

estuary

acadia's creative arts magazine

Edition 14.1

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Acadia, In the End

The end is near – at least, it's said

Whether by rising tides or the risen dead
Or a date left off the calendar – either way
One day soon we'll wake
To find it crumbling, they say.

And though I don't believe it, I still
Find myself imagining it true –
What then? I can see shattered cities and a sky
Bruised black with smoke and silt
A world blazed raw, the sound of fear - I
Can see it – but not here.

I imagine coming out one day to find
Waters lapping at the edges of the street –
And students wading
Through it with their hoods up, wondering
What meal hall has to eat.

If at night zombies lurch from grave confines
And come grasping, brain-hungry –
(They should wait until the New Year, then –
Exams do not promote nutritious minds)
Perhaps they'll balk; the smell
Of the local bar may drive them off –
I can see the dead, slack jawed and amazed,
Watching drunken students laugh and stumble
Past them, with shoes and skirts askew
(They should be careful –
The crows are hungry too.)

In the quad, an argument will break
Over what sort of apocalypse it is –
Zombies will just be lost in Chase.
The halls of Seminary will echo long
With bothered ghosts in silent throngs.

Dennis will laugh, and Barrax too;
Tully quiet, Cutten high and new,
But to watch the world come to an end,
Tower may have the finest view.

I'll stand atop the campus, looking down
To floodwaters, fires and the dead
Check my phone and think *it's time for bed* –

*It's getting late. The world is ending! Yet –
When you wake up, we all enduring will
Be toiling, yawning, down our impassive hill.
~Meredith MacEachern*

The Banana* Blues: For Langston Hughes

I'm bluer than blue

A branch thicker than the root
A banana unlike any other fruit

But my growth has been severed and burned

Like a scale with weight it cannot measure
The music of my white soul
Is melancholy, oppressed
Singing without words
Confined within black bars

I'm bluer than blue
A composer without compositions
A conductor without a baton
To even guide himself

The song beats away as
I'm singing my blues

*American/British/Canadian-born Chinese
(ABC/BBC/CBC's) are often called 'bananas'
because they are 'yellow-skinned but
white-hearted.'

~Allen Qing Yuan

Genetically Modified

stuck here under this fluorescent lighting,
eyes sunk in with bruises that could last a lifetime.
swollen with a decade of perceived abnormality,
windows to the soul that will never flutter again or
see the light of day that dares to touch this
porcelain skin.

marked with Dr. Frankenstein's pen,
this encasement is no longer occupied.

awaiting the knife
this porcelain doll lays lifeless under the
microscope,
the scent of stale skin and disposed organs lingers
in the air.
like a patient in the waiting room a long process
will entail,
where misplaced features will no longer reign.

soon enough these false sheets will be a pool of
blood,
with remembrance of slicing flesh and
creating perfection staining deep,
and cursed with the image of a blue eyed beauty,
where Jack the Ripper took his victims.

knives cut deep and spark crimson.
needles used to rid the pain,
slicing and dicing at the self loathing and flawed
body under the heat
a lifelong road to perfection.

stitched up like a voodoo doll the Dead rises,
where eyes sealed shut and rubber lips are the main
attractions,
killing time is up and she's got the detail to prove
it,
a mere memory of a psychotic genetic rampage.

a savior to the unfortunate and the weak,
a legal slaughterhouse of the innocent and naïve,
where mercy is left in the real world,
in substitution for a lifelong commitment
to the face of a mannequin.

~ Cara Williams

Natural Confrontations

1/ Octopus

To escape
From its predator
The octopus ejects the ink
From its brain and belly at the same time
Trying desperately to dye the whole ocean
Into a world of dream water
Murkier than mud

2/ Leaf

Like a wounded soldier
Still firmly holding his position
The leaf is the only one left
Hanging at the tip
Of a young maple tree
Determined to deter, to stop
The invasion of an entire cold season

3/ Snowflake

The last snowflake
Drifting around in a hidden corner
Of last year
Finally falls down
Yet slowly, as though to dissolve
With its white hand and crystal soul
All the shadows
Piled up, still piling
Over the night

~Changming Yuan

Neo

~Dedicated to Neo, he who can.

A caged sparrow,
he becomes the wheel
chair to which he is
bound.

His infantile
wings fold inward,
his feathers never
rustle free in the wind.

Fragile, tense and
seized by palsy pain,
his eyes soar with hope as he
rounds his lips and

strains to blow a
single
bubble;
strains

to become
a child
again
for the first time.

"I...can't," he gasps—
he inhales a new breath
again and again,
it takes half an hour

until
an iridescent
bubble takes
flight.

His meek, determined
breath plants life anew:
weightless, painless, flying
free:

Neo.

~ Rose Grieder

Raven

Although all ravens long for freedom bliss
and take to the sky to learn of all things,
know this: I do thee love. A strange abyss
exists where you are gone. Spread not your wings.
Your burning love sparks an endless ember
within my heart; be wary raven, star,
of thought that brings you shame. Please remember
just how perfectly imperfect you are.

~Katrina Brooks

Pointless Perseverance

Shining sheets of steel
March down the smoothly paved road
While fair maidens and young boys wave their men
away
Dull grey men
Fathers and brothers with time to waste
Load onto ships lying in bays
To die alone in foreign lands.
The shame! The shame!
No really what a shame!
Building a wall of pebbles to stop the tide
Or a lasso to pull at the moon.
Let's build a fortress without our hands
Stop a river with our minds
Unite all kingdoms with the sweep of our hands
No really, flood a desert with your tears
See what the cacti have to say to that

Futile, Pointless
A waste of the mind
Throw forth your hand
Glance not behind
Forget the past
Embrace the mind

~Austin Huang

A Sentry's Post (above) and **Reflexion** (below)

~ Kela Larocque



Untitled 1

With the setting of the sun
The colours fade
Like an old coat of arms.
Each ambition of the day
Is slowly extinguished.
~*Sherri Springle*

String Me Along

When you embrace me fast beneath your chin
And when against your collar I do rest,
Sweet sings our harmony that from within
My resonating heart, I can't contest.

As fingers softly skim around my neck,
Some how you always know which strings to press
To promise passion that I can not check,
And make me trust it's your love you confess.

Your sole reward for my fidelity:
Staccato ecstasy that flees with you.
Beneath your masterful stroke; enmity
Forgotten for my purpose felt anew.

But when alone, my love turns to chagrin,
For you just play me as your violin.
~*Kathryn Henderson*

Swan Lake Waltz

Moonlit ball masquerades tonight
Princely ladies, Fine Gentleman
We are through the night with heads hung back
Ticklish grass lightly kissing our feet
Nocturnal twirl, Spiral of the night
Twirl, twirl with the stars
Colourful blend
Soft gold, loud silver
Just missing each other's toes
A duo from moon glades
Midnight ball lit up like noon
Warm darkness with a gentle embrace

Minstrels flowing through their flutes
Ever moving, ever pushing
Brass punching light in to the night
Mingle, mingle lively dances
Twirl into tables
Twirl into chairs
Push over the cake
The host doesn't care
Dance into the twilight
Asleep at the daylight.
~ *Austin Huang*

Rebirth

I'm waiting for the bells to stop
These old friends of mine,
singing through the rain
break the metal from my bones

clash the curtains with the sea breeze
and set the sands to flow

A pair of pigeons upon the roof
of a brick wall
discard
the senselessness of hollow bones
and plummet from the sky

It is in me to rebel

the blood pools in their feet
as they stand
listlessly
staring
at the shadows
cast
from the setting sun
~*Jennifer Galambos*

Spoken Word 3

So. Let me ask you again. Let me ask you again for a light.

Let me ask you for a light because you and me, we're in an endless night that crawls its way through
absolution.

And I'm sitting in the dark watching a slideshow of evolution, like the shadows on someone's cave
long before there was the concept of freedom and slaves.

Nobody told me it was revolution. Because I don't remember how I learned how to walk, or the part
where they told me to run, or how all the light fell out of the sun.

Maybe we should go back to the start.

But we know better. It's not as easy as shifting back the moon or stamping that envelope with the note
"Return to Sender"

Because I may not remember learning how to walk but I can still feel the ache in my knees and the
scrapes on my palms and all the past wrongs etched in on the inside of my eyelids.

So that when I fall asleep all I can see is the whites of your eyes like two stars who have abandoned
their constellation in search of planets not bound by their rotation.

And that light that fled left a thread of darkness that stretches and spills its way into the sea. And all
those inside who long to be free are screaming, "I *must* be blind" because they can't seem to find a way
out.

And goddamnit all I need is a light. A light for the cigarette between my fingertips, the burning red
ember at the base of my lips. Light this cigarette so I can send a smoke signal to those stars who shed
their

concern by forgetting to burn. Because I've lost my way home and all I have is a backwards map inked
into my skin for all the places I've been and no flashlight to light the way home.

~Jennifer Galambos

Untitled



~ Riley MacKinnon

Quiet Tracks



~Erin Anderson

Undone

No matter what I've said to you, you know that you're the only one I ever want to be weak with. You're the only one that I'll let watch me cry, because I know you'll tell me to suck it up and get on with my life. I need that, and you stole it from me. The hardest part now is that you're the one I would've turned to when I got that shitty grade, or when my water heater broke, but I can't. You're not going to answer my calls anymore, and I hate you for that.

But then, after all the times you've been there for me, and I can't even be there for you now. I love you-can't-even-show-up-when-it-counts-much. And I'm so selfish that after all you've gone through all I want to do is bitch about *my* paper, and how stupid this guy in *my* class is like none of your shit ever happened. If I were you I wouldn't answer my calls either.

Does me not crying every day mean that I've lost you completely? I don't think so, because when they were shuffling around at some bullshit ceremony, proving they loved you more because they could afford to go, I was here, where you would've been had it been me. Right here, sitting on our musty old blue couch with the sticky cup holders and the levers that haven't worked in years, the one that we found a family of mice living in when I moved away.

And I actually thought I was fine, but then my mom called today, and I told her I was busy. I feel bad lying to her, but I can only hear the question, "how are you?" with that stupid fucking tone dripping with sorry, trying to get me to break down and tell her how hard it's been so many times before it starts to build anger where the sad used to be. I can handle the anger without you. I don't know what to do with the sad.

But I'm supposed to "move on" though right? That's the bullshit you always hear in movies. I don't really know what that means without totally letting you go, though. Oh well. So here, on the lumpy old couch, I bury you in the virgin ground of my heart, while they bury you in the cold dead earth.

~ *Meaghan Smith*

The Mouse

Once there was a mouse. A mouse with whiskers, which the mouse cleaned frequently after they had brushed in the dust of Behind-The-Walls and Under-The-Fridge, and especially In-The-Clock. The mouse also had short brown fur which the mouse cleaned just as much as the whiskers, but more to rid the bristles of the biting nits that leapt onto the mouse's back whenever he ventured Out-Of-The-House. All this being Behind and Under and In and Out was necessary for the mouse's survival. Behind was where those flaking silk-moths came to expire in a puff of a final landing. Their eyes were especially delicious to the mouse, the crunch of the thorax particularly pleasing.

Under always availed the mouse with crumbs of cheese or old crackers, or smears of sweet cream or milk: soured but good. Out was where succulent worms reared their pink heads to plunge back into the black soil, making sport for the sharp, clipping nip of the mouse's front teeth.

But In-The-Clock... what did In provide for the mouse, except for occasional dry woodlice which the mouse found tasteless and mossy?

You'd have to ask the mouse, but my personal opinion is... nothing. Nothing crunchy or deliciously pink, or nibs of chocolate or coffee beans. The Grandfather clock faced the East windows, on whose ledges the mouse had often sat, and chewed a strip of rind while the brown fur warmed and the plump tail flicked at dried-up flies.

In the mornings, light slides through the windowpane-frost and the round face of the clock to pool on the platform that holds the round brass wheels, steel springs and iron bolts.

This is where the mouse sits, brown bristles lit up gold at the ends, almost melting in the brightness of the small, glowing chamber. The mouse sits on the big brass wheel and glides round and around, cleaning his fur and whiskers. Even the mouse's ears are limned in the light, the small hairs glowing precise and white.

I'm not sure why the mouse goes up there. His nest is elsewhere, and there is no food among the occasional shuffling woodlice, but perhaps you can guess, as I have. Imagine that mouse, simply sitting, the shadow hands ticking counter-clockwise, the numbers in black, reversed.

Round he goes, again and again. You really have to wonder what he sees in the chamber of glowing brass wheels, springs, shafts, and coils. It could be dust making that nose twitch. But the way he sits so spellbound in 360 degrees, makes me think of awe.

~Ceileigh Mangalam

Dusk at Lake Champlain



~ Erin Anderson

Music Archive:

At the End of the Day

~ Adam Clarke

(The above musical composition is available at the online music archive of Estuary:
www.acadiau.ca/estuary*)*