

WHEN WE ARE BONES AND
 EVERYTHING ELSE HAS FLED AND
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AWAY

By Charles Pinch

Guest Editor BARBARA YOSHIDA writes... *An amazing, ambitious story by a very gifted writer! He gives no context—no landscape or urban environment, no weather, no time of day. There's only dialogue. But dialogue is enough to establish character, story, and much more. It pulled me in and carried me along so skillfully. Like overhearing some juicy bit of gossip, I couldn't turn away. At first, I thought I was an observer, listening in on a conversation from a (safe) distance. But I found myself siding with one person, then another; being annoyed with one person, then another. And in the end, I felt complicit in what happened. I wasn't just an observer, I was part of the story. And the story lingers, long after reading it—disturbing—haunting.*

Five Stars

Guest Editor TOM SMITH writes... *I just love 'WHEN WE ARE BONES AND EVERYTHING ELSE HAS FLED AND FALLEN AWAY.' It gave me those ASMR tingles as it unraveled.*

Aside from its picturesque economy of prose, pervading humor and metafictional leanings and bending, I love the subtext exposing a spectrum of aspiring writers. It appears to begin as a ghostly, preternatural treatise on criticism in contrast to opinion and magnificently devolves into a ghastly profound statement on basking in the deepest, darkest frayed-edges of human nature.

Cynic, I am: Seeing some who offer praise and support as an anticipated investment in reciprocity and shared admiration; others who embrace Mary's work as a platform to share their own relatable, tragic experiences; and, still others who appear egocentrically dismissive in keeping with their own subjective, self-aggrandizing standards of excellence.

But what seems exceptional to me in the extreme is the accelerating descent of the comments as the participants, for the most part, are reduced to a clucking, cackling brood of blood-lusting chickens taking turns pecking each other to death.

Admittedly, this sort of bullying gives farm fowl a bad name.

BRAVO!!!

Five Stars

WHY I LIKE IT: Fiction Editor JOEY CRUSE writes... *I start with all of Charles' stories with a disclaimer: I am the fiction editor and he is one of the heads of FOTD. We aren't related, and it's a weird form of nepotism, but, in that sense, I like to make it perfectly clear that there is a damn good reason why his stories are published and why I am writing about why you should read this story.*

They're fucking solid.

I know the effort that it takes to write a decent story. The effort that it takes to send that story out and be rejected again and again and again. The elation that comes when you get that letter/email that says, "hey, we liked this."

I can't even begin to imagine the amount of effort it takes to create a magazine. Can you imagine reading through the slough of grass trying to find the roots that hold the soil? There is an insurmountable amount of ego, an impossible amount of explanation as to why or why not, the delicate balance of feelings and tiptoeing through the rhetoric of what you suggest versus what you get, the hours, the emails, the ignored emails (from me), the fun, the frustration, the toil, the check to see if you got the right document and when you didn't get the other document, the arrangement, the teamwork, the trust you need to have in someone else to not ball you over, keeping up a good face, the fact that you do all of this while trying to write your own work, finding the right people to create pages, finding the right people who can make shit look cool, finding the right people, finding new friends, loving and accepting those who write in second languages and whose stories blow you the fuck away, accepting talent that you may not even understand yourself but know that there is greatness within, being open to the modes of language and the way in which they're communicated, making moves and opening avenues from at least four continents and being willing to hear from the other three, letting someone know

when they've been accepted when others have not been out of however many, reminding people that they're people and simply understanding, fuck, simply just dealing with me...

"When We are Bones and Everything Else has Fled and Fallen Away," by Charles Pinch hones this emotional activity down to the marrow.

You know what you get when you put a bunch of monkeys a room with a typewriter?

A bunch of dead monkeys.

Pinch has taken the experience of creating a magazine that I am incredibly proud of and turned into a quick-witted, self-referential, profoundly present concept that I am happily willing to tell you to read.

If you have ever been in a writing workshop you will understand the vindictiveness and insecurity that is rife throughout the dialogue, if you have ever even checked the comment section of any internet article you will see how vile and self-aggrandizing any asshole can be on the Internet, if you have ever worked with a group of people who are trying to make you succeed and at the same time are trying to be better than you, then you will hear the depth and ripple of the rock thrown in this lake.

I will be the first to tell you that Pinch writes like a Russian lost in a Canadian snow.

I will also be the first to tell you that he gives me enough rope to hang myself with.

I am certainly going to be the first to say that this piece is a work of fiction that could be put on a stage and should be read aloud to any and all that are willing to listen. And I am definitely not the first to say that this is a story that should be read.

But you should. You'd be an asshole not to.

I'll leave you with the ultimate thought that we all think of critics and "partners" because we all know that we can do better and that their work is merely an excuse to not produce themselves – even though I try...

"and you have the nerve to criticize others..."

What a lovely journey, a sad and joyous journey.

Five Stars

QUALITY QUOTABLE (for the love of language...)

"Robert...?"

WHEN WE ARE BONES AND EVERYTHING ELSE HAS FLED AND FALLEN AWAY

By Charles Pinch

For Frances and Viveca

Originally published by *'The Furious Gazelle' (USA), Vol 7 (print)*

Sofia: Great story, Mary!

Reese: I just read your story, *Next Stop, Jesus*, Mary, and have to say I was really moved. You really captured the pain of a mother watching her son die of cancer. Well done!

Wilson: A wonderful debut here on Story Line, Mary. Greatly impressed. Keep writing!

Aynesley: This truly heart-rending tale affected me deeply. My grandmother ('Gran') died of cancer a year ago and I relived the sadness and loss I felt when I read this. Hard to believe it was fiction. Kudos!

Shamir: What beautiful writing. One of those tales that lingers in the mind. It will be with me for days.

Tyra: This is such a powerful story, Mary. *'Ella, the dying cancer victim's loving Mom, felt a freight train headache dieseling full speed ahead through her head.'* Awesome!

Mary: Thank you, Story Line for posting such a telling story. Cancer is too often a reality in many of our lives. How many of us here have not lost at least one family member (I'm including cousins) to it? A story that heals the heart. (We have the same name! xox Mary)

Susan: My father is a cancer survivor, Mary (the author). When he (and I!) read your story it brought tears to our eyes. Little Stevie was such a hero! Bless him.

Li: Very good writing. And moving too. Congratulations.

McDuff: What a wonderful story. Thanks so much for posting it!

Haruko: That all mothers could be like Ella. What a tribute to motherhood. I felt her pain!!!!!!

John: Lovely, just lovely.

Madison: I cried real tears when I read this, Mary. I know it's fiction but it's so *real*. Wow. I'm envious. Do you suppose you could spare a cupful of talent?

Bucky: That 'freight train' going through her head rings a bell.

Robert: Let's get back to earth here, people. Yes, cancer is terrible. Who would disagree with that? But could we maybe turn our attention to the writing—or lack thereof—in this story? The ending was predictable from the first word. (What? You mean the kid's gonna die?). The characters, for the most part—well, for the *whole* part—were stereotypes and good dialogue, folks, is more than a transcription of actual speech. This is the difference—and it's vast, as vast as infinity—between wannabes telling stories and talented *writers* doing same. Think Alice Munro! Think Tobias Wolff!

Shamir: With each paragraph I found something to marvel at. The sentence where the smell of rubbing alcohol gives Ella 'a headache like a freight train' is very powerful. If I shut my eyes I could picture the hospital room. There was a lump in my throat when Father O'Callaghan prepared to give 'the bravest little fighter in the world' his last rites. Read it three times and still can't get enough!

Wilson: Think Munro. Think Wolff. Think Robert, maybe?

McDuff: Bucky. Me, too. '*Like a freight train runnin' through the center of my head...*' Springsteen. *I'm On Fire*.

Aynesley: Anyone who has ever experienced the loss of a loved one due to cancer would never post a comment like that.

Reese: Agreed!

Robert: Aynesley, wake up and smell the feces, dear. We're not talking about cancer, we're commenting on a work of fiction *about* cancer. This is the kind of lamentable writing that lowers the standards of a site like Story Line. Enough, I say!

Bucky: That's it. Thanks, laddie.

Wilson: And the stories you've posted here raise it?

Robert: Frankly, brashly, even arrogantly, YES!!! Read my *Sojourn*. (archives). Read my *One Man's Meat* posted two months ago and tell me I'm wrong.

Sofia: You're wrong!!!!

Robert: Have you read them? Really?

Nick: I agree with Robert. Maybe I'm missing something here but the story didn't work for me at all. I found it naïve, both emotionally and psychologically. The writing is flat, the characters are one-dimensional and the story line (oops!) is painfully predictable—we know little Stevie is going to die. It's also a sure bet that Ella will find spiritual comfort when she opens 'that bestseller sent down from Heaven'. And yes, yes, yes, goils and boils, good dialogue, as Robert pointed out, is NOT a transcription of actual speech. Read Elmore Leonard or Cormac McCarthy (*The Road*). You'll be embarrassed by your comments.

Sindra: Wonderful story, Mary!

Robert: Thank you, Nick. I needed that.

Sofia: Cormac McBARFY you mean.

Wilson: Hey guys, my last post was two days ago. So okay, in the meantime I read *One Man's Meat*. Well, I have to say it was a great read. Really hit me. I almost *hate* to say it cuz it'll stir up the ashes(?) fire(?) we got goin' here, but Robert is right. His work does raise the standard here. I loved Mary's story too, though.

Shamir: Shame on both of you, Robert and Nick. My mama always told me if you have nothing good to say about a person then say nothing. Advice you might heed?

Robert: Uh...it's an open forum, Shamir.

Olaf: Your mother said *that*?

Hippolyte: Been reading all these posts with amusement. I found Mary's story okay but I just finished reading *Sojourn*. Excellent, top quality story telling. That was truly powerful writing. I'm sure you hear that often, Robert. Keep writing for gosh sakes!

Robert: **Not** often enough, friend. Thanks.

Tyra: I read *Sojourn* like you said. Wow! I'm reeling. Sorry, Mary but this is waaaayyyy better writing. Anymore in the wings, Robert?

Reese: Cormac McCarthy? UNREADABLE!!! Mary, pay no attention to these nay-sayers. They don't have the right.

Nick: We live in a democracy, Reese. We *do* have the right.

Haruko: Mary (the author Mary) are you there? Please post a comment. We love you!

Robert: She's licking her wounds, poor little lamb.

McDuff: Mary had a little lamb....

Olaf: Whose fleece was white as coke.

Sofia: Wounds inflicted by you!

Robert: They shoot horses, don't they?

Bucky: And every time that Mary'd snort, the lamb would beg a toke.

Mary: (The other Mary) People need encouragement in the early stages of their writing careers. It doesn't hurt to bolster someone's self-esteem.

Robert: No it doesn't, sugar. But Mary (the other one)'s run out of steem (sic).

Nick: Robert, I read the two stories you posted (archives) and snarky comments aside, they are fine works indeed. Your ear is tuned to the magic of prose—'it's music and pure unexpectedness'—to quote our beloved Tobias Wolff. The main character in *Sojourn* was sympathetically portrayed without being sentimentalized—a challenge for any writer. But it was with *One Man's Meat* that you really won me over. This is a truly haunting sensitively rendered tale of a gay relationship where the possibilities have run out. I don't know if you're gay or not—doesn't matter. You just got inside this one. I am, and I mean it, impressed.

Olaf: Maybe because he's 'so good' Robert feels he has the right to put what he considers 'inferior' writers down.

Sue: Mary, it's cousin Sue-Ellen. Just read your story. Brought tears to my eyes! Remember Dylan!

Robert: Thank you, Nick. For the record I'm not gay but I do have gay friends. Tyra, I'm posting a new work on Story Line this coming Monday. It's called *Exactement*.

Olaf: I don't 'put' inferior writers down. I squash them. Like bugs!

Sofia: Who's Dylan? I didn't see him in the story?

Mary: Hi, everyone. It's Mary. Thank you all for your lovely comments.

John: '...I do have gay friends.' And a closet full of dildos, too!!!

Robert: 'Closet' being the key word here, John.

Sofia: Mary, who's Dylan?

Kenner: Lovely story!

Mary: Dylan is the 'world's bravest little fighter' who actually died of cancer. You see, he was my brother in real life. I changed the name like your supposed to.

Reese: I'm so sorry!

Aynesley: Deepest sympathy, Mary.

Robert: Then your story isn't fiction, Mary. Delete! Delete!

Olaf: Maybe we'll vote to delete your story come Monday.

McDuff: Duh...

Wilson: Okay, it's Monday and I just read *Exactement*. I liked your other two Robert but sorry, man, this one sucks. I guess every writer has a bad day.

Shamir: All Robert's days are bad.

Li: Didn't get it. Sorry.

Olaf: This one falls short. Like six feet under short.

Madison: Touché!

Haruko: How does it feel now, Robert?

John: Haruko, you're assuming he *has* feelings.

McDuff: What happened, Robert? This was a real disappointment. And I was so looking forward to it!

Olaf: Squash him like a bug.

Tyra: *Exactement*? Ugh!!!

John: What goes around comes around.

Susan: Robert, where are you?

Shamir: When the going gets tough...

Bucky: If you can't stand the heat, take your head out of the oven...Sylvia.

Reese: The tough go shopping! Ha! Ha!

Kenner: I loved *Sojourn* and was intrigued by *One Man's Meat*. Obviously a writer of great talent. So what happened? *Exactement* was a real let down. Maybe not wise to publish *everything* you write.

Seiji: Stupid story. Stupid plot. Stupid characters. Stupid dialogue. OBTW did I mention stupid?

McDuff: C'mon, Robert. '*Peek up dee zoap and I show you how mush I like you.*' Sure, it's a story about prison. Sure, one of the guys is Mexican, but c'mon. This works? Uh...no.

Axel: What happened? The other two stories you posted here were so good!

Olaf: He can't come to the forum right now. He's eating crow.

Sofia: May he choke on it!

Li: Ha! Ha!

Nick: Even good writers sometimes fall short of their mark. Hemingway wrote a few bad stories (*Fathers and Sons*) and not all Alice Munro's fiction is up to her usual Nobel standard. But that's allowed, folks. Nor does it take anything away from their great stories. The point is Robert's posts here, with the exception of *Exactement*—are first rate. Maybe a little compassion.

Reese: Maybe a little humility on Robert's part. He shouldn't knock Mary's story.

Nick: I knocked it too, Reese. It's nothing personal against Mary and I hope she keeps writing. But here's the thing. When Daniel Richler approached his famous dad, novelist Mordecai, and told him he wanted to follow in his footsteps, Mordecai put it to him this way: 'Do you want to be a writer or do you want to write?' If you don't know the difference you'll never make it. (And you might not even if you do.) As Robert reminded one of the posters, it's an open forum and everyone has the right to an opinion here. As for *Exactement*? No, I didn't think it was his best story. I didn't even think it was a good story. So it goes. But I'd still encourage him to keep writing and posting.

Mary (the other one): Opinion, yes. **Invective, no!**

Olaf: Robert's in a restaurant. Looks at the menu. Waitress comes over. "Sir?" "I'll have the humble pie!"

Bucky: Make that a double. With two scoops of **** on the side!

Kenner: Robert, are you there?

Madison: Hmmmm. All quiet on the Story Line front. Yoohoo? Oh, Robert...?

Li: Too embarrassed to show himself.

John: It's called egg on the face.

McDuff: No, John. It's called omelet on the face. Six eggs and counting.

Sofia: What a ghastly story. And he has the nerve to criticize others!

Haruko: Knock, knock. Anybody home? Robert...?

Reese: Suspiciously quiet.

Aynesly: How the mighty are fallen!

Olaf: Good riddance to him!

Nick: Now, people.

McDuff: '*Peek up dee zoap!!!!*' Ha! Ha!

Robert:...I don't know what to say. I'm really embarrassed about everything and maybe this is my well-deserved comeuppance. Mary, I apologize for my unkind comments. If you felt anything like I feel after reading them, I am sorry sorry sorry. Even when I wrote my so-called 'good' stories I doubted—well, privately, doubted my ability as a writer. It's something that always eats away at me. And you know what? I'm not so sure I am a writer. Though it's what I want to be more than anything in the world. I deserve what you're giving me. I'm going to ask the moderator to delete *Exactement* because I agree after reading it. It sucks. Please forgive.

Olaf: Sucks big time.

Wilson: Suck being the key word here. Remember *One Man's Meat*.

Tyra: *Exactement* wasn't Robert's best story but it wasn't *that* bad. I still say he's a writer of talent.

Haruko: I agree. Not his best but hey, who's their best ALL the time? Robert, don't delete it. It's still better than some of the other stories here (authors' names withheld to protect the untalented).

McDuff: Keep writing, Robert. We all have bad days once in a while.

Robert: Guys, I will tell you. It is too late for me. The stories I write—or try to—come from somewhere inside I can't seem to contact anymore. Maybe that's why *Exactement* isn't up to snuff. I know this isn't a psychology forum or 'true confessions' but I feel I am unraveling at the seams, slowly disintegrating. My frustration and anger at myself expresses itself as cynicism toward others. I rage and I rage. But it is myself I am losing here. I am so scared, so scared, guys, and I don't know why. I hear things sometimes that other people don't. I'm frightened to fall asleep at night. You might think I'm the gregarious sort but I don't have any friends right now, and my only contact is you guys, the forum. I hadn't slept for a few nights when I wrote *Exactement* and I will tell you writing it was a struggle. I am so lost...so disconnected from myself, from everything. Oh, boy. Listen to me. I displace my aggression and throw it out at innocent people like Mary who have done me no wrong. Like Joe last month and his story *Persnickety*. Like my neighbors in the apartment building I live in. Like *everybody*. Why? I ask you why? I actually thought *Exactement* was my best story. That's how far gone I am now. But re-reading it here, all your comments are justified. I apologize for posting it. It is terrible. It is vile. I am vile. Vile vile vile man

Nick: Robert, I admire your honesty. Don't despair. Please, if you feel down like you do, seek help.

Susan: I read *Exactement* and don't know what all the fuss is about. Great story.

Haruko: I read it too. I didn't think it was so bad.

McDuff: Robert, my heart goes out to you, man. As Nick says, don't despair. You have bared your soul—both in your writing and your posts—which is more than some here. We're with you, dude.

Mary: (The other one). You're not alone.

Seiji: Hang in there!

Brock: *Sojourn, One Man's Meat, Exactement. YES!!!!*

John: You are not vile.

Bucky: I love the '*peek up dee zoap*' part. Very funny!

Wilson: Far from doubting yourself as a writer, I think you are—or have the makings—of a great writer. Most of the lofty icons of literature suffered at times—sometimes often—from corrosive self-doubt. Faulkner, Hemingway, Capote, Kerouac. You're in good company, Robert. Stay true!

Robert: adoubntio pixwqurtiophfg gasadfrmi gu lkjgctio.

Nick: You okay?

Mary: Thank you again, everyone.

Madison: Hey fellow commentators. It's now Friday and Robert hasn't posted since last Thursday. Should we be concerned?

Shamir: Exactement.

Sofia: This is a dreadful thing to say but do you think it's possible he's having a joke with us? Pretending to fall apart, admit his shame and make us believe he's contrite? I don't know but I don't trust this guy.

Reese: Exactement, Sophie.

McDuff: You're right. That is a dreadful thing to say.

Madison: Just read *Exactement*, again. Loved it!

Nick: Seven days now. Robert? You there...?

John: Do not go gently into this good night.

Olaf: What the **** did his last post mean? Is he writing in code, now?

Olaf: Okay. I figured it out. Schizo-script!

Wilson: Robert is a true artist.

Olaf: You mean con artist.

Tyra: I think he's having one over on us.

Li: He's laughing his head off.

Aynsely: He's laughing but he's not posting. Robert, say something. Say something nasty. We miss you!

Bucky: We?

Shamir: After reading Mary's story for **the nth time** I have to agree with our resident grinch. The quality just isn't there. It sounds amateurish.

Nick: Robert, are you there? Please post.

Seiji: To quote the ever-quotable Robert—wake up and smell the feces, guys! He's conning us.

McDuff: He sounded depressed.

Susan: Depressed? He sounded suicidal.

Sophia: I'd be depressed too if I were him.

Haruko: Yes, please post something. Let us know you're still out there.

Nick: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. That's ten days now.

John: Does anyone know where he lives?

Olaf: Sleepy Hollow.

Madison: You guys are awful.

Reese: Nick, are you there? Do you think he was serious? I'm worried. I hope he hasn't...killed himself.

Wilson: I agree with Maddy. You—not all but a *FEW* of you—have unfortunately polluted these waters. Maybe even more than Robert (in the past). I'm outta here. Been nice knowin' y'all.

Olaf: Don't go away mad, Willy. Just...go away.

Li: I killed myself last year and I survived.

John: The walking dead. The walking dead.

Nick: Robert?

Mary: I *hope* he hasn't killed himself. Olaf, I hold YOU responsible.

Susan: Do you suppose he's okay?

Seiji: Do not ask for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee.

Olaf: What? I'm responsible if he takes his own life?

Nick: Robert? Are you there?

Sofia: It tolls for tea.

Olaf: Hey, Robert. So you didn't like some of our comments (mine especially, no doubt). I'm sure all the other people you eviscerated here—Mary, being the latest, (and then there's Joe, Simon, Tibor and Alyssa) didn't like yours. But is that a reason to kill yourself? Chalk it up to experience, man. Life goes on.

John: And on and on and on....

Reese: Experience is the name we give to our mistakes.

Tyra: You're a mistake, Reese. Is your name 'experience'?

Nick: Guys, I think we should stay focused here. I don't like the fact Robert isn't responding.

Olaf: **Yeah**, we got that, Nick.

McDuff: Oscar Wilde.

Aynsley: What?

McDuff: Oscar Wilde said experience is the name we give our mistakes.

Nick: Does anyone here have Robert's cell number? Anything other than email?

Li: That's wild, Duffster.

Sofia: And the Oscar goes to....

Nick: I think you people...well, I think you're all pretty insensitive. This is a serious situation and I would hope, in the spirit of sharing, which is the whole point of this forum, we could maybe come together on this and try and help this guy. I am really, really worried for him.

Olaf: Aw...

Li: Best performance by an actor...

Susan: You guys are horrible!

Bucky: Hey Olaf. Look in the mirror and tell me what happens first. You scream or it cracks.

McDuff: Robert? Are you there?

Olaf: You curl my sphincter, Buck.

Susan: Horrible!!!!

Olaf: Oh, you got that, did you?

Nick: Robert...?

Seiji: Robertrobertrobert????

MacDuff: Hey, Robert!

Haruko: Robert, say something!

Li: Hello in there?

Olaf: Bette Midler. *The Divine Miss M.*

Nick: Robert?

Shamir: Hey,Robert?

John:...Robert?

Susan: ...*Robert*...?

AUTHOR'S NOTE: I've never attended writing workshops or enrolled in CW programs that guarantee the successful candidate at the very least a diploma, if not fame and fortune. My natural contrariness kept me away from such duplicitous opportunities (?). I learned to write by reading the great writers and taking note of their styles. It took practice and persistence and what came out of the experience was the realization of my own unique *modus operandi*. I've talked about that in previous Author's Notes, so I will spare you my repeating it. But I have had a couple of friends who went the classroom route and have the scars to prove it. It was one such related incident that 'inspired' this story. I had originally thought of titling it 'Wave' (as in the back and forth flow of opinion and invective as an illustration of group behaviour) but *il mio amichetto* Nicky North suggested the present title. I liked it because it better conveyed what happens when the gloves come off. The narrative proved to be one of my quickest—I wrote it in about 20 minutes give or take. Writing dialogue appeals to me and in this case, there was the added challenge of many voices. I'd like to thank Barbara and Tracey for the taking the time to critique this story and to our irreplaceable Fiction Editor Joey for his routinely brilliant analysis, something he brings to every story we publish.

GUEST EDITOR BARBARA YOSHIDA'S BIO: Barbara Yoshida is an American writer and visual artist, living in SoHo, NYC. She began writing theatrical plays in 2019, starting with Language Games, and adding Intuitive Leap and Animal Magnetism to create The Hare Trilogy. The Language Games and Intuitive Leap playscripts have both been published by FOTD. In 2020, NYC site-specific performance company, Peculiar Works Project, produced a 17-minute film version of Language Games, which was presented in NYC's Rogue Theater Festival and which has since premiered in several short film festivals, receiving awards for Best Women's Empowerment, Best Experimental, and Best Arthouse Film. Yoshida's playwriting followed two decades of assisting Peculiar Works Project with dramaturgical support on projects such as Planet X (Black Mountain College's [Re]Happening Festival), 2 Jane Jacobs (Cherry Lane Theater), Son of Cock-Strong (La MaMa), and Afterparty: The Rothko Studio (site-specifically throughout 222 Bowery). Other writing includes her monograph, published in 2014: www.moonviewingmegalithsbymoonlight.com

GUEST EDITOR TOM SMITH'S BIO: Tom Smith is an underground poet and manic-mime performer in Toronto. He founded the lit rag *SCAT!!* which ran 2 issues.

AUTHOR BIO: Charles Pinch co-founded FOTD with Tom Ball in December 2019. He has degrees in Fine Arts and Philosophy from McMaster University and the University of Toronto. He is a senior editor on the site. He speaks English and Italian and is learning Arabic.