

estuary

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Water

Rachel McLean

The Otonabee
spilled its guts.
We watched them slide
first
slowly, slowly
over the lip of the city.
Later they
ran 'round shoreline and streetline.

Algae loosened
from the belly and the back
of our
once shallow river
and wading knee-deep
through the water rush
the only traffic tonight
is the twin whirlpools
trailing our footsteps.

Damp in early August,
the city laid out to dry.
Our little ribbon of a river
withdrew.

Your Ribcage

Jen Huizen

High above the grizzly maze
pulled me into the alders.

Lonely
with the life gnawed out of it
an arm that ended at your shoulder
with a watch on the wrist.

You looked at the lens,
underneath your sexy camo bandana.
Prince Valiant with his hidden forehead,
told me not to cry.

"I'll die for these animals,
I'll die for these animals,
I'll die for these animals."

When the smoke from the guns
cleared and became Alaskan mist,
the camera that wasn't rolling
whimpered " please don't listen".

Warmth deep in the grass
is what you've become,
talk to me Timothy
the camera's still on.

Arthur

Carey Bray

Watching over the Bay of Fundy,
Those grassy, green banks sleeked with brine and red mud.
Like Camlann before, she patiently waits
And questions what shall be left behind.

We both fought and triumphed over death.
Shattering stone with our hardest mettle.
Feats forever immortalized by Monmouth and Hallmark.
Tales told of Saxons, Mount Badon, and hospital beds.

Yet deep down I know we never survived for ourselves,
But for some unshakeable conceit that we would be missed.
This flawed, false notion that the world would decay
If we somehow just ceased to exist.

But in some ways you were lucky
To be elected by that lucent Lady of the Lake.
Your important fate secured by celestial stars,
Never having to decipher that ancient Atlantic sky,

But where is Camelot?
There is no stone white castle in the sky.
And for all you did, you are dismissed as legend.
Your kingdom. Your work, vanished in mist.

Perhaps all life is myth,
Our long days devised by some elusive hand,
Guiding us unseen from the spirited world,
Only to bring us back to Avalon again.

Right Coast Sliding

Tyler Boucher

Fumbling and sleepy we load in the cold
drive East on Route 7 towards Martinique,
Waking this early leaves no need to speak,
steaming black coffee helps fingers unfold
Sunrise meets bleary eyes on dawn patrol
light plays in the clouds – a slow hide and seek
Crunch underfoot sounds 'midst chattering teeth
as subzero water swallows us whole.
Waves crash down heavily, three feet at eight
I search and I seek in voids between swells
for the wave upon which I can propel
L'eau and behold, it's delivered by fate
With spray-tickled eyes and a frozen yelp
I slide it, ensconced, in watery spell.

Ultrasound Photo

Amy James

The **merging** of black of white **created this new life**, unknowable though present, untouchable though seen. **I peeked** first. Grainy lines **into your inner home**, an expectant voyeur, **thrilled by** lustrous bones. **You** remained tight up against me, snuggler **extraordinaire!** **And** still you seek me when afraid. **I witnessed** your extended belly, **you** a gourmand from the start, one small fist, **thrust out**, set chin, a leader even when **alone** and your mouth, open, already **calling** for me or my breast or just noise. **Luv you** too. Wh-are you **mummy?** Rounded head, up turned nose, **I recognized** your profile from twenty weeks, though **we** had only just met, and you **had grown**. I heard **your heartbeat** like I **was** feeling **mine**. **And now**, sitting at piano keys, **turning** to my smile, **you point** to yourself, **pronouncing**, the first Sam. From outside, you peek-a-boo **me, here** you are. You called me? **Here I am.**

Men of Salt

David Oastler

Howling against what will be my fault
I begin battle with this modern binary,
clawing for answers in the mind's vault.

Modern man, are you still a man of any salt?
You plow on industrially and sure. I'm left wary,
howling against what will be my fault.

Gaia screams and begs and bleeds for halt.
Her flowers now trampled, you wouldn't marry.
I'm clawing for answers in the mind's vault.

Our Mother left broken, soaked in asphalt,
by you, brother, you take up arms but I parry,
howling against what will be my fault.

Shed off your armor of lies, evolve, molt
from your stubborn cruelty for clarity
and clawing for answers in the mind's vault.

I saw you salt the earth, your assault
on the song of the soil's tired canary.
I'm left howling against what will be my fault
clawing for answers in the mind's vault.

Alone, I was Overcome

Courtney Harris

In that moment I felt more alive
than I have in a very long time.

Drive me to my darkest night
Be fluorescent inspiration
Sing to me, shout if you might
to ease my lonely deprivation

Smile of turquoise, lover, smile
Stars can run their pillow rest
cannot this last a little while?
Just see the light inside my chest

Water glints off hair and shoulder
flowers desire own flower's dew
when everything I need flows over
my spirit aches to fly with you.

Klimt's Water Serpents 2

Caroline Roy

Groggy gauze lifts from our eyes,
Reluctant to unravel
We twist and nestle deeper.

Your brush steals the moment.
Overlapping curves melt into
Burnt oranges, flecks of gold, strands of seaweed.

You put stars in our hair, you speckle our blankets,
We command your eye down intimate planes.
If you capture us, take us whole.

Fret

Tyler Boucher

sound is projected
outwards, that's how it works –
strings reverberate and vibrations
bounce around inside the guitar body
and then zoom outside. our ears snatch
them out of the air – in my case usually
wrong notes. but try as I might I can't
play the right ones. perhaps I'm out
of tune, or maybe I ought to change
these strings 'cause they seem to
have lost that smoothness and
brightness they had when they
were new. but I can't blame it on
my strings when the real problem
is my left hand and this one chord
shape it doesn't seem to want to
make, and that pattern that my
right hand likes to forget
how to strum.
someday,
I'll get
better,
but
today
I'll
most
likely
just
let you
mock me,
as I just keep
on trying
to make good
sounds.

Water

Caroline Roy

My lake is a murky green cocktail of pollen and zebra mussels.
At night its depths merge with the sky in an endless black backdrop.
When I jump in it slurps me under, swallowing in one gulp.
I sink into the coldest layer.

Swimmers above me tread water with pale glowing legs.
My hair curls around me, suspended in limbo.
My limbs rest on an invisible chair,
While waves slop and lurch a deep drone.

Merry go round of bouncing pollen, silky seaweed
And colonies of jittery bubbles.
My lake is a swill of absinthe,
Promising a soothing, dark drunk.

Metropolis of Pauses

Courtney Harris

Empty hands as empty hearts,
A rush to sleep, to sleep.
Dewy faces, morning starts,
Silent pleading to the street.
Chunks of pavement, love engraved,
Crack the heart of cities here,
Always spent and never saved,
Definition of a relished fear.
Music verse of painter fine,
Sun absorbs to heat.
Catch, my love, to intertwine,
Chilled shivering elite.
Quiet, you, this tranquil voice,
Metropolis of pauses.
Unheard song, the stubborn choice,
To live for unknown causes.
Combining salty tears and rest
A sigh too deep, too deep,
The silver shining moon's request
To set the sky asleep.

Untitled

Nicole Heelan

The shadow of her elegant hand, etching lines across the paper, spilled over onto the wooden chair disguising itself as a ramshackle sort of desk. The wind must have been blowing that day as her other hand held down the dog eared tab of the page. Her arms, reaching across, pushed her bosom into an appealing cleavage, the sun falling upon it, shadows burrowing in its crevice. Her lithe, little legs wrapped around, black shade tumbling upon them in places the sun's languid strokes had missed. Above her pretty little head, veiled by raven locks, a lush tree poured itself onto the terrace; its rich green leaves a testament to the abundance of water they had been granted in weeks bygone. To the left of her tidy voluptuousness, the kind that stayed just within the lines, was a round table strewn with all the accoutrements for a hot day, the air being too stifled to allow for the indoors. The lighting lent an almost clear schism between the dark and the light, a pleasing sort of yin and yang. The woman found herself basking in the glow, only mere glimpses of her suppleness dappled in shadow. To be beside her there, would be to love her. As he did. As he does.



Ocean

Emma Vost

I once fell in love with the ocean.
Don't ask me how, or when, or why, but I did.
I was standing on the shore looking across to Europe, to all the places I've never been, to the lives that were happening that I couldn't see.
I was looking out when a wave crashed around my ankles and pulled me in.
And I panicked because this had never happened to me.
But the waves were friendly! They pulled me under and around and played with my body until I was in danger of drowning for laughing so hard.
That day, I spent hours lying on the shore line, where the waves could roll over me.
I saw myself become half aquatic and lay my head on the soft beach.
My hair whipped around my face, saturated with salt and eternity.
The days went on, and I could hold my breath for so long.
The water became so familiar over my body, tickling me with foamy kisses.
I spent so much time in the blue silky water that I forgot how to walk.
I never needed to walk when I was weightless.
The ocean kept me buoyant and lovingly held me up for breath when I ran out.
The waves would include me in their energetic welcoming of land, and I would look on puzzled at a solid world, forgetting what it was like.
But then sometimes, when the sky was grey with sadness, the ocean would lose control and get angry, slapping me on the hard sand and pinning me down.
And when I was about to pass out, it would push me to shore where I could breathe once again.
I would recover lying in the sand, looking up at the distant sky, my familiar friend.
The ocean would always come back, tickling my feet at first and then curling towards the small of my spine, eventually lapping at my neck.
It would bring me gifts of starfishes and sea urchins to remind me of the beauty inside of it.
I would forget all about being scared and would head back out, laughing with the dolphins and seals again.
For days, I would be submerged, trying in vain to grow the gills I needed to survive this life.
At the surface, ocean ripples would blind me with magnified sunlight and I would gladly dive deep.
My eyes thus grew accustomed to the dark, clear waters of the ocean's depths, and I saw things I never even knew existed.
One day, on the deepest dive yet, I saw something peculiar running along the ocean floor.
I dove again and again in an attempt to get closer to this dark stain and make myself known to it.
Just as night began to fall, I held my breath until I thought I would die and pulled up to the long, mysterious stripe.
I nearly choked as I tried to place my hand on it, as wonder quickly turned to fear.
This giant dark stripe was in fact an ocean trench with interminable depths, with unknown blind inhabitants.
I swam for the surface as fast as I ever had, knowing full well that I could never understand the secrets of that infinite abyss.

Yellowstone

Tyler Boucher



Jamaican Fire

Carolyn Thomas



Do You Have the Time to Dream?

Paromita Adhikari



Ode to Some Grecian Birds

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