

# 3 Prose Poems

By

*Howie Good*

**WHY I LIKE IT:** *Poetry Editor HEZEKIAH writes... Howie Good reads with all the splendour of burning incense and smoking grass. Perhaps not scarcely a seasoned taste, well-dried and freshly lit. At long last he's finally legal, dispensed in bulk and pre-rolled cones. Thank god for child-proof packaging, let them get their own. He's a sheer delight, "A delegation of / angels in a tree outside the synagogue hooted in derision and then rose into the sky and flapped / away, leaving mysterious future gaps in the fossil record." . . . "My wife has a / long, thin, smile-shaped scar just above her pubis from a Caesarean. Oh, I think, how beautifully / torn." . . . "The medical assistant asked in a flat, toneless bureaucratic voice how I would describe the pain. / Stabbing? Aching? Sharp? Dull?" If you ever need to go head shopping, Howie's "tongue is all muscle." Who's up for a trip to Canabaskin-Robbins?(Spacing is poet's own.)*

## Unsolved Mysteries #2

The unbalanced hostage-taker suddenly meekly surrendered to his hostages. In that instant, I became convinced of the essential stupidity of strictly adhering to any single plan. A delegation of angels in a tree outside the synagogue hooted in derision and then rose into the sky and flapped away, leaving mysterious future gaps in the fossil record. And don't think I didn't know that with my droopy face and drab old clothes I looked like an unassimilable immigrant from a strange country – someplace dark and rainy and governed by contradiction, where there are no clues or, rather, only false ones.

## **Mariner's Harbor**

The gray seagulls at the water's edge watch me with black beady eyes in which I seem to detect glints of sardonic amusement. In the surviving fragment of his book *On Analogy*, Julius Caesar tells us to "Avoid strange and unfamiliar words as a sailor avoids rocks at sea." My wife has a long, thin, smile-shaped scar just above her pubis from a Caesarean. Oh, I think, how beautifully torn.

## **A Theory of Justice**

The medical assistant asked in a flat, toneless bureaucratic voice how I would describe the pain. Stabbing? Aching? Sharp? Dull? She entered my answer on the form, but without showing any actual interest. A philosopher once said – or should have – that a society is only as just as its treatment of its most vulnerable members: the old, the sick, the poor, the institutionalized. Using a dropper, I strategically place .50 milliliters of Triple M tincture under my tongue. I wait fifteen, twenty minutes, and then gray-clad troops burst from the treeline with a rebel yell. The tongue is all muscle.

**THE POETS SPEAKS:** *Prose poetry is seen in many literary venues as a poor excuse for poetry. This makes it more, not less, attractive to someone with my distrust of hierarchies. Prose poetry occupies a liminal space between prose and poetry, which means it is unbound by prescriptive definitions of either. Consequently, every prose poem is an experiment, a kind of dare, a challenge to see new things or see old things in new ways.*

**AUTHOR BIO:** Howie Good is the author of *Failed Haiku*, a poetry collection that is the co-winner of the 2021 Grey Book Press Chapbook Contest and scheduled for publication in summer 2022. His story **4 x 100** was first published in **Issue 2**.