daughter will not get money.

I didn't think it was a good idea that she had left her daughter in the first place. In fact, I was kind of angry with Luzviminda for doing this, but that only made me try to be nicer to her. I can give you some money, I said. I have two piggy banks.

Luzviminda didn't seem to hear me. She has twelve years soon, she said. She has five years when I go. She will be happy with me?

Um. I don't know, I said. I watched her small fingers moving, twisting open the little ball of string.

OK, she said. So let's play a game again, Eleanora. Let's play.

No thanks. Actually, I think I should try to find Gus.

Gus had a bad habit of tattling when he was upset. I left Luzviminda behind, sitting on the big hockey bag.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Sergeant Guffy and Mom were still talking in the driveway, under an umbrella, and I was supposed to be eating the mountain of cheese and crackers in front of me. I kept thinking of Luzviminda, who must be the reason Gus's father had come over. I got up and went to the window again. How did she keep dry out there when it rained this hard?

Soon Mom led Gus's father inside. He was wearing his police uniform and he waved at me through the kitchen doorway. I waved back. Puffy Guffy, people called him.

His voice was as high as Gus's.

To my mother he said, Or it could be that her visa's no longer current. That could be why she's on the run.

Mom said, Eleanora, can you come here please?

It happens, Puffy said. They lose their job for some reason. They don't want to go home. They're afraid to inform anyone that they're unemployed.

I dragged my feet over to them. Sergeant Guffy squatted down in front of me. He smelled like restaurant mints and fried chicken. Hello, young lady! I understand you might know where to find a woman called... Amy?

That's not her real name, I said.

He glanced at my mother. To be honest, Madeleine, I'm also thinking about the suspect's own protection. Behind his hand, he said, Coyotes.

Oh? said my mother. Has there been a sighting?

No. Not recently, Guffy replied, lowering his chin and his voice.

For some reason I started giggling, about a deadly serious thing like the existence of coyotes, right in front of deadly serious Puffy Guffy.

You know, Mom said, squeezing my shoulder, I've told this child a million times not to go into that nasty culvert. But she's so... dreamy, Burt.

I could see Mom's neck and cheeks had turned pink. She said to me, Your friend Gus says you visit a woman who lives in the woods. Sergeant Guffy wants to know where he might find her.

I looked down at my shoes, and thought, nasty culvert? Never once did you tell me *not* to go into the woods! And why are you asking *me*, when I already told you about

—

Where is she? Guffy blurted.

I didn't answer. I couldn't answer.

His big eyebrows lifted. Well, he said, if you can't describe the location, Eleanora, I know you're *brave* enough to take me and your Mom right there. A big brave girl like you.

Oh, Burt. Do you think that's necessary? Mom asked. Now, in the rain?

I wanted to ask him what exactly there was to be brave about. Then I remembered the coyotes. Grown-ups always wanted you to be afraid of something. But Gus's father wasn't staring at me because of a coyote. Suddenly I had the idea it was *Luzviminda* he wanted me to be afraid of. I looked at my mother. Did she want that too?

In a quiet voice I said, Didn't Gus say where we went?

Sergeant Guffy stood up slowly, crossing his arms over his belly. No, he said. Gus wasn't able to... No. Gus was not forthcoming.

Puffy Guffy scratched his cheek and said, All he could tell me was that you introduced him to a, uh, a short woman living in the ravine. He looked from Mom to me and me to Mom. Hey, he said, I just wanna nip this situation in the bud. Before anybody gets pinned for vandalism or trespassing. Drug dealing.

Drug dealing? said Mom. I can't imagine a nanny would...

If she *is* a nanny, he said. She could be a tramp or a pervert. Some kind of refugee.

Either way...

Either way, you want her out, said my mother.

Of course, he said. I think we can all agree on that around here, can't we?

Mom smiled and took a very long breath, then bent down with her back to Sergeant Guffy. Eleanora, she said, now I want you to think carefully. It's important for you to tell Sergeant Guffy the truth about whomever it is you've met in the ravine. My mother blinked hard. *None* of your fanciful stories, Eleanora. Not like the ones you were telling me this afternoon.

Before lunch, Mom had caught me emptying my teddy bear piggy bank. I told her about Luzviminda who looked after the three Grube boys, aged two, six, and eight, and about her daughter, living so far away, waiting for an airplane ticket, and who was twelve now and used to be five and liked to play cat's cradle.

The Grubes of all people, my mother had said, taking my piggy bank into her lap. The poor woman.

But now Mom was saying nothing to Puffy Guffy, about Grubes or airplane tickets.

She was just squeezing my shoulders and taking long, careful breaths. I looked into her eyes.

She's not exactly...a woman, I said. Luzviminda – that's her real name – sometimes she sleeps under the king willows. No, high *in* the king willows. Because she likes the sound they make in the breezes. Luzviminda's a river nymph, and river nymphs make music from the sounds of the forest.

What? said Sergeant Guffy. He tilted his head.

In a louder voice I said, That's their special power. Luzviminda is the queen of the river nymphs, so she can make music as good as Taylor Swift's.

What in...? said Sergeant Guffy. What is she talking about?

My mother got to her feet, saying, I'm sorry, Sergeant. Eleanora, go ahead and speak directly to Sergeant Guffy. Repeat what you've just said and don't spare any details. I think there may have been some misunderstanding between you and Gus?

Maybe, I said. I don't know if Gus got much of a look. He was really freaked out.

Sometimes he... freaks out kind of easy.

Sergeant Guffy let me go on a while about the enchanted forest until he lost his patience and made an excuse to leave.

Mom and I rushed to the living room window to watch him speeding home in his cruiser, so fast his tires screeched at the corner.

## Non-fiction

### **Territory** **Sandra Allan**

Grace steps out onto the back stoop. The northwest wind is whipping the sheets and shirts into billows and twists. It's a cold, April day in Foremost – the clouds hover and swirl in constant quick changes from one dull grey shade to another, sometimes verging on black. Now and then a squall blows up and drops a few sprinkles of rain, just enough to wet the whites trying to dry on the clothesline. Finally, though, they're just dry enough to bring in and drape over the furniture to await ironing. A sudden gust pastes Grace's thin cotton housedress to her body and lifts her ash blond waves and teases them out of shape. She shivers and begins to reel in the clothes.

Sarah and Leila are having afternoon naps. Grace wishes she could lie down, too, but there's so much to do before Howard comes home. It's been tough without him the past two days. She glances at the sky as she unfastens the shirts and drops them into the wicker laundry basket along with the clothespins. She's hoping that the few spatters she feels don't multiply into a downpour again.

Howard couldn't make it home last night because the road from Manyberries was too muddy. Even the tire chains wouldn't have pulled him through the slimy gumbo of that post-Depression rural route. But today's wind will have blown the road dry enough to navigate along the ruts. It's a good thing, because Grace doesn't feel confident running the house alone for very long. Shovelling coal into the furnace in the cellar, lighting gas lamps, cooking on the wood stove (and keeping wood *in* the stove), emptying the slop pail, heating water for the laundry, heaving it up to pour into the galvanized tub, scrubbing, rinsing and wringing the clothes and diapers, lugging them out to the porch for hanging – it's all so overwhelming. And rubber gloves or no, washboards are hard on the fingers. She's grateful for the addition of the clothes wringer, clamped onto the counter beside the sink. At least she doesn't have to do that by hand anymore.

It's still more than she can handle, especially with two little ones. Howard's posting to school inspector in the Foremost Division is a welcome step up the ladder from teacher, to be sure, but it has its down side. She has barely recuperated from Leila's birth a year ago – what seemed like days of continuous labour. She was exhausted. Remembering makes her weak all over again. Thank goodness they were still in Lethbridge, where hospital care provided comfort for the long lie-in.

Here in Foremost, without the city conveniences, like electricity, running water, and flush toilets, she feels quite abandoned. The cooking, the cleaning, the caring for a family of four in an old two-storey in small-town southern Alberta – it's a bleak domestic existence for the postmaster's daughter who's been coddled all her life as an only child in a home with a maid to do all the chores. And now there's a new responsibility: Sarah is going on four and needs help with her reading and the simple arithmetic she's begun to tackle.

Grace scans the low sky and drops her eyes to the houses across the lane and beyond. They stand starkly defined. No trees hover over them; no bushes enclose them. She thinks of her hometown of Stettler, where a glance down the street shows a vista of lovely tall elms and a glimpse of a rooftop here and there among them. She pictures the rolling hills and foliage on the

road to Buffalo Lake. How stark the contrast with this pancake prairie, not a tree in sight. The only thing resembling even a bush here is the odd tumbleweed rolling across the yard.

The pulley wheel squeaks as Grace grabs at the sheets. She manages to tame them enough to release all the clothespins, and finally drops the last one into the basket at her feet. She bends to hoist it up and into the house. The fire in the stove is heating the irons sitting on top. With luck she'll be able to finish in time to start supper before five o'clock.

She hears a noise upstairs. Sarah is awake early. Grace sighs; now she won't have as much ironing time as she'd counted on. She'll have to finish it tonight, when she'd planned to relax with Howard after the girls fell asleep. Their time together is precious, but he has run out of clean shirts, and that's a fact. He's on the road all week visiting the schools in his area. A lot of hard driving and long days. Better than what some are doing, though, fighting in the trenches in Europe again.

Grace trudges upstairs to the girls' bedroom and picks up the tow-haired little one.

"Ba deam, mommy."

"Shh, honey." She would like to ask what nap-time bogeymen have disturbed Sarah, but she doesn't want to waken Leila, still sleeping peacefully in the crib. Grace hugs Sarah and kisses the tears away, then hustles her out of the room to the little potty chair in the hall. Sarah tries to pull down her own panties but needs help. She wriggles onto the small seat.

"Wan go 'side," she says from her perch.

"It's too chilly," says Grace. "You can play with Dolly in the house while mommy gets some of the ironing done."

A shaft of sunlight suddenly infuses the hallway through the west window, flooding the floor and lighting up the dust motes. Grace's spirits lift. She looks out at the sky – the clouds are scuttering away in the breeze, the blue background expanding. The rest of the day may be sunny.

"Sun," says Sarah gleefully. "Go 'side."

Grace knows she's too busy to take the girls out for a walk. Besides, she wants Leila to stay sleeping – she woke up several times last night with a cough, and the rest will do her good. But she can't let Sarah out on her own – there's no fence, no way to keep her safe. She can't be wandering. She could get into the outhouse, or stray down into the coulee where the ticks await her succulent, peach skin. But the fresh air would do her good. Maybe there's a way...

Sarah stands up, job done, and Grace helps straighten her clothes. Then she carries her down the steep stairs – Howard and Grace still help her with those, afraid she'll take a tumble. In the front hall closet, she sets Sarah down and pulls the leggings, heavy wool sweater, and bonnet off the lower shelf. She helps Sarah get dressed, then adds mitts, coat, and rubber boots. She pulls the harness off the top shelf and fastens it around her and picks her up, strap and all. She hesitates a moment, thinking, then heads straight for the cellar stairs. Her skipping rope is in one of the unpacked boxes down there with her old dolls and toys she's saved for her own children. It will do.

In the basement, with Sarah still in her arms, Grace rummages through the boxes on the storage room shelves, finds the rope and climbs back up the stairs, not wanting to linger on the dirt floor with all the spiders and beetles. She opens the back door and steps outside onto the stoop, setting Sarah down carefully so she can't fall off the ledge. Grace loops one end of the rope over the clothesline and ties it securely, then takes the other end and knots it through Sarah's harness strap. She backs down the steps to the ground, holding Sarah's little hands to brace her as her short legs follow awkwardly, one step at a time.

Grace opens the small shed under the stoop and pulls out the trike and a push toy, the little rainbow-patterned cylinder that chimes as it rolls like a lawn mower. But Sarah chooses the trike, climbs on and starts her journey across the yard, part weedy, part grassy. Grace pulls on the rope and is satisfied that it will hold. She goes back inside to listen for Leila.

Though the clay soil is hard, the crabgrass impedes the progress of the little trike. Sarah soon gives up and climbs off, picking up the push toy and making her rounds. With the clothesline as her tether, she can go from the house to the lane, from one side of the yard to the other, but no farther. The rope is just long enough to give her this much space. This is her playground, for a little while at least. Reined in now and then by the rope, she marches along muttering "daddy home, daddy home, daddy home." She misses Howard, misses being tossed up in the air and caught securely in strong arms. He is the joy in her life.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Howard grasps the wheel, shifts into first, lets the clutch out slowly and steps gently on the gas. The car slips sideways. He quickly turns in the opposite direction to compensate for the skid. The engine coughs; he depresses the clutch but it's too late – the engine conks out. Now he's stuck. He's in a dip in the road where the mud from the last two days of rain has not yet dried. The spring of 1940 has been a mean, wet one for a rural school inspector in southern Alberta.

"Damn," he mutters, and opens the door, stepping as lightly as possible onto the mucky road. The fresh shine on his oxfords isn't going to last long in this. His first thought was to gun the car through the bad patch, but the surface isn't solid enough to support its weight. He has been too anxious, too tired, to assess the situation properly. The rain made it impossible to travel last night. He'd stayed in Manyberries at the principal's house. The mattress was lumpy and the blankets too flimsy to hold off the night chill. Now he feels a sneeze coming on and suspects he's due for a cold. He just wants to get home. Grace will be needing him.

Now he slips and slides around to the trunk and pulls out the chains. The mud makes his progress difficult, but finally he has placed a set in front of each of the four tires. His shoes caked with gumbo, he makes his way to the passenger door. He backs onto the seat and reaches into the glove compartment for the kitchen knife he keeps there for emergencies. He lifts one heavy, mud-caked foot, the left one, and scrapes off as much of the goo as he can. He places that foot on the running board, then gives the other one the same treatment. He needs both shoes clean for the next stage. He swings his body into the car and closes the door, then slides over to the driver's seat.

"God, if there is one, please help me get this baby moving," he says out loud. He pulls out the choke part way, switches on the ignition, and gradually depresses the accelerator. His skill serves him well. The engine catches. He quickly pushes the choke back in and begins the routine – reverse, forward, reverse, forward. Gearshift, clutch, and accelerator work in turn to roll the tires gently and rhythmically onto the chains. With the motor in neutral and the hand

brake set, he climbs out of the car again and secures each chain to its wheel, then repeats the shoe-cleaning process and gets set to ease out of the mud. He's performed this drill many times in prairie gumbo. This time is no different. The chains take hold and the car churns slowly across the wet patch and up onto the drier roadbed at the top of the rise.

He scans the track ahead. It looks rutty but negotiable. Riding with chains on dry roads means slow and bumpy progress, though. It's also hard on the axle, not to mention the tires. He puts the car in neutral again, pulls on the brake, and gets out to begin the chain-removal process. Finally, he stows the chains in the trunk and resumes his journey. He's sweating from the effort of the past twenty minutes. He glances down at his hands, his suit, his once-white cuffs – filthy. Another shirt to wash and iron. Without the mud it would have lasted longer, perhaps a day or two. Maybe he can just soak the collar and cuffs. The suit? Well, he hopes once the mud is dry a good brushing will do the trick.

The steady putt-putt of the motor begins to mesmerize him, becomes the sound of the taxi he drove in Toronto...

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Howard's thoughts drift back to 1930, and he's driving his fare through city streets shimmering with rain, vying for a place in the slow-moving line-up at the gate of the Canadian National Exhibition grounds. He's a good driver, darting in and out when he gets a chance to pass, but this is a bad time of year for making any headway in traffic in Toronto. It's good for a struggling university student earning his tuition behind the wheel, though.

He's living cheap. There's no other way. He's got to get himself educated and start working on a profession. He knows it can't be music. No money in that since the talkies put him out of a job conducting the pit orchestra at the Paramount Theatre in New York. Now he's aiming to teach, but he wants a firm academic foundation before he starts the training. He wants to do more than survive in this depressed world. He wants to achieve, go as high as he can go. The only way to do that is to build on the skills and knowledge he has going for him already. He's used up all his savings now. Luckily there are still some who have cab fare to make this temporary job possible. And lucky he has the scholarship. As he has many times before, he blesses his parents for his brains. And his aunt for marrying money. She has helped to pay for his degree.

He drops his passenger at the Royal York. It's late. The doorman has no fares for him, and there's nothing on the two-way radio from dispatch, so he cruises slowly to the side of the street, parks, turns off the engine and picks up his flashlight. He casts the beam over the pile of books on the passenger seat – his travelling companions. He's never without them, because slack hours are the only time he has to study. Classes all morning, library research all afternoon (on the days he doesn't have geology lab), and driving cab from suppertime until two in the morning. He has burdened himself with a heavy schedule because he wants to finish quickly and get back home to Calgary. Toronto is just a necessary stop along the way. He's eager to return to the quieter pace of life on the prairies, and to renew his acquaintance with that captivating Stettler teacher.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

A flash of white on the passenger side pops him back into 1940 on the rutty prairie road. He catches the back of the sign in the rear view mirror – he knows what it says. *Entering Foremost, Population 500*. Home, for now. His mood brightens as he imagines the scene around the next



corner – the white two-storey at the top of the coulee, his three girls inside, and the promise of a hot dinner.

## **Homeward David Houston**

### **Quiet**

Flavio had died.

The day before dying, when he had finally accepted out loud that his time was almost up, he had requested a promise from me. I was to scatter part of his cremated remains in his hometown, Sao Manuel, Brazil. There was a church garden there he had always enjoyed sitting in as a child. Then again later he found himself in that same spot, seeking quiet during his annual visits home to his mother and family. He was a strong believer in completing the circle of life, and this would be his final trip home.

### **Ash**

The cremated remains were weird, more gravel than ash. Like those small stones that find their way into your shoes. Abrasive. The crematorium passed them on to me in a discreet brown box, a white printed label showing Flavio's initials and the cremation date on the side.

In the stillness of an empty house I handled them solemnly. A wisp of dust rose when I raised the lid. Like my thoughts, these minute particles would forever be settling and drifting, never really still.

Tomorrow Brazil.

### **Heat**

On arriving in Sao Paulo the first thing to hit you is the heat, like opening an oven door with your face too close. The shirt began to stick to my back and the wait for my bag to appear inside the reclaim hall was worrying. Eventually it found me.

Dodging a mob of panhandlers, I reached the outside terminal. Fresh air, or sort of. Dust and car fumes.

Two friends, Annie and Erica, were due to collect me. Annie I knew well. She was one of Flavio's closest friends and had lived with us in Kent at various points over the years. She was a good person and I liked her. Erica I had not met, but knew from Flavio's stories. The three of us would drive to Sao Manuel, the girls acting as translators and protectors.

An odd trio. We would never all have been together and heading to his home-town if he had not died. His life there was not something he had wanted to share with any of us.

### **The Road**

The car rules in Brazil. The drive would be around seven hours, almost two of which would just be getting out of the city and toward the long straight highway west. Our car was tiny and red.

We left behind the affluent high-rise confusion of concrete, glass and metal. The capital's banks, businesses, and swish apartments all sat uneasily, threatened by an imposing mishmash of favelas seemingly ready to tumble down the hillsides and contaminate them. Two cities.

Once away from the noise, the scenery changed. We were on an apparently endless and gently rolling carpet of concrete travelling through miles upon miles of green fields. It was all coffee plantations, broken only by the occasional oversized billboard advertising chocolate or cigarettes. Nothing healthy. Vast unhindered swaths of green and brown panning either side to the horizon, meeting an equal mass of pale blue sky. It was beautiful.

Sometimes I would notice people working in the fields or a single tractor plodding along, almost in slow motion, but mainly it was empty. There were few animals to be seen in the fields, but every now and again we would pass a dog or cat lying flattened on the road, a mangled body of fur and bone being picked over by jostling black ravens and colored magpies.

Ahead of us the road. Always the road. Traffic was light. A lorry loaded up with fruits would sometimes roar past and shake our small car, causing a brief moment of nervousness. Occasionally we would rattle by a worn mule straining to heave an overloaded cart. These were always driven by old men in baseball caps, features browned by years of relentless sun and work.

We would also pass lone figures. Barely human, dressed roughly, tattered t-shirt and shorts, no shoes, pushing their makeshift handbarrows through the heat, heaped with plastic bottles or soda cans on their way to who knows where to claim a few cents.

We rarely passed any houses and the few towns I saw were mere villages, thrown up haphazardly close to a service station or tollgate areas, metal, plastic sheeting, and planks taking root like seedlings. Struggling to get established.

### **Sad Stop Café**

After four hours of solid driving we pulled in at a rest stop. It was good to stand up. Really good. I had always thought of travelling as freedom but in fact it is all about confinement, either on a plane or in a car, in a motel room or a mind. Never completely free.

I had noticed a handful of prostitutes loitering around the entrance. A smudge of colour and flesh. Thin and tired. Bird-like, as though they had just flapped in.

Inside, Erica and Annie rushed to the washroom. I sat by an artificial pond in the reception area. Piped music, tacky pop a notch too loud, and the pond, over flourished with plastic plants and sad, gasping fish, failed to create the tranquil atmosphere it surely aimed for. Worse than melancholy.

### **Red Town**

I remember once Flavio had returned happy from Brazil with a pint glass filled almost to the brim with a fiery red earth. He had wrapped the glass in rolls of cellophane and somehow got it back to the UK intact and through customs.

A red baked by the sun and ground by time. The kind of color only nature can master. It was to remind him of home, he said.

Sao Manuel was exactly the color of that earth.

We searched for the street where Vera, Flavio's mother, lived. As we quietly got lost amid the grid of lanes and turnings the route became a puzzle of dust and tracks. What green there was had been brought here and planted optimistically, geraniums and a few laburnums, testament to nature's tenacity. There was little grass to be seen except in the church gardens. Palm trees and a kind of resilient fern flourished though, species that had shown their propensity for survival centuries ago.

We passed the church and the bench where Flavio had sat so many times. I stole a glance from the window, almost afraid to look for fear of seeing him there.

At last we pulled alongside the house. Like all the others roundabout, it was a single story, roughly plastered square block. It was odd to think that this was where Flavio had been born, where he had grown up, left for school each day, and eventually left for Europe. Erica asked me if I was alright. Was I ready?

Vera came out. Tears flowed. Hugs were exchanged. She had aged since we had last met, that day miles from here on a snowy February morning.

She led the three of us indoors. We all felt uneasy arriving in this little faraway town, sitting on chairs Flavio had sat on, looking out at views he had seen. We were straying into his memories and making our own.

## **Two Brothers**

I was nervous of meeting Paulo and William, Flavio's two brothers, one younger, one older. It was one of my main anxieties when I had thought about this journey. I was not their brother. I was a stranger. It was usually Flavio who returned home to Sao Manual for this welcome meal.

The two men turned out to be exactly as he had described. Paulo, the older sibling, was big, looking older than his years but with sparkling eyes buried deep in a squashed face. He reminded me a little of my own estranged brother, coarse and loud. When he spoke, he shouted. He was a rough character, but he was friendly. Once hellos had been said, he paid little attention to me other than shouting my name occasionally from across the table or throwing another chunk of meat on my plate as if he were feeding a dog.

William was more fragile. I could tell he had been affected by the events of the last year and now again by my presence here. He shook hands loosely, reluctantly, unsure. He was similar in build and appearance to Flavio. Not as slim, but with the same handsome face and thoughtful brown eyes. He looked uncomfortable. Spoke little.

Often I would catch him gazing at me, sizing me up, trying to see who I was.

Paulo was a survivor. He'd be fine in time. While I was certain that he was sad about Flavio, I was equally sure he was able to cope and had in fact already moved on much further than anyone else at the table. William had not. He carried sadness, was weighed down by it. We tried to gauge each other's character. I was curious to know what conclusions he had made about me and who I was, but since Flavio's death I had been in a self-protective mode, getting through each day one at a time, with no emotional or physical strength for anyone else. Some selfish mechanism had gone into overdrive to get my physical shape through this period and out the other side.

All of us were in our own space, awkwardly circling around each other trying to make sense out of what had happened and where it would end.

I liked both men.

### **Final Service**

My time in Sao Manuel was deliberately short.

Sunday evening, the night before leaving, a memorial service was held. The chapel was small. Like everything in the town, it was concrete and whitewashed. The inside offered a welcome coolness. I arrived late, reluctant to take part, and stood at the back.

It was crowded, the music loud and the singing enthusiastic. Vera was near the front, singing. Paulo and William, like me, loitered at the back. Quiet. Paulo left after just a few moments, probably for a smoke. William continued his visual interrogation of me.

At the front was a simple concrete altar set up with candles and flowers. On the floor at the front were the ashes.

### **Last Rites**

The service over, Vera came out to find me and took my arm. We walked the few metres or so around the side of the church to the garden where we would scatter the ashes.

We had already chosen a place next to a small fern to scatter them. It seemed a good spot, tidy, likely to remain untouched by gardeners or animals. About twenty people joined us. The town's spinsters and widows came and spoke to Vera, sharing hugs and support. Paulo and William hung back from the main group. They never strayed far from each other. I was unsure if they would take part; they seemed agitated. Annie and Erica moved close to me. Our journey here was coming to a conclusion.

Everyone held hands in semi-circle while Vera led a prayer. I looked around at all the faces. The brothers had come forward, Paulo looking oddly out of place, holding hands with his brother to his right and an old lady on his left. He kept his cigarette in his lips. I sort of admired him. William was hollow. His young son, Yuri, clung to his leg. I was unsure who was supporting whom.

I heard Vera say my name during her speech, but that was the only thing I heard. She stepped forward and took a handful of the ashes. Crying, she scattered them around the base of the fern. She beckoned me forward. I took a handful, still perplexed by their coarseness. I stayed still for a moment, ashes in hand.

I turned. Paulo had left the group and was standing by his truck. Erica signaled for William to come forward, but grief anchored him to the spot. Tears reddened his face. His son came forward and took a fistful of the ash letting it trickle through his tiny fingers gently.

The box was empty. The sun was low. The act over.

William raised a hand and waved to me. I waved back, but he had already turned and was going toward his brother and the waiting truck.

Tomorrow I would be heading home.

### **Endings**

The dawn air was cool. It had that edge of a summer morning back home before the heat of the day had started. The sky hung huge. No clouds. The palm fronds of the trees barely moved. Occasionally the stillness would be shaken by a flock of noisy parakeets jostling in the trees. Anxious, they never settled for long.

The redness of Sao Manuel had a more russet tone in the early light, a kind of parched translucence that reflected on my palm as I bent down to touch it. It no longer felt so strange to be here. I did not feel quite the intruder I had a few days earlier. It was Flavio's town, his family, and his past, but he was part of my life and now these people and this town had become part of it too, if only for a moment. I let some earth fall through my fingers. It was true that everything returned back to where it had come from, or at least a part of it did.

I roused from my daydreams. An old man passed by on a bike. Slowly. A rangy brindled cur following behind, its long tongue hanging. The man waved. I waved back.

High above, impossibly high, meeting the morning, a plane moved across the sky, a sliver of metal reflected by the sun, curving and then disappearing into the distance.

## **My People Shall Be Thy People** **Desmond Lindo**

Were I ever called upon to describe my career as a writer of fiction, I would use by way of analogy the backyard and workshop belonging to a nice enough but rather slow-moving fellow whose avowed hobby is restoring old automobiles.

I would ask the reader to imagine a cluster of shabby buildings located on a large, semi-rural lot in a neighbourhood where no one worries about property values. Spread around the grounds would be a number of rusting vehicles, some of them clearly having been cannibalized for parts, others under protective tarpaulins with the fallen leaves of several winters stuck to the fabric, and everywhere motor parts and body sections half-hidden in the foot-high grass. A careful look would reveal that many of the vehicles are of the same make or model, albeit of different vintages, a fact from which one could perhaps deduce a thematic connection of some sort.

Inside the building that serves as workshop would be an assortment of tools and gadgets and mechanical devices of every description lying about on the floor or on the countertops or hanging on the walls. Amid this where-the-hell-is-my-socket wrench-mess would likely be two or three vehicles in various stages of restoration, all representing several years of painstaking if somewhat desultory labour.

On one of the walls, beside a June 1958 calendar bearing a photograph of a statuesque and stunningly gorgeous nineteen-year-old girl in short-shorts and halter top (with one heartbreakingly long leg on the bumper of a gleaming blue MG soft-top convertible with the top down), one would find separate photographs of two vehicles, one a 1950 Mercury Monarch, the other a two-toned, blue and white, 1955 Ford Fairlane, with the hobbyist, hardly recognizable because he still has hair, standing proudly beside them on the day that they were, gloriously gleaming, finally street-ready.

The only misleading part of this analogy would be the 'gloriously gleaming, finally street-ready' phrase. Not one piece of my fiction from the period when I still had hair ever reached the stage of having wheels, much less a gloriously gleaming body. Everything else in the analogy works. From the badly-typed manuscripts dating back to a pre-computer period stashed in filing cabinets to the unfinished drafts and reworked pieces existing precariously in the digital dungeon of my computer's hard drive, to the novellas, short stories, and magazine pieces that never got published, everything I have written over the years could be viewed as beset with the rot and rust of neglect, and all destined for the junkyard.

But what disturbs me about my failure to create street-ready pieces of fiction is that each novella or short story I attempted was intended as a vehicle for transporting one or more of the characters who, like the children of Deucalion and Pyrrha, appeared as fully formed individuals in my imagination. What would bring about this *vir stabat* miracle of their existence was something I seldom fully understood, yet I knew that each character wanted only one thing of me: to create for him or her the shelter of a story. Over the years, my characters would become more real to me than loved ones or members of my family. And as I have failed to tell their stories, they burden my spirit now that I have passed my seventieth birthday and know they will have no other life except the sketchy, shadowy one I afforded them in my imagination.

The outward evidence of their brief existence, namely, the manuscripts in the filing cabinets, the delete-able digital data in which their half-written stories are encoded, will all end up in the

landfill or in the fireplace. I hear them calling to me to keep them alive, to find a place for them where they can continue to exist when I am dead.

Unable to bear their cries, I am proposing now to line them up, all clutching their identity papers and shabby belongings, to load them onto the vehicle this essay represents, and to ship them off somewhere. My hope is that they will be adopted and given homes in the works of other writers more industrious than I was. By way of recommendations, I can say that I know all my characters – every one of ‘my people,’ as I call them – well enough to assure any writer who wants to take one in, that they are all modest, self-effacing individuals who will accept humble roles in any story. Not one of them is an egotist, and all are malleable and willing to assume any role to which they are assigned. Moreover, they’re not fussy about the genre in which they might find themselves.

Consequently, if you are a writer in search of an unemployed character, I would be delighted should you choose one of mine. All I ask is that you do not mistreat or otherwise abuse him or her. What follows is a list of who they are and a brief résumé of the lives I had intended for them had I possessed the talent to write their stories.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

#### Deirdre

First in line would be Deirdre, whose grey eyes had the translucent quality of marble extracted from the quarries at Pentellos in ancient Greece. Deep-sunk and contrasting sharply with her dark skin, her eyes expressed a separateness, a deep sense of anomie, from the world in which she found herself. This drew me to her.

Deirdre came to me when I was twenty-two years old. I had not given much thought to becoming a writer until she appeared, silently requesting that I tell her story. I recognized that the story she wanted me to tell was, in a sense, my own. I gave her the name Deirdre because I knew its Irish origins and its association with sorrow and sadness. I also liked the name because it had belonged to a girl with whom I was in love for a short time when I was seventeen. This real-life Deirdre was not Irish, and there was nothing of sadness about her. She had green eyes, auburn hair, and the warm, olive-toned skin of her Mediterranean ancestors. She was the daughter of a diplomat or a business executive posted in Jamaica, my childhood home, and she was as happy and as cheerful as any young woman could be who had had an excellent education, had lived in several countries during her girlhood, and who had always had dozens of young men in love with her.

My fictional Deirdre was a young girl from Jamaica who had immigrated to Canada with her parents in the 1950s. Her family belonged to the large Portuguese-Jewish community that had resided in Jamaica for over two hundred years and to which my family also belonged. In Canada, as a dark-skinned young woman, Deirdre found herself contending with prejudices directed against her – prejudices that she and her ancestors had practiced in Jamaica. Her struggle to come to terms with the conflicts within herself was to have been the subject of my novel. That I never got very far with its writing still bothers me. But at twenty-two, I was a dreamer, not a writer, and Deirdre lived only in my imagination.

Thus I say to a writer in search of a character for a story about love and loss and the demoralizing nature of racial prejudice, take my Deirdre, please. And if you find it within your powers, deliver unto her a measure of happiness.



## Dell-Dell

Dennis 'Dell-Dell' Greene came to me – and in a sense, to my rescue – some time in 1974, after I had gotten my degree at the University of Victoria and had gone back to work at the Hudson's Bay Company. I was thirty-five years old, married, and the father of two children under the age of six, and burdened with a student loan that threatened to prevent me from ever owning a home. Nevertheless, I was planning to purchase one, having outgrown the small, four-room house whose low rent had enabled me to go to university in the first place. With few other career options available to me, I was thankful that the Hudson's Bay had taken me back, and moreover, had given me a position that would enable me to handle both a mortgage and repayment of my student loan.

The only drawback to this job was having to work under a department manager almost everyone hated. And they had reason. His management style consisted of keeping everyone on edge – except those who would agree to spy on the others for him. On joining the department, I too was asked to 'keep an eye' on certain other employees and to let him know 'what they were up to.' I did not respond to this invitation, which no doubt told him that I would do no such thing. This also told me that I should keep an eye on him because he would be a pain in the butt.

He proved to be more than just a pain, and I found myself under a lot of stress working for him. One afternoon, he tackled me about some minor matter or other, heaping abuse upon me and charging me with all manner of offenses. He did so in a stockroom away from the sales floor and possibly out of earshot of anyone else who might have been working in the same area of the store. His tirade induced in me as deep and murderous a rage as I have ever experienced. How I managed to control the urge to bash his head open with a hammer that was readily to hand I do not know, but the incident left me so shaken that my heart went into a state of fibrillation that lasted the rest of the afternoon.

Having decided after I got married that I would never take home the frustrations and petty annoyances that occurred at work, I managed to conceal the rage still churning within me, and passed the evening with my family in my usual manner. But retiring for bed brought a sleepless night in which a thousand murderous fantasies competed with each other for brutality, swiftness of execution, or long-drawn-out infliction of pain. And crucial to each fantasy was trying to imagine how I would escape punishment when the deed was done. I was not egotistical enough to believe that I could outsmart a team of criminal investigators. I lay awake late into the night trying to imagine a fortuitous set of circumstances that would enable me to commit an unplanned murder leaving nothing to connect me to it. A chance encounter with the bastard, perhaps in the forest or a dark alley somewhere, was the only scenario I could come up with. And this was when Dell-Dell came to me.

I was drifting in and out of sleep when in my mind's eye I saw a young black man sitting on a threadbare sofa in a shabby apartment, his arm around the shoulder of a young Caucasian woman, both watching in the darkened room a small black and white television. On the screen, being shown over and over, was the clip of Jack Ruby shooting Lee Harvey Oswald, an event that had occurred earlier that day. I saw the young man suddenly begin crying and the young woman consoling him, she doing so in the belief that the murder of President Kennedy had upset him. But I knew he was not weeping for Kennedy. No, it was Oswald's fate that had touched him – the stupid and meaningless death of a lost and confused and possibly deranged young man. He was crying because he too was a lost, confused, and deranged young man. And, like Lee Harvey Oswald, he had recently committed a murder. I did not know whom he had

killed or how he had committed the crime, but I knew, as the scene, dream-like, swam into view, that it was a senseless, un-premeditated act, and the likelihood was that he would be caught. I knew also that he was a native of Jamaica.

This dream or whatever it was doused the rage that was burning in me, and although I lay awake for a couple more hours thinking about the young man and his predicament – with memories of Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* going through my mind – I fell asleep with the comforting thought that I now possessed the makings of great work of fiction. My hero would get away with his crime, would marry the girl, raise a family, have a rewarding career, and earn the respect of everyone around him. And this would all happen, as if by magic. Indeed, Dell-Dell would come to believe that magic played a part in his life. Moreover, I realized then where this story had come from. Disturbed by the incident earlier in the day, I had returned to my childhood seeking solace and had found it in that which I had rejected when still quite young: superstition and magic.

The next day, comfortable in the fantasy that I would write a novel about Dell-Dell, and thinking about his life instead of my own, I returned to work as if nothing had happened. In time I found it easier to work for this supervisor because in my heart I had already killed the son-of-a-bitch and gotten away with it. I even learned to laugh at the incident, and later on would entertain fellow employees by relating the dozens of cruel and bizarre ways in which I had dreamed of murdering the fellow. Meanwhile, Dell-Dell and his magical story developed and grew in my mind.

A couple of years later, I began writing the novel – or, more correctly, making notes for writing it – by scribbling down a number of literary allusions and references that I would use in it. Thus I chose as my hero's surname, Greene, doing so because I intended to give to the story what I considered a Graham Greene-like tone or texture, plus it would be filled with moral ambiguities. And for a bit of private amusement, I had my hero ultimately rise to become a senior partner in a law firm named, needless to say, Graham, Greene, & Company. The tale would begin with my hero, now in his middle fifties, suddenly remembering the murder and the magical circumstances that saved him from a life in an institution for the criminally insane.

Please take my Dell-Dell. All I ask is that he remain a young man of who grew up in Jamaica and who momentarily lost his way in Canada. And let his survival be somehow magical.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

*A note from the writer to the reader: The above represents the initial portion of a planned work wherein I intend to offer a busload of delightful characters, all eager to do your bidding. Just don't hold your breath while you await their arrival.*

## Contributors

Anthony Rintala

Anthony Rintala, nerd, recently returned from a three-decade tour of the American South and is currently hiding out in southern Indiana, where he teaches, grooms his beard, and waits for the signal. He will know the signal. His work has most recently been published in *New Plains Review*, *Kudzu Magazine*, *Muse: A Quarterly Journal*, *Ishaan Literary Review*, *Oklahoma Review*, *Copperfield Review*, *A Few Lines Magazine*, *Mad Hatter's Review*, *Foundling Review*, *Muddy River*, *Penwood Review*, *St. Ann's Review*, and *Sakura Review*.

Contributions:

The Tree -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Autumn Richardson

Autumn Richardson is from northwestern Ontario. Her writing draws upon landscape, ritual, and memory. She lives in Cumbria, England, and is the co-founder of Corbel Stone Press, publishing texts, music, and art informed by landscape, folklore, ecology, history, and animism. Recent publications can be found in *Contemporary Verse 2*, *Room*, *Carte Blanche*, *Reliquiae*, and *Earthlines Magazine*.

Contributions:

Aperture -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Dan Murphy

Dan Murphy is a retired educator and an author who splits his time between Tilting, Fogo Island, and Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador. He has co-authored eleven books that include environmental science textbooks and canoe and sea kayak paddling guides. Dan is completing his third volume of poetry and is in the process of seeking publishers. His poetry has appeared in *Quills: Canadian Poetry Magazine*, *Rabbit Tales*, *Paragon IV & V*, *Red River Journal*, *The Tilting Expatriate*, and *The Scaldy Detail Anthology* (Scallta Media, Wexford Ireland), and recently an anthology of his work was published in *Humber Mouths 2* released during the 2010 April Rabbit. In 2011 he received a Newfoundland and Labrador Arts and Letters award for poetry.

Contributions:

Liturgy -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Darrell Dela Cruz

I graduated from San Jose State's MFA Program for Poetry. My work has appeared in *The Round*, *Two-Thirds North*, *Foliage Oak Review*, and *Sheepshead Review*, and will

appear forthcoming in CAIRN, Euphony, The Chaffin Journal, and The Dos *Passos Review*. I try to analyze a poem a day on my blog or, rather, I acknowledge my misinterpretations of poems. Website: [retailmfa.blogspot.com](http://retailmfa.blogspot.com)

Contributions:

Kundiman -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

David Houston

David Houston is an MFA student at the University of Saskatchewan currently working on a non-fiction thesis. Previous work has been published online and in an anthology, *The House at Black Moss* (Clitheroe Books Press). He was winner of the Wasafiri New Writers prize in 2012.

Contributions:

Homeward -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Desmond Lindo

Now approaching his 75th birthday, Desmond Lindo has taken to passing himself off as an Author, Playwright, and Raconteur. He was born in Jamaica and somehow managed to sneak into Canada in 1957. Possessed of a modesty commensurate to his talents, he has managed to avoid notice on the Canadian literary scene. He has written or begun works in several genres, with publication coming his way only through the short pieces of humour he gave away or sold for a pittance. The damn fool once aspired to win the Stephen Leacock Memorial Award for Humour but has abandoned that quest for reasons you are advised not to ask him about.

Contributions:

My People Shall Be Thy People -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

gillian harding-russell

harding-russell's poems have most recently come out in the anthologies *That Not Forgotten* (Hiddenbrook, 2012), *Poet to Poet* (Guernica, 2013), *Grandfather, Father and Me* (Hiddenbrook), and *Inspired Heart 2* (Hiddenbrook, 2013), are forthcoming in *I Found it at the Movies* (Guernica, 2014) and the *Nashwaak Review*. Her poem sequence "Where the days and nights are equal length" was long-listed for the Gwendolyn MacEwen award (2013), and "Desert duets" was short-listed for best poem in association with that same award. Also, the poem sequence "Enhanced Woods" won second place in the Gritlit 2014 awards.

Contributions:

Learning to see in the dark -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Jack Hostrawser

Jack Hostrawser is an award-winning young writer completing concurrent Bachelor of Arts degrees in English and Creative Writing at York University. His fiction and poetry have been published in *Steel Bananas*, *Existère Journal*, *The Quilliad*, and others, and his work has been lauded by the York writing faculty. He is currently reading the October 1965 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post*.

Contributions:

Infiltration -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

James B. Nicola

James B. Nicola, winner of three poetry awards and recipient of one Rhysling and two Pushcart nominations, has published 400 poems in *Atlanta Review*, *Tar River*, *Texas Review*, etc. A Yale grad and stage director by profession, his book *Playing the Audience* won a Choice Award. A first full-length collection, *Manhattan Plaza*, is scheduled for release in 2014.

Contributions:

Context and Perspective -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Karen Kachra

Karen Kachra is a published and award-winning author and scholar. Most recently her poetry has appeared in *Geist* and *FreeFall Magazine* and her short fiction in *Prick of the Spindle*. She teaches literature courses at Seneca College, where she is also the Program Coordinator for the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies. She nourishes her spirit by hiking in the woods with her two children. Website: [www.karenkachra.com](http://www.karenkachra.com)

Contributions:

Coyotes and River Nymphs -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Kenneth Pobo

Kenneth Pobo has a new chapbook out from Eastern Point Press called *Placemats*. His work has appeared in *Grain*, *Windsor Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Nimrod*, *Dalhousie Review*, and elsewhere.

Contributions:

Wandawoowo Learns to Skate -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Lorelie Gerwing Sarauer

Lorelie Gerwing Sarauer is a writer and artist living in Saskatoon, SK. She's attracted to narrative, which she expresses through her drawings and paintings, as well as her

writing. She's currently enrolled in the new Master's of Fine Arts in Writing program at the University of Saskatchewan and hopes to graduate in the fall of 2013.

Contributions:

Mindful -- Issue Number 6, June 2013

Mindful -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Louise Carson

Louise Carson's work has most recently appeared in *The Literary Review of Canada*, *Descant*, *The Puritan*, *The Antigonish Review*, and *The Best Canadian Poetry in English, 2013*. Her books *Rope* (2011) and *Mermaid Road* (2013) are published by Broken Rules Press. Louise lives near Montreal.

Contributions:

One way or the other -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Matthew Walsh

Matthew Walsh is currently studying Creative Writing in UBC'S MFA program. His work has been or will be featured in *The Found Poetry Review*, *Carousel*, *Descant*, *Existere*, and *Carte Blanche*, and as part of the Halifax Commons Poetry Anthology. His long poem "Cloud Grape" won the York University President's Prize for poetry. He is currently a member of *Prism* magazine's editorial board.

Contributions:

Coelacanth -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Meghan Rose Allen

Meghan Rose Allen has a PhD in Mathematics from Dalhousie University. She currently lives, works, and writes in New Brunswick. Website: [www.reluctantm.com](http://www.reluctantm.com)

Contributions:

Ana's Cupcakes -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Richard Kelly Kemick

Richard Kelly Kemick is originally from Calgary, Alberta. A graduate of the University of British Columbia, he is currently studying at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton. Richard has been published or has work forthcoming in *The Feathertale Review*, *The Fiddlehead*, *Foothill Poetry*, *Prairie Fire*, *Prairie Journal*, *QWERTY*, and *Vallum*. He also won first place in *Grain's* 2013 Short Grain poetry contest.

Contributions:

The 12 Aspects of Tragedy in Wolves Hunting -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Sandra Allan

Sandra Allan is a retired educator and researcher who lives and writes in Regina, Saskatchewan. She belongs to the Saskatchewan Writers' Guild and participates in classes and other activities at the Lifelong Learning Centre, Centre for Continuing Education, University of Regina. She also volunteers as a tutor of English as an additional language through the Regina Public Library.

Contributions:

Territory -- Issue Number 7, June 2014

---

Steve Klepetar

Steve Klepetar's work has appeared widely and has received several nominations for the Puschcart Prize and Best of the Net. His latest collections are *Speaking to the Field Mice* (Sweatshoppe Publications) and *Blue Season* (with Joseph Lisowski, mgv2>publishing).

Contributions:

Waiting -- Issue Number 7, June 2014