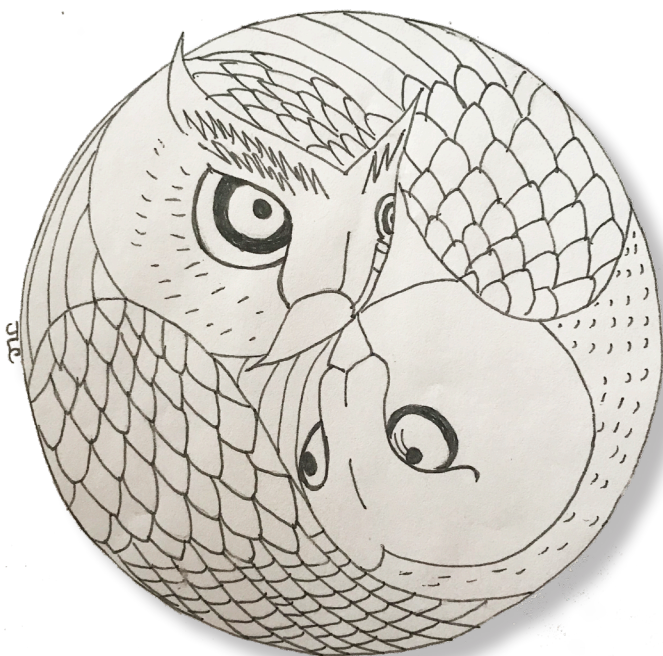


POWER IN POETRY

VOL. 11

2020-2021



POETRY BY THE WOMEN AND MEN
OF
BLAINE STREET
ROUNTREE
AND
RE-ENTRY AND REHABILITATION

The Santa Cruz Poetry Project/Poetry in the Jails began as the legacy project of Ellen Bass while she was Poet Laureate of Santa Cruz County. Over the years, the program has facilitated workshops throughout the county, and with your support will continue changing the lives of justice-involved men and women one word, one poem at a time.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, we've been doing paper-based and Zoom classes with two men's units at Rountree, the men's Re-Entry and Rehabilitation facility, and the Blaine Street women's facility. As a result, we've decided to include writing from all of these classes, collected in one anthology. It's been a challenge to conduct our classes remotely, but with our students' help, we've made it work! We are so proud of them and their creativity.

Our website, poetryinthejails.org, will keep you updated on recent and future events. Please visit the site, and remember, your donations help keep us in dictionaries, composition books, and other supplies; and help make anthologies like this one possible for ALL our classes. We extend our sincere thanks to all our donors.

Special thanks to Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department, Kristie Clemmons, Edward Greene, and the officers and staff at Blaine Street, Re-Entry and Rehabilitation, and Rountree.

The William James Association, a 501c3 non-profit, is the fiscal sponsor of The Santa Cruz Poetry Project.

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Poetry Class

by Michael Rodgers

This is poetry class where
you do it your way.
You don't need to rhyme.
You just have to say
whatever you like
if that is your way.

We all get a turn.
If you don't know,
in time you will learn.

It's easy to say things,
that sound the same.
Whatever you write,
don't feel no shame.

You don't need to be seen,
just need to be heard.
So pick up your pen
and write down some words.

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Thank you to the poets who made this book. And thanks to those who attended and participated in class, but whose work does not appear. Please know that you were heard and appreciated.

Flashbacks

By Christina Shepherd

I used to like your style
You used to like my smile
I said I'd stay a sec
You said stay a while
You started spittin' lines
Said I been on your mind...
& I been thinkin' of you too baby
All the time.
We'd hit the nighttime for a late date
And every day after that for 8 months straight
The weed was rolled tight,
We had our small fights
You shoulda seen how we'd argue
Under street lights
You couldn't see my tears
From the pouring rain
I couldn't see his body shake
When he'd say my name
He said I'm not the same
"Tina you've changed"
I said "Baby it's pain
From this jail stay"
We went our separate ways
Man, I was hurt for days...
& I didn't even call
I went through withdrawal
Flashbacks of his face hit me sometimes.
& I been wondering if he ever thinks of mine. Δ

Rearview Mirror

By Julia Cabibi

Who are you
Who do you want to be
Shed your skin
Get in the car
Floor it
Leave your old self behind
Leave her in the dust

You know who you are not
That should show you
Who you want to be
Take off your blinders
Walk out the door

Leave your past behind
You know who you are supposed to be
Be proud of who you've become. Δ

Lights Out

By Jacqueline Gomez-Lerma

Lights out at 10 ladies, wrap it up.
Sitting in the dark on top of my blankets
I get stuck on the coldness of my room
deep into the 100 tabs open in my mind.
My eyes seem to want to wander to the
little dust I see, then noticing the static
as I blur into a vivid memory. Δ

Doing Time

By Corina Cagle

In jail I sit doing my time
for breaking laws and crossing the line.

Jail time is the price of
a life full of crime.

Was it really worth it??
A question that rolls over and over
almost constant in my mind.

What is “doing time”? Doing time
is not doing or doing nothing here
when you could be at home
drinking wine.

When doing time, all I think
about is the possibility that
doing the right thing would
have been fine.

Maybe after all this
I'll just walk the line. Δ

Panic Buttons

By Corina Cagle

I panic when the
teacher calls for homework
while I'm starting.

I panic when the phone
rings and rings and rings
and I'll hear no answer
on the other end.

I panic when I think about
not holding onto my son this
year at his birthday party
while he blows out his candles.

I panic when I think about
life moving on without me.

I panic when I think
about the feelings
that come up when trying
to think about panic. Δ

Lesson

By Christina Shepherd

Punishment is painful
when you know that you deserve it.
Another year for a dime bag
now tell me was it worth it?

Surrounded on the daily
by these lames
feelin' super stagnant
every day is the same...

Don't guess there's more to learn
for me before I hit the gates
I hope to open up my eyes
and not leave here with hate. Δ

The Eyes of a Child

By Christina Shepherd

When I was little
a child just growing to be
we were playing hopscotch
in the middle of the street...
I was innocent
but shown no love
eight years old
exposed to drugs; swept under the rug...
With polly pockets
and a bike

as young as I was
I had to learn life,
all alone.
Everything for me was an experience
sidetracker --
never taking things serious...
This little homegirl
just wanna be free
and live life
as long as she can see

Through the eyes of a child. Δ

1989

By Jacqueline Chavez

I was just 1 year old
I was in my high chair
I was shaking
the whole house was.
I heard my mom screaming
I heard things fall
I heard my mom ask my
brothers if they're ok.
It shook the whole town for
seconds but felt like minutes.
We all gathered outside
waiting for it to end.
1989 earthquake shook me up. Δ

What Keeps Me Going

By Jacqueline Gomez-Lerma

Being alone is not always
that bad, think for a min.
While seeing the ocean waves
see what will make the next
day better than today.
Take a walk, watch the
sun set down, have
FAITH.
Hold on to the cross
wrapped around the
neck.

Pray
to be on the other side
again.
Rhythm of my music choice
is what keeps me going
all day. Δ

Words

By Jacqueline Gomez-Lerma

The power of one little word can be so great,
little words are a voice.
“Love” and “die” can be such small, simple words and yet
have such a powerful hold on life.
Something so simple can do
serious carnage
on one’s life. Δ

Insomnia

By Cornia Cagle

A moment of stillness before sleep,
it could be the calm before the storm, the storm
that is the chaos of our minds
churning into thunderous clouds in our minds,
the fog between being awake
and walking in a dream.

Like lying in bed awake
waiting for unconsciousness

or

waiting in line to get into a popular ride
at a theme park.

The dull stillness of insomnia
is the time when patience
and stillness

will eventually lull you
into the non-punctual time of relief,
a time
of dreams. Δ

The Sleeping Gypsy

By Corina Cagle

The gypsy is dreaming of playing music for a beautiful girl
at an oasis.

The lion wondering if he should eat it, run from it, or
continue on.

The moon is dreaming about how much he misses the sun. Δ

I'm Me

By Jacqueline Chavez

I'm beautiful

I'm smart

I'm funny

I'm a mommy

I'm loving

I'm caring

I'm thoughtful

I'm shy

I'm happy

I'm silly

I'm Native American

But most of all I'm me.

I love too hard

I love my kids

I love my family

But most of all I'm me.

I'm chubby

I'm short

I'm friendly

But most of all I'm me. Δ

Spring

By Jacqueline Chavez

Greens and reds and coppers

It's time for spring.

Yellow and orange and brown

Are the colors that are

Falling from trees.
Spring, spring, spring
Is here. Greens and reds and
Coppers and yellow and orange
And browns, the colors
Of spring.
Spring is here, spring is
There, spring is everywhere. Δ

Letter

By Vanessa Randall

It happens every morning
It happens every night
It happens in my dreams
It happens so much
I forget how to be me.

I wish I could hold you
Squeeze you and kiss you.

I wish I could call you
To tell you I love you
And miss you
I wish you were here
Making my life more bearable
This was supposed to be a letter
Not a poem or confession
I just wanted you to know
That you make me complete. Δ

Better or Worse

By Vanessa Randall

I hate my job
I hate my life
I hate waking up
I hate this room

I wish I was dreaming
I wish I was younger
I wish I was loaded
I wish I had a new life

I miss my sobriety
I miss my shitty job
I miss that room
I miss that life Δ

Sand

By Vanessa Randall

I have sand in my bathing suit
And I can't get it out
There is sand in my sandwich
So I have to throw it out
It's on my blanket
And in my hair
And yes, it's down there
It's everywhere. Δ

Untitled

By Alura Castillo

My love sways in the wind
Like a flower gently
Dancing back and forth.

My fears bear down as harsh
As a hurricane.

His laughter bursts out like
Thunder

My heart beats like bass

My pain rushes in like the
Sudden break of a dam

His hand comes down like
A hammer.

My cries blare like a non-stop
Horn.

My loneliness consumes me
As a stage gone faded
Dark. Δ

The Sleeping Gypsy and His Guitar

By Lacey Banks

I notice the guitar first and then that it's night and I see the lion showing that calm as nature makes you feel empty, not reacting to what should put fear into, yet you're happy that there's another living soul - animal, person, fire, water, the wind, rain, even a guitar - with or without a bag of clothes, food, anything worth keeping with your night, or somewhere you come back to. Δ

The First Time

By Jadie Cahill

The first time I saw your beautiful face
and held you in my warm embrace
I knew in my heart that love was real.

I've never felt anything close to such love.

An entire life full of pain you healed.

The bond that we share can never
be replaced.

Nothing else matters when I picture your
face.

I hold you close to my heart and
can't wait for the day

I can be the mother I am
and show you the
way. Δ

Mystery and Madness

By Corina Cagle

One topic to explain the mystery

And madness of the people and things I've

Fallen in love with.

The list flips back and forth and life's

Changing. People come in and out of my life

Like changes in the seasons. However, there's

A handful I've held onto, and for good reason.

I am cursed with a heart that loves too -- often, or easily --

So it's usually the reason it's torn apart from underneath

easily.

Love's all over, I'm in love with the things that embraced me

and my life,

My pros and cons are never weighed because friendship is

never far from love.

Sometimes my heart gets confused or disappointed, when

falling in love

Was nothing more than a game play.

I love my family, I know that's a love I don't worry will leave

me.

A poem about love has left me speechless, love is here, gone,

and

To be continued... Δ

Missing Pieces

By Jadie Cahill

My foundation is gone and without it
I am confused and weak. I try to find
The tools to rebuild, to find my strength
And over and over I'm left helpless and meek.
I never questioned my ability
Or where I wanted to be in life.
Confidence ran thick in my veins
Until my fate took an unexpected turn
And my life became far too insane.
Having you here and by my side
Made everything bearable. I don't know
This world without you. I'm lost and
Confused and can't seem to find the
Piece of me that is needed to move on.
I need you here like I need air to breathe.
I won't give up, but I don't know how to
Live without you. Δ

Still Surprised

By Julia Cabibi

Finding hope in a hopeless place
Has taken me by surprise
Never did I imagine this is where I would reconnect
With the love of my life
He was there before
Over a decade ago

And I've loved him all this time
Our love is stronger than any love before
I can even use that cheesy line
I've found the one
And it's real this time
Love more than I've ever known. Δ

Water

By Jadie Cahill

Something so central to our
Existence. The existence of the
World and everything in it.

Hot boiling water to make
Our coffee/tea....warm water
To draw a bath. Cold
Water to drink on a
Hot sunny day.

I've never thought of
Respecting something that
Keeps me alive, although
After this exercise I now
Have a different outlook
On this clear, wet, tasteless
Liquid. Water. Δ

Would You?

By Sean Villareal

if I told you we could do all the things we've never done
would you be mine for all time

when we're going through a dark place feeling like there's
no sun
would you stay mine for all time

when the world is falling down around us and there's
nowhere to run
would you stay with me for all time

if we don't make it to paradise falls before this is all done
would you still love me for all time Δ

The Turtle Screams

By Cole Mertes

Ice cream cans full of blueberry skins
Plucked on a guitar of roaming crabs
Sinks through the ceiling of hazy fog
while cows gallop all through the night.
I make way with haste for a
Stray bumblebee swimming on the wall.
Green weeds wilt, blossoming into spiders
That laugh at sights silent to the
Tiny elephants feasting in the eye of the storm.
The chaos subsides and tranquility ensues

but not before the turtle screams
“Don’t Step on my Shoes!” Δ

I Want to Fly Amongst the Stars

By David Jones

I have a fantastic and unusual wish
I want to visit a faraway place
I want to walk amongst alien megaliths
Built by an ancient extraterrestrial race
Somewhere in a galaxy far from here
Away from this little blue marble called earth
Away from the judges, prejudices, weapons, and fear
Away from the police, prisons, and material worth
Put me on a spaceship faster than light
Let me fly amongst the stars light years away
Let the people here hate, kill, and fight
I’ve lost faith in this world, let come what may. Δ

Rope-a-Hope

By Michael Rodgers

Hope, I hope I can cope without the use of dope,
I hope I can cope without being thrown a rope,
I hope I can learn to cope without dope and
Staying clean without soap,
Because soap won’t help one cope without
The use of dope. This is what I hope. Δ

Garden Grove

By Juan Flores

In my garden, I've only planted one seed, but many things have grown around me, in me. Home...My sisters seemed to grow to dislike me more than care for me. The three of them and I grew apart. A love for poetry, music, and writing, what I feel began to reach for the sun, soaking up all praises from family, friends, and strangers as nutrients, allowing me to feel more centered in my aspirations. The dream. Unfortunate Events...I slowly fed my addiction, harvesting a monster that attached itself to me, draining me of all my energy, even my will to live, thrive, love. I wilted at every edge. I wilted to the ground, ending in cage, after cage, after cage. Dad...By the grace of God I was plucked from the ground. I finally replanted trust in my heavenly Father's love. Stretching my hands high, I thank Him for allowing my one seed to grow beautiful, and strong. I impatiently wait for the day I am to return and tend to her. I will let her know that it's OK to make mistakes, to make a mess of everything. Every day above ground is another chance to make it better, and grow... Δ

A Path

By Riley Limroth

I walk to the ends of a flat world falling
Without rhyme or reason
Similar paths I am traveling, soon to
Hit my demise

Not knowing if recovering is written
In the stars and one day I shall
Persevere.
I will persevere
When I think of the line that is designed
To split two halves, my vision has become
Blurred.
Society's perspective seems to over-
Shadow cosmic truth.
Our recognition collectively has strayed
Off its path.
Am I or are we a reflection of a
Flat worldly perspective? Or are we
Right where we need to be? Δ

Untitled

By Michael Rodgers

I was sitting on the cliffs by the sea,
The waves were breaking very close to me.
I was enjoying the sound of the waves
The feel of the waves pounding against the rock wall
I was perched upon,
The stars were bright in the sky,
And I began to wonder why
God was so nice in so many ways, yet....
The world has so, so much wrong. Δ

Magic Time

By Justin Marc

Well my magic place is beautiful.
Thousands of us gather for the same thing.
Lights go down, then it gets real bright,
they walk on and it's pandemonium.
I only hear screams.
Then they sing and I sing.
Here they come, goosebumps
that can only be produced by
music / harmony of guitars & other instruments.
My favorite harmony is of
voices singing together beautifully.
This is my freedom.
My favorite drug is music
and I've been addicted for 43 years.
I will never get bored of it
'cause it's rebirth to me every day
or night.
This is my magic time. Δ

The Other Side of Nothing

By Riley Limroth

A guided path through the reflection of a mirror.
A variation in refracted light.
I become aware down a vacuum slope
Heartbeat driven powered with electrical neurons.
The other side of nothing, I now exist

A brand new child in a place of harmony
Sound and vibration is all I can see.
Memory of thy self becomes non-existent.
I'm stuck in a void that is better
Than reality.
I could get used to this. Δ

My Grandmother's Pins

By Jadie Cahill

The beautiful, yet gaudy Bakelite pins,
And the pins made of ivory and gold
That my grandmother used to wear --
I see smiling faces, drinks raised high,
Classy. Intelligent. Strong.
Wishing I had more time with her.
Wishing I knew more of my family history.
The pins and the rest of the material world
Is unfortunately lost beyond reach.
Curiosity remains and my heart yearns
To find relatives to help guide me
To uncover more memories
To bring her back to life. Δ

Masterpiece

By Riley Limroth

I spend what little time that only
Exists in a lifetime
Connecting to a higher self that might
Only exist in a perspective that could be shattered
And broken
Not knowing if this is the correct path
To travel down. "Is it too late to readjust
My habits that have become a stone?"
Taking my stone and chiseling a
Masterpiece that holds everything I know
To be true.
Trusting my faith to let go of the inside
To become the space that allows me
To thrive.
Expectations that no longer seem out
Of reach, but have become accomplishments.
To know end is my journey from start
To an end that does not exist.
The pinnacle of language that cannot
Define the continuum that no brain can
See. Δ

Wake-Up Call

By Justin Marc

I figured it out my brain
Was in a drought. I was thirsty

For the word, so I can soar like
A bird, or maybe a paper plane,
To me it's all the same.

It's all about the take-off
And flight. It really doesn't
Matter the length of the trip.
You must thrust forward to get lift
Not too much drag, trust the
Fuselage is strong and your
Two tails are precise.

Five seconds in air is freedom
Enough to reset your brain.
So land safely and fly again.
Life can be as simple as a paper
Airplane. Enjoy the flight day
Or night. Bon voyage! Δ

Untitled

By Brian Johnson

Breeze drifting by
Dancing on my skin
Tight red eyes
Peering up towards the bright sun
A desert runs deep
Toward the back of my mouth
All will end under the protection of my blanket. Δ

Her

By Riley Limroth

A feather lightly brushes her left
Cheek bone.
Acknowledgement brings rosy cheeks and
Sparkling tears to each other's eyes.
Warmth and electricity binds our bond covalent
Like a leaf that falls from the top
Of a tree.
Two atoms in parallel paths somehow
Go beyond physics to break their paths
To intertwine to become souls of one
A summer breeze with the perfect
Combination of warmth and love. Δ

Just Be Mine

By Michael Rodgers

Wave after wave
Your love crashes into mine
Our love is intertwined
Wrapping itself around our hearts
Making them combine
A lot is on the line
Headed straight for the stars.

We would not falter
Should we build our house with brick
I fell soon as you blew a kiss

You smiled
Cuz you know I wouldn't miss
When I caught it with my lips -
I'm giggling like a child.

Who knew we'd find a way?
Since we started with frustration
Now we're stars carved into pavement
Choosing love's time
So don't you go changin'
Lord knows I got the patience.
Don't speak...
Just be...
Mine. Δ

Untitled

By Juan Garcia

Forever mine
Gone now
But not forgotten
Might have
Cried but
See the sky in your
Eyes
Then quietly
Sigh
And then know
Goodbye. Δ

Untitled

By Riley Limroth

Like pictures on the wall,
lost until noticed by thoughts that have
many perspectives.
Distortion through the painter's eye.
Inner thoughts of creation divine.
Expression through an artistic hand holding
a blade of grass.
Cutting through the fabric of tantalizing
thought.
Continuous thought being expressed through
art.
So many lost expressions over time never
being appreciated.
Doodles of endless genius.
A secret so coveted and rare lost
forevermore, time's disastrous lock and key. Δ

Understanding Reality

By Justin Marc

Well, pain is back stronger than ever!
Clearly my actions weren't clever.
Time, time, time, way too much decline.
I fucked up, now all pay the price.
My loved ones need me, seems I'm
Punished twice. If only I
Listened to the ones I hurt, I

Wouldn't feel so remorseful,
My value's less than dirt.
Well, I'm alive and sober so I
Obviously can grow. I'll do my
Time, pay the price and show
My glow. Understanding my
Reality, owning my life, being
My best, and never make the same
Mistake twice. Δ

Fishing

By Brian Johnson

Sitting, waiting, listening,
Looking.
Blue, green, brown
And grey.
An eagle cry, water
Washing on the shore.
Children laughing in the
Distance.
The fishing pole in my
Hand, the sun on my
Face, a gentle breeze on
My neck.
It's a beautiful life.
It's a wonderful time. Δ

Untitled

By Riley Limroth

My breathing becomes erratic!
I sense my eye senses through and through
Unparallel when two points become one.
Equilibrium brings chaos into balance.
Inner peace becomes serenity, a paradoxical
awareness that brings physical substance
to my feelings.
A perspective that doesn't break, but bends
its way back to me after letting it go
with blind faith.
The sound that travels as guidance through
cosmic fabric that no eye or feeling
can express.
We are anomalies of space that electricity
intricately makes us compatible on the
great continuum of right this very instant.
Unique becomes habitual throughout our
existence of one lifetime
overlooking perfection when it's so blatantly
you and me. Δ

Family

By Michael Rodgers

Growing up in a family the size of the one I had
wasn't always easy, sometimes it was great,
but sometimes it was bad.

I was the youngest of eight,
my memories are good for some of those years
and a bunch were filled with many tears.

I remember sometimes I was treated real bad,
I would run to tell my mom
and she would in turn tell my dad.

I didn't like being the youngest in the bunch,
I was picked on too much.
They would even steal my lunch.

My brothers were mean,
I was always real sad,
I thought the only ones who loved me
were Mommy and my Dad. Δ

A Wave

By Mark Mendoza

At the beach I kick off my shoes and take off, I run free.
Run with my eyes closed on purpose to see
If I can feel and hear myself at the water's edge.
My toes sink into wet sand and the noise of the waves
Crash a few feet away.
I stop, and open my eyes,
Just as a wave envelopes me. Δ

Time Chaser

By Justin Marc

As I look back in time and try to make it rhyme
I can't avoid my crime,
It makes me cry every time.
It's a shame with only myself to blame,
My decisions are far from mundane.

But who am I to question
The things that led me to need correction --
I made decisions that led me in the wrong direction.
I made my family's finance need protection.
It's been a year since I had an injection,
Or felt safe enough to have an erection.
But I know I'm saved because of Jesus' Resurrection.
All of it foreseen with God's close attention!

So I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be now,
And this is my life lesson. Δ

Untitled

By Jose Contreros

With whom I'm pleased
That is the question
Whom I say that is
The question. Is it
You, is it Her Him They
It. Whom I say is it

Me that is the
Question. Answer it.

Would you want to be
yourself, or would you want
to be the person you
are from a young age. Tell
me who gave you the right
to tell me who I am.
I have darker skin so
What, I love life so
What I don't hate so
What I don't judge so
What I don't care what
You say What so or
So what front or back
I am who I am
So What. Δ

Bright Eyes

By Larry Palomino

Bright eyes
And the goal of this
To see you
I'm blind
Without your love
I have no fate
Nightly haze
Would amaze you
Until I see you again. Δ

Siblings

By Manuel Silva

I throw out my line from my pole, fishing
With my elder brothers, two of them.
Without saying a word all 3 of us already
Know this isn't a leisure day, to
Relax and enjoy the quiet. This, as
With everything with them is all about
Competition and who will catch the most
Fish. Somehow I end up on top at the
End of the day, I caught twice as
Many as them combined. I threw all of
Mine back into the water, along with the
Proof that I had won. Back at home they'll
Never admit their lil brother outfished
Both of them, and I threw back the proof. Δ

Time's Thief

By Patrick O'Neill

The crime of time a fine which cannot be unwind, for it is
cold and the excuse is old, so is the face that tells days laid
down never to be found. Another past where the picture
alone fades and ages, images the pages telling of the time
deserter of our prime, trenched in a bind a failure of my
mind to understand, deceiving myself of where I belong
til the world be gone, for I long to see her face and take her
hand to never lose sight of her again. Perish the days I let
slip away from the heart I bent, spent as a fool and cruel to

the one who is true, plaguing the mind and inflicting the
soul to a horrible toll, a shade which took the light out of
the day and brought a cold to the night, sickening the sleep
where loneliness and grief creeps, stealing the rest and peace
stolen by this thief. Δ

Untitled

By Brian Johnson

O you feed both, train both, become both animals' master,
Become the alpha
And if one won't submit
You put it down
Or let it go. Δ

Bird of Prey

By Mark Mendoza

I move just the same
Fluid smell, and
Also touch
The limbs I live and
Dwell on
I can see for miles
Hear all prey
And taste the
Reward Δ

Waking Dream

By Jadie Cahill

Lost and alone I wake up in
this place.

My world had changed
drastically, I tried to picture your face.
Too hard or just too painful,
I locked the memories away.

Slowly I let them come to
surface, it's the only
way.

I let you back in and I
consume the pain in time I
know it will get brighter
but for now it shall
Rain Δ

Ode to Rain

By Patrick O'Neill

When I was young I did a rain dance to give the clouds
a chance to give up some of their water as I hit my drum
harder. As a teenager I rode the waves til the end of the day.
Growing up in California, the rain gives way to sunny days
and the ground gets hard as it thirsts for a drop of water,
but the rain rarely comes when early spring is done. For the
most part, watering starts from November to early spring
when the coastal mountains turn green, then to gold again,
where the golden state namesake takes place to a waterless

state, where there is no fall to a little boy's call. When the snowpack is sound and mother nature has blessed the former grizzly bears' ground, a liquid of gold is abound, for the people, businesses and farmers around for the water shall melt and come all the way down, millions will suckle her teat to a plentiful treat, seasoning its meats and savoring the juice of the greatest fruits for watering the golden roots, the silicon suits, and the Hollywood stars it travels so far, and you taste Hetch Hetchy's bar. Δ

Untitled

By Mark Mendoza

It is time to know it's
Not all
I took a break
Shattered
My glass was half empty
Now it is full
Full of love
Full of hope, realized that my
Eyes choked and I dried
Them faithfully
Clear of mistakes, cause I will
Remain true to fate
To be forgiven
By myself. Δ

Someday

By Larry Palomino

Someday
In the future
I will
See
Our
Past relived
The love
Will never
Be lost
In the sun
Up in the
Clouds Δ

Splash Mountain

By Michael Barry

This is a poem about the recent change (in the news)
About Disneyland's Splash Mountain ride,
Whose racism has followed the tide.
First the hateful flag came down
Then the statues toppled
Then Aunt Jemima fell
Now, Splash Mountain, in its glorious art
We will quell.
The hateful Song of the South's removal - righteous
Thus as such right by us.
But how I will miss you.

I will not forget - getting into the flume
Caverns as dark as midnight
A looming fright
Lingering.
A shivering bone
Tingling.
Fear shattered by a soft slope
The softness of which pales against
The immense splash ahead.
A deep breath before the plunge.
The soul sings during
The fall
But in the face of racism
I say bye to them all. Δ

Small World

By Patrick O'Neill

The emperor of the east, the
Mediator of the beast, emporium of earth
Suckling the worth, the firth of
Monetary growth currency floats, the
Opium war sitting at your door.
The babel and fall, the contagion
Will not stall, morph a deadlier
Pestilence makes its call to a
Small world after all. Δ

Buddy

By Jose Contreros

Here you go, Chuy told Jose. You
Wanted a friend, so I bring you one.
What do you mean, Chuy? Here, open
Your arms and behold your loyal friend.
What shall be his name?
It's Buddy, my Buddy to the end.
Even though I have no money to spend
I will love you my friend, with love
You can't pretend.
A happy day it was.

He went, but did not come back.
Why, Lord, why did you take him in his puppyhood
Leaving me alone and angry
With no one to walk with around the neighborhood.
Be sad no more, Jose, as at the beginning it shall end.
You shall be with Buddy, your Buddy
To the end. Δ

Untitled

By Ricardo Garcia Ruiz

I roam the world without a destination.
Now that I've lost the love of my life
And my children due to my addiction,
I roam the world without a passport.
Unable to be there for you -- I dwell

And run around aimlessly with thoughts of
Reconciliation. My addiction follows me
Like my shadow in the scourging heat
Without any trees or pillars to harbor me.
Tears flow like rivers and no one seems to
Understand me -- except you, my pillar.
You're listening but I can't seem to tell
The stories that are pouring from my heart.
Although I may never see you again.

I roam the world without a destination or passport.
Trapped in a golden cage unable to be there for you.
My soul as immense as the love I have
For the love of my life and my children.
All is shattered and I shiver -- bones rattling as I
Sing my last melody and
Breathe my last breath.
(Take my last breath.) Δ

Untitled

By Mark Mendoza

I was once free, but now I'm caged,
Locked up and away...
I could never do that,
Even to an animal. Δ

I Remember

By Ricardo Garcia Ruiz

I remember the first times our eyes met.
Yours green, mine brown.
We lived in forest lakes among the redwoods,
Filled with trails that led to streams of water.
We met in Paradise. Two strangers sitting across
From each other at the dining table.
You wore glasses and held your hair up in a bun
With chopsticks. Your intelligence held me captive.
We roamed forests looking for waterfalls.
Filled with wonder that drove us beyond mountainsides.
I felt love for the first time, and my soul felt alive.
Your birthday came around and I snuck up to your window
Filled with balloons and sunflowers. As playful as you were
You grabbed the string from the balloons and let them go.
I gave you flowers for the first time --
You swooned in my arms.
Midnights by the beach
In the back of my truck's bed - facing the ocean.
Blankets and pillows -- you fell asleep and your softness
Made me shiver. So many moments that I failed to
Remember the night when water was pouring on our
Youthful faces under the moonlight. I was struck
With the idea that love was finite, when in fact
It was infinite -- a single moment
Shattered
That made me forget all of the love
That my soul has for you.
I will always love you. Δ

How I Began Writing Poems

By Patrick O'Neill

My lassie, my love, the one I am always thinking of,
Is the greatest writer and poet I have read and she never
Leaves my head. To lose the freedom of your sight
To view the night, the stain of my view to see the stars
Over you, deny a celestial feast, where the heavenly beast
Roams high in the sky.

Cast between white-washed walls feeling so small.
Oppressed by false tongues which must be undone
Falsehood brings grief but truth shall bring relief.

I assail her heart, breaking it apart.

The injury reared, can I repair?

How can I relieve this bitter siege,
An impregnable solid state chamber
And fate self-imposed to hold.

I am the one who batters her soul.

To water down your world is a fool's garden
Eaten alone.

If only I could turn the hand and
Rewind which time bands.

The dread of day, the cry of the betrayed.

A wrong so great which I hate
An offender's mate. A great woe,
A great blow

To be your own foe. Δ

Apple Duet

By Juan Garcia

#1. I Watch Her Eat the Apple

Beautiful, white core
Like her teeth
Lips
Skin of the apple, like
A garden
Her name is Eden
Smiling and inviting
A kiss of what is to come.

#2. Who is a City of Apples

We all are from somewhere
Be it free, be it locked down
In the end
It will all be judged
Consumed by mistakes
Or be it fate
We can all get a break Δ

Untitled

By Patrick O'Neill

My absence tortures our heart
The misery tears us, a separation
An affliction rips the spirit apart

Dealing fading blows as the hands
Of time go, injury grows, anxiety
Shows its daily flash, yesterdays
Past, a torment rewinds the days
The pain which does not fade
The freedom and love betrayed the
Rapture of our ways
Befriend a robber and a thief
Brings agony and grief. Δ

Prying Open Its Feverish Mouth

By Bennett "Mike" Healy

Yes, you say you love animals, but
what if your favorite animal is ugly beyond all measure,
do you still love this particular animal?

Or if a pet becomes sick
and you must pry open its
feverish mouth every 4 hours,
to deliver medicine;

or if, sadly, your favorite animal
becomes rabid and bites you,
do you still love this animal? Δ

What Is Next

By Jacqueline Gomez-Lerma

Every day seems like a test.
Will I show up to class? Or get high
Today? Maybe call it a day
And drink some liquor with
The girls as we got no destination to go.
I could be learning statistics and be a good girl.
It is tomorrow, the girls
Want to do the same as yesterday
Ride through the coast and
Have a smell of the cookies
Burning, wrapped around a honey
Bourbon between the lips.
I chose to say “not today,”
Nor ever again.
While I got my education, I need
To work my brain. I need
To show my parents I got it
And I’m doing it for them and myself.
I show up to class
And sit on the front row
Ready to learn. Remind myself
It’s only for a few hours that will just fly.
I love it there. Δ

I like the light of poetry

By Patrick O'Neill

I like poetry for the way the words sway to
The pen's bend, to a rhyming blend and to the utter end.
I like poetry for what, then and when to the pain,
Stain and fame to begin and the
Feelings within.

The light of poetry opens one's eyes to a
Poet's cry as they cast their die to reveal
Why they use the words to enlighten and express
The feelings in the chest, a treasure to behold
As the words flow and the reader's knowledge
Grows to a priceless treasure trove. Δ

If You Knew

By Bennett "Mike" Healy

All the things I found out
And still I love you.
-- If you knew
All that I discovered
And yet I still love you
-- If you knew
You could do not wrong
Would you still love me? Δ

If You Knew

By Michael Barry

What this process is like
It's a factory
We are processed, us all
No factor too great, too small
You must go down the line
Time after time
"Breakfast!" "Medication!"
Chime after chime
The crime isn't to do with time
It's that waiting line
The unknown
"How will it go this time?"
Will court be cancelled?
Will it go wrong?
"Breakfast!" "Medication!"
Has become a song.
The beat is the chains
Clank. Clank.
Court looms. The factory.
What could go wrong?
Arms bound. Echo
That damn echo sound
If you knew what this is. Δ

Bad Things Are Going to Happen

By Bennett "Mike" Healy

So it may be best to often
remind ourselves to "relax."
just as the ol' saying "Life
can be a bowl of cherries,"
one should also be aware
of the cherry pits - to remind us
all that rough roads lay ahead.
Even if the strawberry seeds
can be troublesome, the oh so goodness
of the strawberry is so much more worth it.
So relax
and enjoy this fruit.
As in life, all won't be stormy.
A clear and beautiful day is almost always assured
to follow at some point. Δ

A Poem About Work

By Cole Mertes

Working with lumber
My hands went to work
Brain disengaged
Working all day, to make the pay
From 2-4 lifting 2 x 4
Now in jail, for using a 2 x 4
While not at work. Δ

Joy

By Michael Barry

Joy of life
Joy of (a little) strife
Joy of goodness
Joy of fullness
Joy of happiness
Joy of lapping up happiness
Joy of discovery
Joy of ill-fated discovery
Joy of all discovery
Joy of having joy

Fear

Fear of life
Fear of (a lot) of strife
Fear of fear
and fear of fear of fear
Fear of crowds and balloons
Fear of no money
Fear of too much money
Fear of loss
Fear of memory loss
Fear of no joy Δ

Work Poem

By Alvin Thomas

What happened to the fire?
The one I desire!

'Cause when I think of work
I think of that song
I don't know th' words to.

'Cause when I think of work
I think of the toxic scent
I used to wear.

Light invades darkness as fast as
Work evades me. Δ

Wishes

By Cole Mertes

I walk through endless thoughts
of marshmallow fields rolling with
squares that end at nowhere.
The oceans flood each hand of
the octopus while sessions of waves
pound the frontal lobe of students
lying 6 feet under praying for one
more ring of the bell. Δ

Purple Haze

By Kevin Terry

Purple haze on
Lazy days, dazzling
Off on sunny glaze.
They call me the
Seeker of purple
Haze sunset
Days, purple, blue,
Yellow, too, orange
And red
The sun going down
The day is almost
Dead. Purple and red.
Sunset dead. Δ

Between the Moon and Gotham

By Patrick O'Neill

To fight time's scheme is futile indeed.
We both took part in the thief of our heart.
Her haze gave way to wonderful unforgettable day when
She looked my way with a magical gaze
Upon my eyes the spell surprised as I feel to tell
Of a hex, as I was perplexed by the opposite sex,
As she cast her mystical stare, voodoo was clear and in the
air,
So I walked right by this magical eye,
And I cannot deny or lie, she caught my eye.
As my heart started to race I paced down 9th Avenue
In view of this sorcerer's view, sleepwalking too as I drew
Closer to you-know-who.
Checked by a gaze and her beautiful sway,
I asked this celestial being, Where do you come from?
Gotham, she said with an angel's breath I was obsessed.
Can I walk your way? So we talked all day
Making our way to Dantes.
I asked her out for a bite, to a jazz club that night.
A crazy thing to do is to get lost
between the moon and Gotham, too, because
All I do is think about
You-know-who. Δ

Why Do I Keep Falling?

By Julia Cabibi

Is there anyone or anything to blame
But myself?
Do I need to reason with blame at all?
Could it have been those girls in grade school,
Or my lackadaisical attitude about
The need for social grooming?
Maybe it was my need to go against the grain
That I shied away from the typical suburban
Middle-class upbringing I was offered.
I thought that I had found my way
Regardless of my running off.
I thought my climb to the nearest mountain
Was my destiny
Until I fell from the highest cliff
Face first into nothing.
Where did I go wrong?
Who or what is to blame?
Clearly I made my own choices
And in the end that's all that there is.
And all I can do is pick myself
Back up
And keep on going. Δ

Pray for Peace

By Larry Palomino

Just be you
Orange or blue
Whatever you do
Like a breeze it
Should be cool
And that cloud
High in the sky
Keep your head
And know
You can
Fly.

An angel lands
An angel flies
In the end
It's up to
And through the
Sky. Δ

Ways to Count the Dead

By Patrick O'Neill

First Wave.

For a world spent to an end of a perished spring
To days spent in place of the entire human race except
For the ones in the essential case, to help those in shelter in
place.

Count and behold the positive grow, fear for the old, the horrible toll.

The very sick shall be sapped of breath til death. The young shall kill

Their keen to the very end, for the touch of

Death is upon their breath. For a ripper creeps

And leaps then seeps into another feat to one's heart beat,

To change again, maybe a friend will bring you death again.

As the virus spreads, the dead from the ICU bed lie

Buried alone to a loved one's moan at home, to a

Dearly beloved host to no public or private toast.

To the baby boomer ends, this is no friend.

Second Wave.

The mission to halt the transmission of a disease which affects you and me. We shall see a great wave purge the land of man, for if only they kept their head in the sand and did what the epidemiologist said about the gravity of the dead remains, who will you blame in this social claim to keep this virus tame under a political reign where the economy goes lame and Congress for its fiscal shame. The listing of your will, to the leisure of your liberty, to spring forward, exposed to the one will be you, undone. Listen to this chime in time, where your mind can longer be confirmed. As a cold winter front shall pass, how long shall this virus last, til the breakthrough is found more shall be bedded to the ground to a common grave to die in their bed as we count the dead, where no one will pray as you rot away to a decay to an earthly sway, where the worm plays. You were taken away, forgotten to stay til the end of days your skeleton lays. Δ

A Poem With Humor About a Serious Issue

By Michael Barry

Not having food and you complain?
Ever had airplane food?
Being cold and you complain?
Your heater's never broke?
People view you strangely?
Never had your shirt on backward!
You miss your family, yea?
Holiday get-togethers suck anyway.
No job? No money?
My rates are too high.
Your shoes broke?
Amazon sent me the wrong size.
Addicted to drugs?
Join the club, I love my coffee.
Homeless problems aren't hard, everyone has
Problems. Δ

The Trash Men

By Michael Rodgers

They do a job, it's the same every day.
They pick up trash and take it away,
Then go to the dump
A few times a day.
That's all they do, is
Pick up
And drive away. Δ

Kindness

By Julia Cabibi

What is kindness
If not given freely
Without any want in return?

What is kindness
If only given
With self-serving intentions?

That is not kindness at all.
Kindness has been lost along the way
Missing are the strangers
With their random acts.

What is left
You help me first
Then I may help you.

So much is lost in the ego self
Build me up or I will surely hold you down
In this we are going about things all wrong
In selfishness we serve no one
Not even ourselves. Δ

Cuba!

By Michael Barry

Cuba! Beauty beyond words
But I'll tell you what I saw.
Miami, USA to Cuba,
A safe haven to Havana
Across a blue liquid, vast and tranquil
To a concrete strip, cracked, weed-ridden and tiny.
The fence was small and insecure
For an airport, peculiar.

The streets were quick and colorful
Cars, bikes everywhere. Smog rampant.
The taxi was loud, its blue color - loud.
Its old style was loud
The driver was loud.
The houses were poor, made up by a wealth of color.
Reds, blues, greens. Any house, any color.
The laundry on lines much the same.

I remember the sun, the rum, the dancing fun,
Banned guns, and woes of the trip being done.
I saw horses and streams and cigars.
O! The haircuts! Each precise and as manicured
As the tobacco fields. Beaches and clear water
Like a bath before you enter.

Beauty beyond words - and we haven't yet
Discussed the smells and tastes. Δ

Untitled

By Patrick O'Neill

If you knew the rage, a siege upon the days
Defaced, a butchery in troubled sky, an acquaintance,
A special soul space, thirsty, quenching for peace
To no relief.
In your brain it drains a remain, insane.
I am to blame for the shame
Reflections and memories come of my love, come to me as I
Creep into sleep, with a belief I know within my soul
Is deep down underground, where it is not found among the
dead
Who lie in their bed.

If you knew I bent time to go back to the past,
To go where time does not go, to a space out of place,
Dark as a moonless night, with no light to cure a blind plight
Upon life, with a short lot of thought, to know
Where we all go.
The fat lady blows her pipe to tell the hour is ripe.
It's best to put up a great fight before that night.
The reaper casts the spell that all is not well. Δ

The Rise and Fall of an Addict Vol. #2

By Justin Marc

From there to here, boy it seems queer.
I was dirty, grit, grimy living in a muck
Of my own creation. I had it all and
Lost it all in need of a nightmare vacation.
I would do what it took to reach that
Chemical ecstasy.
Like a succubus, I would take
From the people next to me.
Deeper and deeper I'd drop, who's this reflection?
I need to stop!
God save me before I'm gone.
Please give me the power to put down my crack bong!
Let's just say
I was saved -- be it AA, NA, CA,
Or a woman who believed.
The addict is dead, I killed that SOB.
Now when I look in the mirror,
I clearly see
Me. Δ

200 Days

By Justin Marc

Two Hundred Days
For this I give praise, at this point I'm amazed.
When I look back and gaze at the years I
Lived in a shameful daze.

All the crack I put to blaze.
My brain locked in an endless, closed maze.
I saw no way out and
Hurt the people that were good to me
And for me.
So I will never forget,
And will always regret.
But today I celebrate
Two Hundred Days. Δ

Fear/Joy

By Michael Rodgers

Fear of the anger inside me, fear
Of hurting those beside me. Fear
Of what I don't know, fear
Of nowhere to go.
Fear of who I be, fear
Of what I might see.
Fear of how I will grow.
Fear of how much i will know.
Fear of something I said.
Fear of fixing it before bed.
Fear of not being loved.
Fear of the heavens above.
Fear of hurting myself.
Fear of my life on a shelf.
Fear of dying too soon. >

The joy of going.
The joy of knowing.
The joy of having.
The joy of giving.
The joy of being.
The joy of seeing.
The joys of life.
The joys of a wife.
The joys of the wild.
The joys of a child.
The love of the joys
We grow to create. Δ

Every Time I Look At Your Face

By Juan Flores

A vision of beauty
Intense passion
Elegance
Things I think
When I look at your face
Collision with scrutiny
Illegitimate action
Pestilence
Things I see
When I look at your face
Precision with shooting
Killing in rations

Intelligence

Things I imagine

When I look at your face

So obscure, the only surety, more of the hurt.

I cower and worry, for there's more pain for me, surely,

Every time I look at your face. Δ

When Winter Comes

By Michael Rodgers

Standing in the prison yard

Watching the clouds stream across the sky.

Seeing the shapes the clouds make of

Themselves and the sky.

Wishing I was free on the top of a mountain,

Hearing the sounds around me

While watching the clouds making

Shapes in the great blue sky.

When winter comes, the rains will fall.

The clouds will open,

And the rain will fall. Δ

Tumbling

By Justin Marc

Tumbling in a dryer
Getting burnt and brain damaged.
Tumbling in a dryer
So helpless and unfair.
Tumbling in a dryer
I can barely breathe.
Tumbling in a dryer
I'm about to give up hope.
Tumbling in a dryer
As I start to choke.
I'm tumbling in a dryer
Can't anybody see me,
I'm tumbling in a dryer
Won't somebody help me?
I'm tumbling in a dryer
There's no handle in here.
I'm tumbling in a dryer:
My worst living fear. Δ

Memory of a Parent

By Michael Barry

My mother was a hippie
Weren't you?
You wore dresses with a flower in your
Hair. That you'd twirl.
Unknowing the bustle of the world

Until she had children
And knew that she'd miss 'em
Unless she put aside the life she led
To tend to them instead.
A life of no woes
And trips to Mexico,
A free spirit let go
To go work at the Metro.
And yes, we were poor
Weren't we?
You had nowhere to keep me.
Like a traveler on a bus, you too me with you
I hid out of sight.
I remember the shadows of customers
Smell of sweets
Ding of the register
An exchange of coins
"Thank you."
Five years passed
You became a nurse - and others now said "Thank you."
Didn't they? Δ

New Home

By Justin Marc

What will be my new home?
Will it be my dream place?
Will I live there alone?
Will there be laughter and nature or
Will I be in a locked fortress with >

Regret and stress?
Will I have love, cuddles, and kisses
Or have hard times, bologna, and flavors I miss?
Will I lay on a soft bed with pillows,
Afghans, and pets?
Or will I sleep on a cot, in a bunker
In a corridor behind a fence?
Will I wake up and go to my stocked fridge,
Or a vending machine with nothing good for me?
Will I be able to walk naked if I so desire?
Or will I be strip-searched
for paraphernalia or peanut butter?
I like the concept of making a spread,
But I'd rather be with family when I break bread.
I am my church wherever I go,
But I crave the Eucharist to reset my soul.
If I ever get out, will I have a home?
Not a place to be checked on, counted on and counted,
With nowhere to be alone.
I believe I'll make it, one day, a home for me,
My loved ones, and animals to roam. Δ

Alone

By Michael Rodgers

I've been alone for too long,
I like to be alone -
It's easy on the soul, it inspires thought,
It brings peace,
It's easy on the soul.

I like to sit alone on the cliffs
Above the beach
Listening to the wind, to the water
As they preach.
The water laps on the sand, slaps on the cliffs.
The sound is so peaceful,
So good for the sole. Δ

Abalone Prismatic

By Kevin Terry

Oh abalone shell
You are giving me
Such hell as I'm
Trying to peel
You from the
Rock, the heel
Of the abalone shell
Prismatic rainbows
To the drop.
Abalone, you feed
Me and become
An ashtray of
Prismatic rock
Rainbow, teal
Beautiful feel
As you suck
Yourself to the
Rock. Prismatic
Splendor to the
Last drop. Δ

I, Too, Am America

By Michael Barry

I, too, am America.

I, too, have given an eye - two!

Done time for the fine of "Freedom."

Freedom? Cities got grime 'n' crime,

America be bombin' 'n' blamin' it on

Osama 'n' soldiers screamin' for momma 'n'

On the news I saw 'em

Too many lawmen.

I can't breathe.

I should leave.

But I, too, am America.

I've sang the Anthem's beats

Ate school's processed meats

America!

Worst in Education

Least in Healthcare

Fewest road lanes

Shortest skyscrapers

Most poverty with mass riches

All so "they" can enjoy a nice Christmas.

I, too, am American.

My name is on those bombs.

My taxes fund those bullets.

My votes storm those beaches.

For "freedom."
For America. Δ

You Are No Bother

By Jose Contreras

Grandmother & Grandfather
You are no bother.
This country, this state,
This county this city are
What they are because
Our grandfathers we love
We care because of our
Grandmothers. And no,
You are no bother.
They made endless sacrifices for
All future generations, no
The ungrateful beings we are
Look down on them.
They are bothersome.
We pay back their love, kindness,
And humility with abuse,
Put them into elderly homes
When of no use. O America!
You make war with other countries
And tell them to be humane to their people.
You say "it seems you have a splinter
In your eye" and get angry,
Make threats,
When they answer "you have a log in yours." >

Take care of your log
Before you tell me about my splinter.
We are born warm like summer
But die cold like winter
O God O God my splinter!
You call my country uncivilized,
Third world, bad and ugly.
Let it be known, let it be told
That in my third world,
We care, love, and cherish our old.
We look out for them like they did for us
When they were not old, we were infants.
O America, how I pity you,
The young ones.
I love the old.
What you sow, you reap - now you
Are in the elderly home. Open your hearts,
America,
Be third world. Love your parents.
And cherish your old. Δ

Not Sorry

By Julia Cabibi

I'm not gonna apologize
for being me.
You can take the sorry
you're searching for
and shove it
right there where the sun don't shine.

All the time
I've wasted
caring about what you,
they think.
Well, that's gone and what's left
is now.
Today is for me.

I'm gonna dance
through the shadows of sorry,
stir up the dust
and laugh as I prance away. Δ

Pandemic Poem

By Manuel Silva

Here I am locked up and away from the world.
Away from the things and people I love.
I'm in jail.

BUT SO IS EVERYONE ELSE!

There's a pandemic going on...the whole
World, our country, every state, each county,
And every household is in jail, too. Δ

This Day, and Probably Also Tomorrow

By Erin Reis

I can't hear you anymore. The walk
is real as you feel that morning chill.

Alone again I lie, she cried, you
wronged and I'm right.
The hole in the heart has healed
The broken heart is no more mess.
Full of thought, full of regret,
dashed, not yet.
Full of memory, full of pride,
today I begin a new page, another
poem.

So many notions fill the day with
more words than I can say.
I will dress the words with gowns
of silk and chiffon,
some sexy pearls and gold shoes
to run them.

No more talk, my life can be elite.
I'm sorry someone is crying.
I'm sorry someone is walking miles
for water.
While somewhere a bomb is getting
ready to explode. Δ

Untitled

By Brian Johnson

I'm in jail
Surrounded by assholes,
And most of them stink.
I'm social distancing with
Guys I don't want to be
Social with.

But I can call people I love
I do have time to read
Award-winning books
And I also have time to work out
And get healthy.
Ain't so bad, I guess. Δ

Ode to the Sky

By Sol Aquila

The sky
Thank you for sun
Replenishing rain
You shine
and fall.
You're both
and the same.
You're all.
Above,
below. >

Through it all,
blue and cool.
You give Earth life,
and all its inhabitants,
too. Δ

In Which It Lies

By Thomas J. Farrell

My gratitude lies in my gratefulness,
my thanks lies in my thankfulness,
my loneliness lies in loved ones missed
and my power resides in my faithfulness.

My will lies in my willingness,
my fill lies in with which I'm blessed;
and though my Spirit will still arise at death,
I'm grateful still, for each new breath. Δ

Ode to Coco

By Alvin Thomas

Oh, Coco, how you pick me up!
How chocolatey and tasty you are,
especially when you melt.

As you move with delight,
as you heat up
and even when you're solid,

you're the best snack.
When I'm down you keep me
on track.

How I'd go loco without coco,
How I'd go loco without coco! Δ

Not Easy

By Julia Cabibi

It's not always so easy
to make the change that is necessary,
but a time comes in life
when it's either change
or die.

Get off the road,
you're driving the wrong way.

Gather your senses
turn the page

look in the mirror

It's gonna be okay.

Put one foot in front of the other,
sometimes you have to crawl
before you walk.

Take advantage of opportunities.

Stop wasting time.

Learn how to love yourself,
set your spirit on high.

Gather meaning, find you purpose.

It's never too late --
until it is. Δ

Death Among Us

By Thomas Farrell

There is Death on the stairwell,
 there is Death in the air;
There is Death on the playground,
 playing games at your fair.

It distinguishes not,
 and extends freely its gift;
Ceasing abruptly,
 the life of one who once lived.

If Death sets upon you,
 It cannot be deterred;
For some Death is tragic,
 for some it's deserved.

There is Death in the wastelands,
 it rains Hell from the sky;
Death is life's promise,
 for we're all set to die. Δ

My Friend the Moon

By Julia Cabibi

This has definitely been the longest
night of my life.

More than 430 sleepings
and wakings
of the sun.

The sun I so long to feel
warming my face.

My bones ache and I find myself
wanting to stay in bed more
and more often.

Soon the days will grow longer
once again,
and I will find a little sliver of sunlight
in which I can warm my face.

Soon this long night will be over
and I will move through my fear --
my fear that has been holding me back.

It's not so bad on the other side,
at least that's what they have been
telling me.

In fact, it seems it may be a little better.

One thing I know for sure, though,
is the sun will shine brighter
and my days will be fuller
than my nights.

And I will no longer wish to drown
everything out in my friend,
The Moon. Δ

Ode to Chevrolet!

By William Veyl

Thank you for making the Camaro.
To other cars, there just ain't much comparo.
A car that's sleek, a car that's fast,
Who would've known you'd be such a blast. Δ

Ode to the Sun

by Jose Contreros

Good ol' sun, who is faithful and delightful
You who shine on us all, no matter
our race, place, or case,
you give us life
and sometimes take it,
all the same for that
you are a fair judge
as you don't care for one
more than the other. Δ

Ode to the Park

By Abel Tapia

Lights shine on you every morning,
birds hang along,
babies with baby bottles,
wind in your ear.
People smile with you,
as water flows.

Love is everywhere,
love,
and people love you.
How can peace feel like this?
You are my ecstasy in my life,
you are my water to my plant.
Park, you are as kids ride you. Δ

Mentally Imprisoned

By Christina Shepherd

Mentally imprisoned
long before my incarceration,
broken from the inside out,
no hope of progressive creations.
Stagnant but never still,
numb while in tremendous pain,
staying with my hand raised,
voluntarily insane.
My demeanor is convincing
as I look up with a grin,
but my soul is deeply burdened
from insanity within.
What remains from my tattered life
that I have left to learn --
shit, I guess I'm doin' it --
local prison term. Δ

Grandpa

By Patrick O'Neill

A shovel hits the ground because Grandpa is around.
Worked in Golden Gate Park, did he, planting redwood
trees.

To till the ground fresh earth be found, an earthworm's
playground,

A beetle's town.

Plant a tree deep in the ground

Then pack it down so the grow will be sound

And the roots shall abound.

These redwoods we plant here will rise very high

Before Grandpa dies. Grandpa said

These trees will keep growing every year as the world

Around them disappears.

As we perish and decay, these great redwoods shall stay.

They will grow stronger and tall, outlasting all.

To live on the fog siphon as a giant log

Lapping more than a thousand hogs sucking up the fog.

To cruel nature's life span, this tree shall stand

Longer than any man, or his plan

For this tree's DNA is set to be in longevity

But shorter than the great pines on the eastern decline

Of the Sierra mountain side, where the grizzly

Scratched his aching back. Δ

Giants

By Julia Cabibi

Grandfather trees
and giant ferns at my feet.
I walk through the forest
out onto the riverbed.
4 AM fog clears my head.

It's the most beautiful place
I have ever been.
It was the story
behind all my hopes and dreams
My reason for living
My reason for crying
My reason for wishing
For wanting something different.

When I die
I would like to come back
as one of those redwood trees. Δ

To Those Who Know Better

By Thomas Farrell

Their pickled praise,
has swayed my way,
my spirit dismayed
and fickled my faith.

I know what those bastards preach,
disasterous blasphemes;
to what end but catastrophe,
of a spiritual masterpiece.

I don't doubt God's Great Place In
His Holy Creation,
but your obfuscations
must be trying His patience.

And though I vow to know Him --
The Big Omnipotent,
but if "blind faith's" all you're quotin',
then fuck off with your notions. Δ



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