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Brief Moments

By: Codey Lembck

Introspection

i tried
i strung our neck
i lauded my fears
trapped in a closet
pecking through
a witness to ambition
belt whipped by his father
no
i tried
shit
my love for you
was stained with semen
and the smell of flowers
no
i tried
you fucked
me
him
you
i fucked myself
in bathrooms
reeked of urine puddles
shit
and orange scented soap
orange juice licked
from your nipple
hard
my pain
hard
my pool of happy
iced
no
i tried
who wins existence
who matters
i don't
you did
you do
shit
i feel intertwined
a root through your soul
your veins mine
no
i tried
i'm broken
you're broke
us a doll with no eyes
no smile
left for death
next to my cold skeleton
no
i left

His Aura

There is a wrinkle wiggled at the end of his mouth
that's filled with the sheds of wisdom
spoke from the movements of his tongue
the tones of his throat
the bridges of nerve gaps in his brain

There is a roller coaster in his eyes
that I want to lean my body out of perilously
witness to the immense gravity of his life

His hair curled with the past strife
the present notions of want
the future grieves of loss
there is a curl of past flirtations
floating in his marble sink
there is a curl of present sexual tensions
hanging carelessly in front of his view
there is a curl of future nights laying naked
not yet in existence
but I can feel it's presence in his aura

His smile is a crescent moon
gracefully descending into it's tide
I want to be on the beach where it hits
I want to be crushed by it

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Cantata Argentina

By: Lucrezia Pierro

They dwell among the ruins of Terre Argentina,
little gods who own the city.
They are the high priests of broken temples,
a colony of cats who stalk their sacrifices:
an unsuspecting pigeon, a skittering field mouse.

~~~~~  
Their acolytes, the gattare, bring offerings;  
calamari carried in a Dolce Gabanna bag,  
left over linguini on a paper plate,  
bit of milk poured warm into a chipped saucer.

In the Roman sun, they curve like odalisques  
curl around columns, lounge on ledges,  
but under the robe of night  
they gather.

With eyes like votive candles  
they watch the moon,  
and in its spotlight  
they sing out cantatas  
caterwauling  
desire and despair,  
suffering and love.

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### Pedestrian View

By: Abi Rexrode

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During the long night, avoiding sleep, I walk the streets  
With questions looping around like infinity  
Leading me down dead ends in dark alleys  
Where shadows consume the wanderer.

With questions looping around like infinity  
Past an old man with eyes like a dormant volcano  
Where shadows consumed the wanderer.  
The greens and golds of youth became something darker.

Past is an old man with eyes like a dormant volcano.  
Wondering when my own time starts fading  
The greens and golds of youth become something darker  
Pushed aside by the finalities of taxes and death.

Wondering when my own time starts fading.  
My feet continue their own wearisome loop  
Pushing aside the finalities of taxes and death  
Trusting the road continues beyond this obscurity.

My feet continue their own wearisome loop  
Ever on like the second hand circling around  
Trusting the road continues beyond this obscurity  
To somewhere with answers I hope I'll accept.

Ever on like the second hand circling around  
Leading me down dead ends in dark alleys  
To somewhere with answers. Til then I'll accept  
Trying to avoid that long, endless sleep, by walking the streets.

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### The Turtle By: Vanessa Jasek

I sit awkwardly in my black dress with the tiny white flowers,

among a sea of black trash bags, in what was once your room.  
Your Mom, oh, your sweet and devastated Mom, she brought me here,  
to get swallowed by the bags, to choose what pieces of you to take.  
I'll do it, but only to ease her troubled mind, offer her something,  
anything, other than another "I'm so sorry."

You looked so peaceful, I almost didn't see.  
Almost didn't see the shades of crimson life streaming  
from your nose and your mouth, just an after-thought  
of the actual big bang. The gun looked fake.

The smell of casseroles wafted up the stairs.  
I spot a small pewter turtle on your dresser, not banished,  
not buried with all the rest of your one time treasures in the  
sea of black trash bags, where I sit awkwardly,  
in my black dress with the tiny white flowers.

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## Two Poems

By: Jasmine Griffin

### Enchantment

You amaze me,  
Bewitch,  
Bedazzle,  
And enthrall me.

You fairytale thing,  
You imaginary wonder,  
You skilled sorcerer,  
You bejeweled king.

You shine like the moon,  
Dance like the twilight,  
Sing like the wind,  
Roar like the ocean.

You mythical monster,  
You legend amongst truth,  
You sword baring Prince Charming,  
You great white knight.

My alluring beast,  
Captive,  
Mesmerize,  
And charm me.

You make believe creature,  
You whimsical rapture,  
You mystical thrill,  
You enchant me.

### Silence

The silence screams,  
Howls like a banshee,  
An omen,  
So loud it blocks the noise,  
The noise that is my thoughts,  
Swarming.

That's how it's been,  
Without you,  
No thoughts,  
No calm,  
Just raging quiet.

You knew,  
I think,  
I know you knew,  
Or maybe you hoped,  
That the silence would kill me.

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### Various Poems

By: Mark Melanson

#### Elegy for Anne

Although we are  
deux femmes supêmes  
from random decades  
I know that you  
and I are alike  
my sororal twin

(Even though,  
as you know  
I, like Hamlet  
lack the courage  
to be a coward)

Nonetheless  
I too  
have two moons  
which eclipse me  
with such a sweet, sweet  
lunacy

Each tugs  
tugs with its  
own grave gravitation  
towards cirrus heights or  
unsounded depths -  
for you know too well  
one cannot savor either  
without its other

But I do have to ask  
since we are now sisters  
Are you truly a sexton  
in more than just name?

Can you then toll for me  
a Sanctus bell?

Thrice should suffice  
I do think

Once to clear the bats,  
once to clear the air,  
once to clear my head

For I too dread  
this time of the year  
desolate November,  
desolate November  
with its plucked forest  
gray and barren  
as I am now

Perhaps  
when you are  
finished  
with all that infernal pealing  
could you be a peach  
and go and fetch  
a requiem shovel?

Then exhume gently what is worthy  
and inverted

reinter what is not

#### Cajun Huguenot Jew

Displacement is forever  
in my genes -  
woeful ghosts haunt  
these helix strands  
still longing to remember

Oh, how it weeps  
this primal wound  
wailing in the night  
with a trampled faded voice

It echoes across stolen lands  
invisibly blotched -  
sweat, tears and blood  
long ago dried and blown  
far away

Forced from Evangeline's Acadie  
driven out of Papal France  
fleeing Darmstadt's seething eyes -  
I descend  
from three entwined lines  
anointed with an acrid balm  
of loss and scorn

Perhaps this is why I am restless:  
studying redrawn maps  
gazing at distant stars  
trekking around an unkind globe

Desperate somehow to rescue  
scattered and tattered rags  
of old refugee dreams  
about a home

no more

#### Poetry Workshop

Warm copies circulate  
papers shuffle then pass  
around the poetry ring

signaling it's time  
to unveil the art  
take the literary bungee jump

Echoed thumping pause  
one final breath calms  
before the title crackles dry

then without warning  
each line speaks itself  
as voice and heart accompany

till the final stanza  
arrives almost surprising  
like death itself

After glacial silence  
I thaw with relief  
as poetic judgment awaits