



Cuyahoga County
Public Library

43RD ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The Poetry Workshop

November 6, 2016

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ONCE UPON A FLOOR

I nearly dehydrate as I wait outside the house
that in my prior life I was a mouse.
You were the cat that chased the rat
and now you're my wife.
Is it Karma or just our fate?
Before I could crawl under the door,
now I have to wait.
I remember the old owner always saying cheese,
then seeing a flashing light.
My sight isn't so strong in the dark anymore.
I do now look forward to you putting your
hands on me instead of your claws.

Proet C E Shy

SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER

Twenty miles for the papers, twenty back.
Along the roads red, white and blue signs,
campaign and real estate, punctuate
the orangey-yellow departures from the trees.
Where is even the lesser evil
among all these "Buy me" bleats?

On the way home public radio
rebroadcasts Saturday snark.
Later, drinking coffee and smearing
my hands with newsprint from thick wedges
retrieved from the market, I must fight
against smearing my mind with their pitch.

Robert McDonough

THANKS FOR THE EGGS

Dear Farmer,

Thank you for the eggs.

I took two dozen
and left the money in the butter crock, as per your note.

PS: I almost stole the black and white kitten
that followed me down the drive as I left.

What made me honest?
Not the fact that you would fear
he had been struck by a car. Rather this:
my husband,
and the four cats we already have,
would be peeved.

PPS: I may be back.

Mary Turzillo

HERE COMES ALZHEIMER'S

Imagine,

I burrow down through everything,
I find simplicity.

Burrow deeper,
more simplicity.

Burrowing more,
simplicity, personified.

More,
less.

At the end,
nothing's left.

Life goes on without me,
miles overhead.

My home,
my bed,

everything.
No-thing.

[].

Leonard Seyfarth

INCORPOREAL

As if there were a lake.
As if we lay on the beach
and listened to the water.
As if we were too stunned by the warmth of the day
and the relief of being together
to communicate at all
or even touch.

Carolyn England Ritchie



AT THE VILLAGE DOG PARK

ladies in L.L. Bean release to joy
pure breeds fit for lakefront mansions,
and show off the latest fashion in rescue dogs.

Pruned poodles mix with hounds,
their prance fixing movement standards
before the noisy flow of mixed lines.

Clustered, the downhome gentry chat
dog behaviors, ages, diets;
occasionally detach themselves
for pick-ups with plastic-bagged hands.
Except for a casually thrown ball,
they benignly watch the chaos.

But unleashed for the moment from observation
and isolating constraints,
serious husky bitches gather in the corner
to exchange aromatic news
and plan the coming revolution.

Then feigning obedience
they accompany keepers home,
lifted by knowing that on one fine day
it will be otherwise,
with cringing citizens crying
WHO LET THE DOGS OUT?

Robert Farmer

WORKSHOP LIMERICKS

All poets should know how to spell
But some do not do it so well
For such word abuse
There is no excuse
They ring in the eye like a bell.

Some think good poems don't rhyme
This notion is heard all the time
Some poets can't do it
That's all there is to it
Their rhymes clank rather than chime.

For visual loudness perhaps
A poet wrote all words in caps
To throw out precision
One foolish decision
Caused points made therein to collapse.

Our meetings would often be better
If long-winded comments we'd fetter
Too much said by one
Would never be done
If courtesy ruled to the letter.

Fred Schraff

URBAN GLEANERS

From 7:00 am onward, a parade of shopping carts
loaded with air conditioners, copper pipes, gutters,
aluminum siding, electrical wire, and all things metal,
moves south along East 55th Street.

Sun, rain or snow, wiry urban gleaners travel
past public housing and abandoned homes,
push their metal-laden carts
to the recycling compacter

where a crane and boxcar-sized blocks
of metal destined for the smelter
loom above the fence.

Guaranteed ready cash,
for food in the down economy
or for narcotics to numb.

Kathryn Brock

FIBONACCI'S RABBITS

Count
the
rabbits
then count them
again, and again.
Fast as you count, they multiply
in Fibonacci's geometrical progression:
rabbit rabbit rabbit rabbit rabbit rabbit rabbit rabbit rabbit ra--
Exponential rabbits would fast fill the world, until
the world is naught but rabbits --yet
as they multiply
predators
simply
eat
them.

Geoffrey A. Landis

("Fibonacci's Rabbits" appeared in Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine, Dec. 2014)

QUESTIONS TICKLE THE SOUL

What really transfers when a person dies?
Do all their thoughts travel with them,
or do they hang around
raising more questions than answers?
Can you really feel a solid presence
nearby when you think of them?
What actually materializes in a séance?
Is it imagined or tangibly honest?
How come some people talk to their loved ones
even though they've passed from the earth?
Does time make any perceptible difference,
or is all so timeless that matter's not?
Does the conversation change with age,
or is it evergreen?
Can arguments ever be resolved
to your satisfaction,
when it seems like only you
are stuck in place,
listening to your same thoughts
floating around in circles?

Alyson Widen

MY STAR

I look at you.
You are
the only star
in
my darkest
night.

I touch you,
and
your skin
floods me
with flame.

I hug you,
and
your arms
enfold me
with love

I kiss you,
and
you become
the life
which fills
my soul.

M. A. Doc Janning

Published on: www.facebook.com/tearsofmysoul

JUDSON RETIREMENT HOME

He hasn't gotten anything done today.

Mike's eyelids fall as we talk about death;
he's sleepy
from the brandy
tucked in his cabinet.

There's a break
in the conversation
as I give him a moment
to rest.

At 4:30 p.m.,
I tell him to go to bed.

His cat meows
as she uses her tail
as a duster.

Rebecca Ferlotti

CONTEMPLATION OF ONENESS

Small dark grey
heart-shaped stone---
this one because it
spoke to me.

This stone---
among many other dry stones
on the high beach
washed by storm waves
days, maybe weeks, ago.

This person---
green-eyed and sun-burned
like many others who walked
the beach yesterday
and days before.

Mystery, and no mystery
this stone/person connection.
No I, no beach, no water.
No stone in hand.

Just stardust, time,
and the crash of waves.

Jill Lange

ANNIVERSARY

Darkness on the verge of light,
straddling zones
of consciousness,
I'm musing
on the difference
between memory
and reminiscence.
Is it intensity
or distance?

We're in the years
of corporeal
reconfiguration,
concerned less
with discovery
than machine
maintenance,
lubrication.

I'm musing
on the meaning
of beauty,
and of loss,
and contentment,
and tasting something
indescribably sweet.
Not throes of anything,
nor a climactic moment,
just the pleasure
of holding hands, walking
down the other side
of the mountain,
together.

Adrian Schnall

NIGGLE

The clocks all turned their faces to the wall:
Time, but by stillness, lent a hand . . .
as noodled stichs which moment pitched
I sought to tweak their not quite there

& for what pains, mere words to show,
freshly minted . . . my only coin,
that what wood<--critics-->have me change?
where probably iamb knot going!

As by what page have words been penned
was found the time that I did spend.
¿So perfectly bad it's almost good?
I'd have not I'm cowed for words' mood.

— Christopher Franke

BROKEN DREAMS

The walls closed in and I felt afraid.
The curtains waved hello in a mocking, undisciplined way.
Used paper cups were scattered among broken bits of glass;
Stale wine collected dust on its surface.
The stench of broken dreams was insufferable,
But somehow I managed.
The translucent spider that had become my confidante,
Busily spun its web.
Footsteps sounded and resounded in a hall
That seemed miles away, but weren't.
The old wooden floor boards rubbed together
And noisily expressed their protest.
As the bolt was undone and the door was thrust open,
I saw him.
Standing there, legs shoulder-width apart,
He cleared his throat of phlegm,
And spat on the floor.
As hard as I tried, I could not
Keep my eyes from his face.
When I looked into his icy, soulless eyes
I realized I was doomed.
My husband was home.

Myra Wallace

IN MOTION

Chagrin, Cuyahoga, Olentangy Rivers

Big Darby Creek
Mad River
Mud Creek

Great Miami River

Thank You for Visiting Ohio
Indiana Welcomes You

Flatrock, White Rivers
Sugar, Dry Run, Graham Creeks

Wabash River

Land of Lincoln

Salt Fork, Vermillion, Kaskaskia Rivers
Kickapoo Creek

Mackinaw, Illinois Rivers

different Nissans
streaming decades

Dail Duncan

VACUITY

conversation breaks
falls to ground

silence fills
each knot hole

awake asleep
lie persistently coupled

why?
slams the door

life untethered
lifts away

R. Ferris



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