



May

Noah Jarrett

Shine

Light shafts of smoke and dust
Drilling through space
Like giant size hypodermic needles
Falling from the hands of god.

Quickly losing potential

You must spoon-feed him the words, but, if you're not leaning to the right, he'll rip you apart.

He walks, expecting to sway and fall, with you, purposefully by his side.

And you *will* be there to catch him, and that's great, but something terrible down the road will inevitably be of your doing. So, you come to admit guilt just to shut the fucker up.

Wading through this expansive ego, you, every so often, find the man you were looking for. The man you knew was there. Standing strong, carrying you in his arms, feeding you fresh fruit from the tree, loving the sound of your voice.

And, now, *you* carry him, *you* feed him, *you* sing for him, and he still wails and screams like a baby (an ugly, detestable one) Ever since he grew up, he's been growing down, and, because you *are* the only one, you are held accountable.

So, when do you stop catching the fall.
When do you finish feeding the beautiful bastard the sanity he craves?

And give him the sour taste of reality he deserves.



Rohan Thomas

Realization 1.16.79.

There are screams in the Valley
Where the trees grow,
And where water flows,
Quietly

There is the ruffling of leaves,
While ripple-less pebbles breathe,
Randomly

I am watching a street, through a window,
Within a room, inside a house, and by a bed

Reality might be out there.

Life sometimes must get a little lonely.

Allen Brafman

Dark Blossom

God grows in the dark,
Places mushrooms never go
All the harder to see.

Daryl drew away from himself.
He traveled great distances
And left himself behind.

Along the way
The way disappeared.
He did not see that he was lost.

Everywhere, he found trackless thickets
He pushed on through
Harvesting years of dark fruit.

I heard you hurting in your sleep.
Our bed was broken with your pain.
Shuddered at the thought of moving

Even a single eyelash.
God grows darker in the dark
In darkness, darkness blooms.
.....

Perspective

I am traveling 478 miles per hour
35 thousand, eight hundred, 95 feet above you.

It is remarkable
I do not think
This is remarkable.

No less remarkable
At 478 miles per hour

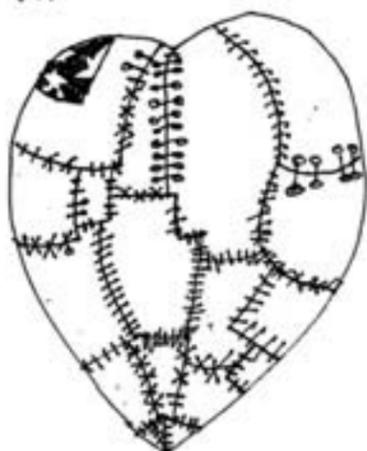
I am nibbling on animal crackers
Sipping tomato juice from a plastic cup,
An unsatisfactory combination
At any speed
At any height.
I bite into the neck of a giraffe
Taking off its head.

Bordered by blue water;
Beaches of white coastal sand;
Communities of circuit boards
35 thousand, eight hundred, 95 feet below
Sizzle beyond the sea.

I close my eyes
Thinking only of you
Just 35 thousand, eight hundred, 95 feet away.

It is not remarkable
When I open my eyes
You are seated beside me
Traveling 478 miles per hour
35 thousand, eight hundred, 95 feet
Closer to me than you were this morning
Nibbling on a lion
& smiling
As though to say
This is the way
Things are meant to be.

Patchwork starlook



Jane Ormerod

Wind Theatre

canine blossom
and citrus grandfathers
stretched thin
with foresight

twenty men in cabs
fighting tooth and nail
brewery
disturbed

five thousand birds
carrying mirrors
as they fly beak to tail across the smouldering moor

*

she pulled the pint
confessed

dabbled in sand runes
confessed

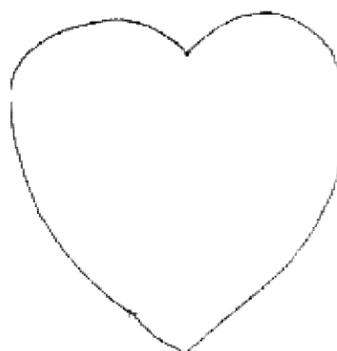
lingered too long
whilst adding lemon slices to milk jugs

confessed to the ancestors
lit a candle
shouted last orders

gentlemen at the bar,
she looked exquisite
in the mud

head to toe
glycerine
cherry brandy smile
she had it
that baby had it all

plain wonderful



Angel Molina

Sometimes I ...

Sometimes I need to breathe
Sometimes I feel like screaming at myself
Sometimes I feel like I'm lost
Sometimes I feel like I'm confused
Sometimes I forget about the criminal I am
Sometimes I feel like I'm going to kill somebody
Sometimes I wish I was born to hate
Sometimes I wish I found where I belong.

A Mile

A mile that never walks.
A mile that never talks.
A mile that never stops.
A mile that never ends.
A mile that goes somewhere.
A mile that's so far.
A mile that makes me confused.
A mile that never began.
It's a yellow mile.



Jesse Beller

Alex got home to find his apartment a mess. Someone had gone through the dresser, the desk, all the kitchen cabinets. After a quick review of foreign governments potentially involved, he decided he'd been robbed. Or, well, that somebody had tried to rob him. There wasn't much worth stealing and less he'd care about losing. He briefly considered calling the police, but decided to save himself the embarrassment. Instead, he pulled the bottle of Wild Turkey from off the top of the refrigerator, made some ramen and toast, and read sections of the book of Job till he passed out.



Robert Dunn

Ballad: Lion Tamers

We lion tamers deal with the King of the Beasts
(With a helmet, a chair, and a crack of the whip).
The best of our breed are ascetic as priests.
And like all the great priests we won't take any lip.

We display nerves of steel facing leonine rage
(With a helmet, a chair, and a crack of the whip).
There's no margin for error when locked in that cage,
Dealing with several big cats at a clip.

And they do what we tell 'em, they know who is Boss
(With a helmet, a chair, and a crack of the whip).
If only the beasties used mouthwash and floss,
A lion's breath would give anybody the pip.

There is one trade secret we don't want you to know
(With a helmet, a chair, and a crack of the whip).
The lions get paid off before every show.
If the Evening News caught us, Boy! Would they ever yip!

Pastoral Near Paducah

In Bluegrassland, did Snuffy Smith
A rank, damp log cabin decree,
Where corn becomes a liquid food
And fed to cows 'til they turn stewed
And begin climbing trees.

And passing Revenuers, forthwith,
Are greeted with double-barreled glee
(In twelve-gauge trysts) and forced to flee.
'The Whiskey Rebellion lives!' cries Snuff,
While Daniel Boone gives 'two thumbs up.'



Over

Seth Garrett Hudson

Two Ghost

Every morning she'd be moving bags or sleeping on benches, so I couldn't pretend it wasn't happening. I started helping her carry light plastic sacks full of weightless loads, eight—she called everyone garbage. Polish people. She was Polish, but she married a Jew. Her husband was dead now. Nobody helped. In the mornings I'd try and listen to her call people garbage. Sometimes I brought her food, she'd wish I'd bring her coffee, or change so she could get some. Once I kissed her forehead and told her to give it time. After a while, she grew more miserable. I became frustrated with the way to work. I quit going that way, enjoying the guilt free side street and forgetting the sorrows on the corner.

They began to not exist anymore. Then, yesterday, I felt the weight of my neglect in the fat of my body and the oil on my skin, the dry pinched veins and sinews, the sore in my throat that itched in my breath's pipe. And this morning my love left me a plum for breakfast, so I brought it to the corner thinking my old friend would still be there. Instead I found a boy sleeping on the steps and left it by him as a gift. As I crossed the gate to go to work, I looked back and saw an old man looking for his lost love from the other side of the bars. She was nowhere to be seen, but we felt her everywhere in that train station.



Bruce Ballard

Fire and Soup
two chickens lament about life

some say the world will end in fire

some say soup

i know but that our lives are dire
our beaks burned off, feathers droop
bones twist and snap like rusted wire

unlike the days of chickens prior
who chirped and clucked in cheerful choir
and perched on roost in chicken coop
our lives are fucked 'til we expire

we screech and scream in endless loop
from KFC's debased desire
to serve up tasteless, sickly fryers
to ill-informed, malnourished troops

we do expire,
are forced to play the dupe

they throw us, throats slit, into a boiling quagmire
of feathers, entrails, blood and poop

oh yeah, check how low the Colonel stoops
to spread his kernel-cruel empire

finger lickin' good?
Liar

Eric J. Thomason

You knot my Stomach

You!
Yes, you.
I think of you
and get a knot in my stomach
makes me scared
and glad
mad
and just
a tad lonesome
for the woman I call wife
my love, my life
the knife
or
pillow,
made of flowers
feathers and stones and a razor
causing me pain
pleasure
thrills
and frills
in my stomach
I only get thinking of you.

Allan David Goldschmidt

Gone

And no early Spring flowers to be seen at all
Trees barren of leaves left for firewood
Some thought all life had gone with the Fall

Songbirds had lost their tuneful call
A solitary gardener had abandoned his fields for good

And no early Spring flowers to be seen at all

What had toppled the mighty Sequoias so proud and tall
The last rosebuds had nodded where joy once stood
Some thought all life had gone with the Fall

Maybe somewhere blackbirds cackled behind an ivied wall
As night pulled down its shutters with a dark hood
And no early Spring flowers to be seen at all

A stoic old lady put on her tattered woolen shawl
An African man played one last note on his Oud
Some thought all life had gone with the Fall

Who would be there to answer one last fading call?
I guess if anyone cared, we'd still be where we once stood
And no early Spring flowers to be seen at all
Some thought all life had gone with the Fall.

~August 13, 2002



Christopher Mulrooney

affordability

my cousin come here to me
I want to talk you into
the New Dodge Rambler
it goes roundabout twelve
miles per hour less in the city

you can have the various remarks
pasted on the passenger side
windows culled as pinchbeck
or printed out at one of our
various locations here it is
the local one if it fits I say
wear it in very good health

it seats roomier passersby
than anyone could have dreamed

Laura Dinnebeil

Let this love be bloody.

In those eyes-
a face of a man who changed his philosophy
based on the dream of her thigh.
In that paled glare deprived of speech,
was earth turning a quarter.
Him day,
and her forever night.

He fell in with her quiet pace and cunning.
No flashy breasts,
or cross hanging between them,
only a murderous past
she achieved by walking,
Her smile,
beacon of the town,
a torch to women
who create ugly mirage.
But she controls the heart of genitalia
like Balzac's pen.

Then ruin
pounds only on her
and never let's up,
And her humanity couldn't shine,
her fingers slipping off a payphone,
her head wet with exile,
while the townspeople retreat
into dry houses.
She's outside desperate for
a heist,
a fence to climb,
a man to love,
a child.

While he loves another
like he hasn't for years,
putting on her figure
another's classy strokes,
a form he wishes to manifest
in a secret bed,
where the tongue becomes entangled
but lost like a river.
He loves with bitterness
instead this faint tapping of a heart,
tired,
tired like moss hanging from the trees,
of color disappearing from his life.

Jealousy's orphan
is wolfing down bread,
her glamorous clothes
too big,
sitting on another's porch
in a brokenhearted dream.
"She touches herself to him.
I'm going to call the police."
Sauntering past black folk,
who turn her shadow into a legend,
oblivious to shame,
the darker side of reality.

Triada Samaras

You are married; I am fed up

Don't try to find me
under the leopard-spotted beech trees
Hanging over Clinton Street
in Brooklyn
'Cause I'm gone

Don't look under the juicy ivy bending leaves
Already turning red my man
Yep, I'm gone
Don't look on the prison-bar like white crosswalks
And don't try any of your charm talk
For I'm Gone Gone Gone

In your blue eyes gazing at me
Sometimes I felt loneliness
Sometimes I felt certainty
In your blonde hair smiling
Sometimes my heart was flying
Those strong muscle arms
sure are a teaser
Your Italian posturing a winner
But I'm gone

You can see clear to epiphany
Or hear angels sing
Long into lonely nights
Summer's moist heavy rain
Hear the wind sounds
Breezes blowing on sweaty passionate skins
See the owl-like eyes following
The moon and other things

I'm gone Nino gone
To a place you'll never see
My home calls me now
A place of solace to me

Triada Samaras (continued from col 3)

Gone is where I wanna be
And gone is where I'll stay
Gone is where I have to be
Til you cease your lonely play

See the place where we met
In a selfish garden long ago
Feel the pain in my arms now
As you kiss the next woman hello.

Kendall Waldman

There were once these girls. Brown-kneed with
scrapes everywhere. The inside of their downturned
belly-full heft was coated in sugar but their eyeballs
floated in vinegar.

These girls were told, "be careful," "be careful."
"The world is scary, its full of creeps, but not too
creepy dear." your uncle is not one of them. I am not
one of them. One of those who likes hot young
beings covered in youth like moss. Squishy. Green.
Irresistable. They will always like pigeon steps and
knobby elbows.

And so they grew. trusting like fawn to hunter. Soon
they were lost to a world where hurt is never ending,
rape commonplace and consequences every
consistent and biting like a ruler on the back of
dough knuckles.

The End.

I have no idea what she thinks about and I'm not so
sure I'd want to hear her explain it to me but she is
so foreign. Her hair is like straw thats been left out in
October rain. Long and kinked like broken fingers,
its always tied back at the nape of her freckled neck.
Her skin is smooth, sallow, the color of tapioca.
Underneath her eyes is a bruised brown and
overripe eggplant, puffy from sleep deprivation and
overzealous thermostats. She looks like she's asking
what you do if you're not ready to kill yourself.
There must be a middle step she begs. Can't just be
tears then 23 sleeping pills or a revolver in the
mouth. Please help me manage the middle, Jenny
asks. Please don't explain it to me Jenny.



Erato is published monthly as the publication of the Park Slope Poetry Project.

<http://www.poetrycentral.com/pspp>

Submissions are accepted via email:
Michael@PoetryCentral.com

An effort is made to select poems that have been previewed at the Open reading which takes place the first Tuesday of every month at 7:30 pm in the basement of St. John - St. Matthew Emanuel Lutheran Church, 283 Prospect Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215.

Directions: M or R to Prospect Ave. Walk up hill (Prospect Ave.) past Fifth Avenue. Church is on #283 on the left.

Publisher: William Duke
Editor/Artist: Michael Hilde
Advisor: David Parsons

Erato

Calendar of Upcoming Readings
May 3 - Harry Ellison, Rabbi Harold Swiss + Open
June 7 - S. David, Les Lopes + Open
July 5 - Robert Dunn + Open