

WELCOME ISSUE 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

'Love words, agonize over sentences. And pay attention to the world.' Susan
Sontag

I gotta be meme. Nick North

Welcome to Fleas on the Dog! We're a no frills brown bag online lit rag with only one focus: GOOD WRITING. Our style is 'HOTS!'—hands off the submissions! We publish every submission exactly as received, so there might be arbitrary spacing, pagination and files containing more than one font. What you won't find are pretty pictures and fancy layouts. We like this 'broadsheet' deconstructionist approach—the printed page as its own aesthetic—inspired by the 'Beat' presses and journals because it visually footprints the individual in a way a uniform format does not. We hope you like it too. (In some cases with poetry, Hezekiah's intro will be found at the bottom, not the top of the page.)

The artistic voices, those of heart, mind and spirit, must never capitulate in the face of tyranny. Art is the instrument of conscience, the fellow of truth. Out of the mouth of the beast rises Sappho's song. Opening the spaces of mind, nourishing the body of compassion, only happen when we write about what matters and what *needs* to be written. To do this literature (and that includes CNF) must have the power to offend. If the dissenting voice is silenced the sediment in the bottle is artifice, materialism minus the atom, spirit minus the ghost. It is up to us to eschew the damnations of political correctness and its idiotic spin off, cultural appropriation. The right to question, the right to disagree, the right to risk is our call to arms. And for those of our fellow writers who can no longer protest without personal consequence—the torch has been passed: we must do it for them! This is what writing is all about. What real writing is all about. Writing is hard. Good writing is even harder.

Yeah, but she's a *woman* we all grumbled. What's going to happen to our Dude cave? We'll have to put in another washroom! We don't use the washroom, remember? We use the kitty litter box like any disrespecting flea-bitten mongrel.

Well, pondered Tom, it looks like the female of the species is out there. I guess it was God's plan to create two genders after all. I mean, you gotta admit the parts fit. Sure, if you're straight! Who said that? Besides, we don't believe in god, remember? Sorry, guys, I think she's here to stay. Knock, knock! Who's there?
JANET COLSON, Drama Editor. Who??? **Let me fucken in!** Um...Charles, get the door. I'm not getting the door. Rob, you get the door...Rob? Oh, Rob...? Where's Richard? Richard, get the door! I can't. I'm on the kitty litter! WTF. Tom, *you* get the door. Okay, on THREE! One, two, THREE! **WELCOME!** (Later) Hey, this is a pretty impressive CV, Janet! And why not? A woman can do anything a man can do! (From the litter box) Oh yeah? Try holding up a hat with no hands! And I can do *that*, too! *Huuuuuhhhh?????*

Starting with this issue we are going to publish every 4 (that's FOUR) months instead of every 3 (*trois, tre, drei*). And we are limiting the number of published submissions to 100 max. Believe it or not, we all have lives outside of insects and canines.

A word about email. Questions like, "are you just one guy posing as six?" or "how come the email's from Charles when it's sent from Tom's url?" So, let us explain, *once and for all*. When FOTD was whelped, we each had a site email. *tom@fleasonthedog.com, richard@fleasonthedog.com...* Etc. But soon there were messages for Charles that really should have gone to Rob and Steve in the UK was getting crap meant for Richard. So it was decided (decreed?) that the solution was to have ONE email editors@fleasonthedog.com that comes from Tom's address. **The message the email contains is from the editor who signs it.** Period. Done. Oh, and yeah, we are separate people, (just check our STD files) and that's why we included our personal email links. *Capisce?*

We're just six crazy dudes and one cool fox who love the language and fall on our knees at the sound of beautiful words in all their glorious reach and transformative power. At FOTD we share that with each submission we publish, each different from the other, some miles and styles apart, but always burning. *Nisi optimum et clarissimum.*

And now we give you Issue 7. Full of sound and fury, signifying *talent* that will keep you reading today *and tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow*. And until we meet again in Issue 8, always spread the LOVE and STAY SAFE, or, as we say here in wonderful Canada, the true north strong and Flea, "Stay safe, *eh!*"

Tom, Charles, Richard, Rob, Steve, Hezekiah and Janet