

estuary

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Gasoline

Jennifer Huizen

Your shadow dances,
Like ribbon candy,
And puppy dogs,
Lying in the shade,
Kisses on the cheek,
Play in my mind,
Sunshine reels and old cassettes play back to me,
Cheap drinks and spoiled dresses pile up,
Bad senses of humour and worse senses of time,
Play in my mind.
Your manners like burnt coffee,
Walls layered, mortar and brick,
Gasoline wasted,
Burns in my mind.

Bones of the West

Carey Bray

It was a strong and decadent city.
But it is lost, so irreparably lost.
Smouldering black skeletons now stand
Testament to proud twin giants who now
Lay prematurely dead in shallow graves.
Ash falls like snow on this cold, autumn day.
Good intentioned peasants become consumed
By ravenous flames and thick, toxic fumes.
Innocent skulls that litter the stone ground
Crack and crunch under heavy, distraught feet.
The tyrannical king barks for justice.
Livid, scared, he strokes his great, bushy beard.
Advisors whisper words into his ear.
He grips the podium as he condemns.
His voice will be a war drum, a beacon
Of light in dark, desolate days. The crowd
Seethes with hysteria, feeding on his
Words. War will bring us back what we have lost.
There is no room to object. Not today.
Stepping down from his pedestal, he is
Received with applause. A real leader.
He shakes hands and pats cute, smiling babies.
Marble statues of great forefathers stare
Blankly, unable to lend their advice.
Deaf monks in brown sing praises while their own
City burns and destitute masses lay
Unloved on stone steps. They beg and cry, "Alms."
The king skulks back to his White Fortress.
He hides in his castle. No one's home.
And so begins the righteous punishment:
Heretics sing their way to the gallows,
Speaking to God in Babel's loud, forked tongue.
Armoured tanks storm by, iron gods bred for
War. Royal crests justify their Crusade.
Thunder rains down as they engage foreign
Castles, massive like ancient sky scrapers.
With weapons drawn, they charge, chanting their war
Cries, evoking faded memories of
Ancient Latin ties and deceased war lords.
Across the snow they soar, leaving homes behind.
Steel shines like bright silver as men fall from
Their mounts, struck down by insurgent arrows.
East clashes with West as a nation looks

On. There they will sleep, embedded in their
Pale, white tombs. Their shields will protect them.
They praise the heroes, who died for the cause,
Of chasing castles that always stand tall.

Spread Your Wings Archangel

Nadya Zacharczuk

Personal freedom implores creation not destruction.

Your assault defends artistic power.

First, renaissance paintings were learned.

Recreations of Monet, Van Gogh, and Matisse are now left behind.

A creative passage: from our kitchen table to the make-shift studio at Wally's.

With boldness or subtle strokes you venture in the here and now.

Your faith assaults Lucifer.

You protected and defended God's chosen people.

Military life implored your confidence in battle.

In our hour of death you fiercely attacked.

A cliff, a family, a rose humbly bare your hand,

Your combat destroys the Antichrist.

You have more paintings than I have walls.

Your paint is now upon my chair.

It has marched upstairs towards the evening skyline.

Rue Des Moulins

Coralia Tsuluca

Rosa La Rouge, she sits so carelessly
Gazing at her jaded sisters
Whose looks have faded
With the memory of every visitor.
Ripped hosiery, empty glasses,
Velveteen cushions that have seen it
All.

The turned up noses don't sneer anymore
And look down on no one.
'Les vieux cons', they've all become
Splitting their love off to one another.
Pink eyes can tell a story
All the while
Looking like a million bucks.
For only a dollar.
Or few.

Jennifer's Hands

Danielle Megaffin

Her knuckles bleed like overflowing ketchup on a Coney Island hotdog in the summer.
Thick blush applied in anger, waging war against herself; a stalemate on the battlefield.
Like Sparta in the pass, she's not willing to concede even though death awaits her surely.
The blush mixes with the blood and I ask her if she thinks she should stop.
"It's not my colour is it?" she asks, and the mirror softens to reflect: matte face in shattered world.

Stormy Night

Denise Belzile

Lady in the sky, sing me to sleep
I can't shut my eyes tonight
You've got me pulled in too deep

That old tune fits it so well
Outside the winds swirl and swell

Instantly, I am enraptured in the lights and sounds
Violence to some, it's calming to me
Take me out to dance in the sea

Fanfare

Xiomara Apted-Kikauka

Blares of red and yellow leaves
Rebel against the gray sky and asphalt.
Currents of colour flutter through the air,
Saluting dying summer with a fanfare.

A student of logic and memory
Recalls a superstition of wishes.
Puts her pack of knowledge on the ground
And dances in a flurry to catch one.

The more she misses the more she laughs.
Aha! Success!
She holds the crumpled colour in two hands.
Closed eyes.
A secret wish.

She jumps.
Plummets back to reality.
She's in the road's middle
In a car's way.

Flustered.
Apologetic waves.
Mortification.

Then she sees the driver.
Smiling,
Sadly.

And they share a laugh,
Saluting dying summers with a fanfare.

Zombies

Jenna Amirault

Another bloody corpse
destroyed effectively for
God. Heroes imagine journeys
killing life. More nobodies on
programs questionably romanticized.
Silence the unfortunate.
Visions, war, xenophobia
you = zombie.

The Denver Drum Set

Danielle Megaffin

For my Father

Painted with colours of decades passed: Hester reds, burnt oranges, tepid yellows.
Like the sun falling over Arizona's arresting clay cliffs,
Or a silk scarf of autumn's latest design.
They're the backdrop to a Western; a 60's television show where he permanently lives.
Johnny leans across the desk, asks him to hold onto them for a while.
If he doesn't mind, of course he never minds.
Cylindrical shells to stay with him by the ocean and
Keep him company for when black and white gives into Technicolor.
He plays them regularly, stares at them more regularly;
I think he is hypnotized by the geometric patterns,
Swirls like music on a page written out by hand in feathered ink.
Cymbals crash in modern day traffic, but he sits there entranced still
By Southwest Cochiti men while John Denver keeps talking.

Perfection

Azura Goodman

It's almost as if the wine they drank that evening led them to the door, which took them to the top of a hill, whose cascading surface guided them to the shore and placed them beside the rickety canoe. Neither of them had planned a boat trip, but it seems a boat trip was well underway. He steadied the vessel as she climbed in, lifting her skirt to prevent it from getting cool lake water on it. He gave the canoe a propelling push and jumped in at the same time. "Like magic," the girl thought. He began to paddle, showing her what a J-stroke was and how to feather, as she rested on his lower half, her legs sprawled out before them. She leaned her head as far back as she could and crooked it to the side to get a good look at him. She stared at the striking contours of his face, highlighted by the moon. She first stroked his face, then rubbed his earlobe between her fingers. Something came over her and she lifted her hand and began knocking on his forehead. The sound was different than bone on bone. It was somehow denser. She listened to its resonance over the water. He was surprised. He clutched her hands and enveloped them in his own.

"What are you doing Anna?" He laughed and freed her hands.

"I wanted to see if it made a noise. It is a part of you, ya know." She was referring to the large metal plate that rested beneath his skin on his forehead.

He stopped paddling. The canoe rested out in the middle of the lake. Somewhere a loon called. He dipped his paddle in the water and watched it bob.

"It isn't necessarily," he paused, "beautiful." He moved his fingers to the long, vertical scars on each of his temples and followed the pink, scar tissue lines with his fingers. Following his lead, she stroked the scars as well, their fingers colliding.

"I think it's lovely." She switched her position in the boat so that she could look him in the eyes. "You know what it's like to dupe death. That forehead is your own trophy." She moved towards him and put her lips to each of his temples lightly. She gazed at the bulbous forehead again, "I do believe that forehead is *perfection*."

The Ways of Grown Ups

Casey Vaasjo

On the fourth morning that Lucas ran his paper route alone, he came home with a colourful pile of "Lost Dog" signs:

MISSING! Have you seen Hugo?

On Lucas' tenth birthday, much to my reluctance, we decided to let him run his paper route unaccompanied. He knew the route well by then, but he would be out all alone before sun-up which made me very uneasy. "He has to be allowed to grow up, honey." My husband would say. But he was still my baby. I just had to know he was safe.

The neighbours had taken to Lucas, keeping a bit of an eye on him in the mornings. When Mrs. Spencer lost her dog, she turned to Lucas for help. The signs she made up had a picture of her big Rottweiler, Hugo, and a phone number.

"I want to help the old lady mommy," Lucas looked thrilled. "She gives me a quarter every morning but she can't walk much so can I find the doggy for her? Please?" I could tell he wanted to play detective. I didn't like the idea but he was just *so* excited.

Later that day, I called the number on the poster and told Mrs. Spencer Lucas would love to help. We would tape the signs up together the next morning - as good an excuse as any to go along with Lucas one more morning.

In the darkened morning we set out. Lucas ran around every house, after dropping off the paper, to see if he could find "doggy clues." As he proudly taped up each colourful sign, my apprehension about his paper route began to dissolve. He ran and ran. He ran ahead to the next block, but by the time I rounded the corner he was nowhere in sight.

"Lucas?" I called, "Lucas!" A mother's frantic nerves don't take long to kick in. My heart began to race and panic intensified. All my worries about protecting my son swept back into my mind. As I scanned the area, I broke out in a cold sweat, all senses heightened.

After a few moments of silence I heard a very distant sobbing. I sprinted towards the sound and caught sight of Lucas far beyond the street, bent over a black figure at the edge of the ditch. Just as a rush of relief came over my body I made out the lifeless body of Hugo, cold and stiff on the ground.

Lucas turned his tear-filled eyes up to me, confused and full of emotion. I sat down slowly beside my child and taking his hand in mine, I too began to weep.

The Wave and the Mountain

Sally Christensen

The mountain sat quietly, thinking its earthly thoughts, a dot in the middle of the ocean. A wandering wave passed by and greeted the mountain, but the mountain was silent. Each day the wave would come and greet, gently breaking on his shore, but still the mountain would not speak. Weeks went by and the wave circled the mountain, wearing him down, particle by particle, until one day the mountain spoke.

“Do you wish to stay with me?” asked the mountain, his voice a deep, gentle rumble.

At that the wave retreated, “Stay? I cannot stay. I must follow the wind, I must wander. It’s my way. I must see all there is to see.”

“Have you seen enough of me?” asked the mountain.

At that the wave was silent.

The wave wandered the world around, saw all that she could see, and when she had seen it all, she returned to the mountain. She had been gone an age, and the mountain slumbered.

“Do you still have a place for me?” asked the wave of the mountain. “I have wandered the oceans and wandered the seas, and I have seen all that I need to see.”

The mountain was silent.

Angry, the wave crashed and crashed against the mountain’s shore, throwing herself against his rocky coast. With each crash she grew larger, her crest higher, her plummet harder. She crashed and crashed until she broke free – she broke free of the sea and settled, a pool at the base of the mountain. And the wave slumbered too, dreaming of all she had seen.

Medford Beach

Tracy Tidgwell



Made With Real Fruit Juice

Kathleen Chisholm



Untitled 1

Jenna Amirault



Peaceful Evening

Carolyn Thomas



Sunrise Over the Pacific

Patricia Morrison



Untitled 2

Jenna Amirault



Fountain in Kyoto

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Cascade

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