A painting of two women in a blossoming orchard. One woman is seated on a stool, wearing a light-colored, patterned shawl and a dark hat, looking down at a book. The other woman is kneeling in front of her, wearing a light blue dress and a red headband, also looking at a book. The background is filled with blossoming trees and green foliage.

The Orchards Poetry Journal

Summer 2019

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Inspired by the small plot of apple trees near Cambridge, England, where writers have gathered for years with their books and pens, we welcome you to pull up a chair and enjoy poetry in the orchard.





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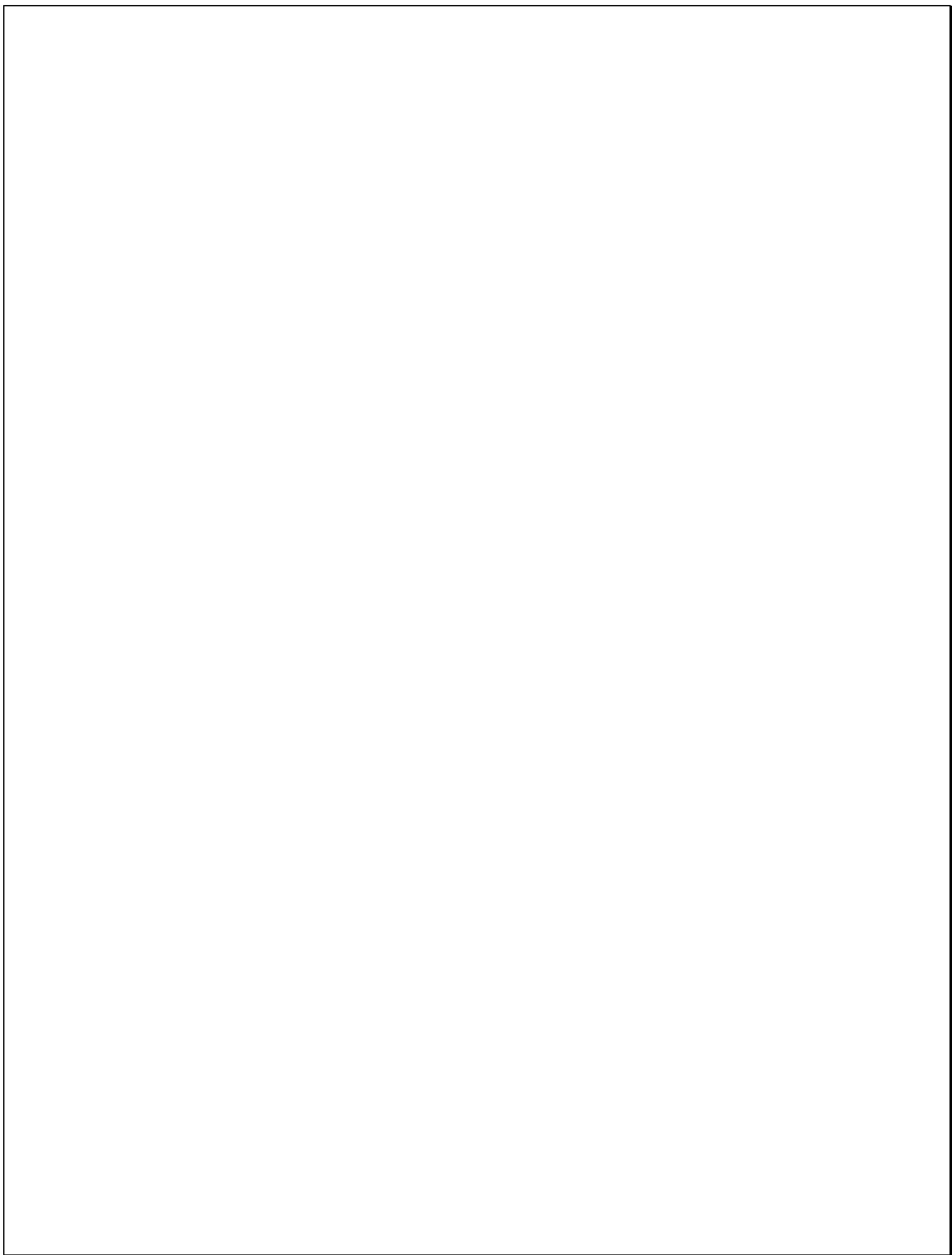
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Steven Duncan

The Crossing

Our family trunk won't fit these cobbled streets
or hold the home our fatherland enshrined.

Within us now a quiet voice repeats
the prophet's call to leave it all behind.

We burgeon forth, our eyes with faith alight,
through rain and steam determined in our quest.

We vowed in Ribble river, dressed in white
to make our Zion voyage to the west.

Farewell dear England, mother of our dead.

Goodbye old town of Liverpool, adieu.

With hope in Christ we ever look ahead,
our hearts reformed by truths we always knew.

Although the journey promises travail,
the time has come. Unanchor and set sail.



James Owens

Tent

At six A.M. sky unfolds from the horizon
like shot blue cloth splashed with milk—
except it doesn't, he thinks from the top of the stair,
watching dawn justify the window, the garden.
As light diffuses through the upper air,
we fabricate, requiring this suave silk
or the worn cambric of an autumn evening,
winter's foggy wool or a satin sunset.
Else, we might be left with what always is,
the black gaping forever on nothing
then nothing above the undefended houses,
from which, even cloudless nights, we don't fear
absence, because we sew stars to black velvet
and think *gems*, think *velvet*, cozy and near.



Carol Louise Moon

Sweet Peas of Jack Creek Road

Jack Creek Road's alight with many sweet peas.
We walk among them parasolled this spring.
Our walk a gentle sauntered ease,
we touch and smell these lovely things—
we see them as they sway amid a breeze.
Farther down the road, a fragrant sight
that looks a lot like down of fluffy pink.
But here, up close, these folds of white
surround a centered red eye-wink;
we see them as they are in springtime's light.



Robert Donohue

Flowers

There was a farm, and on this farm grew flowers,
And in those fields, those long abandoned bowers,
Was an outhouse. I heard my mother tell
How on to her its awkward use befell
Because the indoor plumbing was reserved
For people more in favor, who deserved
The special treatment. In that wooden room,
Surrounded by those acres then in bloom,
The paper wrapper from a peach or pear,
Was, by necessity, provided there,
Run through, like some receipt, upon a nail,
Yet in the air, if you would just inhale,
There was a sweet aroma, a fair scent,
Which followed you no matter where you went.
My mother told me in this atmosphere,
Down by the chicken coop, as death drew near
For Sunday's dinner as it lost its head,
My relatives would wager, comforted
To guess, for all the fun it could supply,
The time it took a headless bird to die.
A famous architect has bought the land
To build his home; please let him understand
That from a place that had such meanness comes
The gifts of dahlias and chrysanthemums.



Ruth Maus

Brexit

When tribal leaders voted a cease-fire
the moated island natives didn't care. They
savored pounding down some feral enemy
and scalping their (mostly) figurative E.U. hair.

Suspicion dies hard. That's why borders make
commercial bloodshed archipelagos of pride
and lands amass great periodic outbreaks
of stink-eye cast at anyone outside.

If France delivered croissants, the Netherlands
produced great cheese, and England's cost of
living went hand-in-hand with all Spain's
plethora of ham, would most folks be
hard to appease?

And would that, perhaps, bring Brexit
to its knees?



Larry Levy

Packing

This is in this morning's news,
this video clip of a hawk-faced guy
wearing neither shirt nor shoes.
He is firing into the evening sky

to arrest the foreigners' attention,
especially this nearby kid, flinching low,
as if as in Hollywood this posture would
redirect the bullet's blow

to his cranium. Now the barrel
aimed at the heart has nothing to discuss.
End of story, and this is the moral:
This is My Street! And You're Not Us!



Larry Levy

Almost Eleven Years

She no longer sat at the kitchen door.

When put out, she mostly slept
under the lilac, under the step.

No gift of rodent anymore
lay waiting for us in the dawn,
a trophy from her midnight hunt.

A foundling, a long-haired runt
we'd bathed until the fleas were gone.

Now she didn't speak, didn't complain.
She ignored the nuggets in her dish.

We tried beef, a bit of fish.
Both ended in the compost bin
and in a week were gone to dust,

and when she died, as all cats must,
we shoveled through the crust
of ice, and lay her, weightless, in.

Next morning I expected her
to greet me coming down the stairs
or later curled on my chair,
a cloud of gray, electric fur.



Vera Ignatowitsch

Battle Scars

As soldiers both we'd seen impressive scars
our brethren sported, casual and proud,
paraded in hot weather through the bars.
You'd nod respect but never ask aloud.

The day your hand touched mine in mute appeal
my breathing tripped on questions in your eyes.
I answered there and then. We would reveal
much more than marks. We'd drop our alibis.

The anger wasn't lightly overcome.
It clung as ever to the guarded truth.
We marched in step to that insidious drum
familiar as a jagged broken tooth.

We struggle now, to say just what we mean
and stumble where the wounds remain unseen.



Vera Ignatowitsch

Propriety

What is it in the entertainment biz
that makes hotel rooms normal places where
you'd hold a meeting? My hotel room is
a place to read or play some solitaire.
In offices and boardrooms, sometimes bars,
we plan our strategies and make our deals.
The older gents squint over their cigars
and don't look like they've passed on any meals.
Our commerce, though, is not in looks or flesh.
Shenanigans are stock tips, Chinese walls
disguise the shadows where grey areas mesh
into invisibility.

Lust calls
the greedy into darker places where
an empty mirror joins in evening prayer.



Robin Helweg-Larsen

Barefoot

After your city feet in socks and shoes,
after your crowded evening with its booze,
your air is tainted with your body's sweat,
unclean and laden with a vague regret.

But we are free
who live beside the sea,
can choose what our life spurns or craves.
Surely we reach
purity on a beach,
daily dallying barefoot in the waves.



Erik Lloyd Olson

The Fisherman

He flings the waving net spread wide
into the sea, drags counter-tide,
and takes the pulse of rising gales,
head bent, mind tethered like the sails.

From the fierce quiver of surprise,
he strains to grasp the living prize,
net choked with lurching diamond scales,
head bent, mind tethered like the sails.

Dead weight from life ashore uncast,
he sweeps for silver darting past.
He gleans pin eyes through kelp's brown veils,
head bent, mind tethered like the sails,

yet cannot catch the reason why
gulls sometimes laugh and sometimes cry.
He rides the waves, though the storm wails,
head bent, mind tethered like the sails.



Louis Gallo

Vision

Again I sit by this fountain and see
the years flutter by like motes
as the bells chime and the sun sinks
behind a willow tree
and darkness spreads like frothy ash
though my eyes still see
my shadow teaching the girls to ride
their bikes along the path
and later Peaches and Daisy
steaming across the sward
to catch the plastic ring we toss
and long before I see my bride,
before the dogs were born,
before they died, her hair long,
lambent, her eyes glowing wide,
and another child I see
who soared away with the wind,
a petal from our apple tree,
and I watch my father,
nimbused and pale walk toward me
to whisper goodbye
and as the years congeal tonight
into a burning moon
I weep as I did when a child
praying to atone
for all a fountain rains down
in a single splash
as we rise and rising, drown.



Ryan Apple

Sonnet

O Christ, when you return to bring your reign
Will sleeping infants hear your trumpet call?
Are they invited to your banquet hall
Which welcomes in the poor, the blind, and lame?

Think of non-sentient stars, summoned by name—
These ancient lights like common sparrows fall.
You track our graying hairs; you count them all
And weigh an hour and century the same.

If you recall the smallest vein you knit
And stitch the robes the least of these will wear;
If you do not call nascent lungs unfit
But find within the faintest cries a prayer,
Then wake our daughter; dry a mother's tears,
And hundredfold redeem the stolen years.



David W. Landrum

After the Ice Storm

After the ice storm, branches lie scattered,
split off from maple trees, thrown to the ground
like bodies on a battlefield, shattered
and silent, motionless where they were downed.
And when the sun shone brightly, we could see
clear drops of sap, like tears, fall through the light,
oozing from broken branches in each tree
that fell a victim to the wintry spite
unleashed that year: trees mourning for the dead,
the broken limbs, thrown down, never to leaf;
trees weeping tears lamenting branches spread
over the earth and sorrowing in their grief.
The lamentation finally will be done
when leaves appear after the sap has run.



Ann E. Michael

Ice Breaker

We catch a ride to the river,
there's a spillway that freezes over.
Kids go skating there in winter.

I wear my mother's skates; it takes
all my energy just to stay upright.
Friends whirl around me. Later,

a boy grabs my mittenend hand,
shows me where the ice is smoothest
and how to listen for the sound

of danger, the thin rustling shudder
that foretells water surging beneath
and can suck a person under.

I listen closely, amazed
at the boy from Camden. *What's his name?*
friends tease. I think I'm pleased.

He gives me his number
but I don't call. It's enough for me
not to have fallen, just to remember.



Ann E. Michael

Big Fish Eat Little Fish
after Breugel

Beached, big fish belches out its undigested meal,
from its innards, the crab, oyster and eel,
wings of the mussel shell
joined at the shoulder of a porpoise, smell
that pummels shoreline with a powerful wave
of decay: what the sea gave.

Man with a sawblade, like a surgeon,
frees the squid, flounder, sturgeon,
the tender, stinking meal.
Overhead, carrion birds wheel,
guffaw, ache to peck out the gelatinous eye.
A fisherman hangs cod up to dry.

In the dory, a man gestures to his young son,
“See what the **LORD** hath wrought. Such a one
swallowed Jonah, and with such gore
likewise vomited him upon the shore,
for big fish eat little fish.”
Meanwhile, at the top of the food chain,
a peasant with a trident takes aim.



Benjamin L. Pérez

Our Faulkner

Our Faulkner who art in O'Hara,
Hallowed be thy Neruda.
Thy Kafka come. Thy Whitman be done
On Ellison as it is in Hurston.
Give us this day our daily Baldwin,
And give us our Toomer, and give us our Thompson.
Lead us to Twain; deliver us Emerson.
For thine is the Kerouac, the Kingston, the Kinciad,
And the Plath, and the Paz, and the Pessoa,
And the Ginsberg, and the Gilman, and the García.
For ever and ever—and ever and ever.
Auden.



John W. Steele

Downward Facing Dog

If you've watched a dog stretch out its legs,
you'll understand precisely what to do:
from all fours just raise your tailbone through
the sky as you extend your arms and legs
and push your chest in closer to your knees.
Downward dog is not so hard to do.
Kids love it—foxes, cats and cougars too.
Watch them and you'll see it done with ease.

Downward dog gives dogs such satisfaction.
After every nap they stretch out long,
wake up their whole body, make it strong,
and give their spine and neck much needed traction.
If you'd like to join them, dog along,
stretch out your whole body, make it strong.



Lisa DeSiro

Motherly Advice

If mothers say a thing, it must be true.
As when, while teaching me to drive: *She who hesitates is lost*. Yes, I could see the logic there. And in another thing she often said: *Shit or get off the pot*; i.e., make up your mind, a maxim which can be of use for certain persons, I agree.
A third thing she was fond of telling me: *Sometimes you have to do what's best for you*. Meaning, make yourself the first priority when necessary. Which is not the point of view most women—most mothers—take naturally.
Including her. *Do as I say, not as I do* was left unsaid. And yet I heard that, too.



Annalee Eagerton

Traumabomb

I collect fragments, radio
dispatches on loop over the wires.
My memories are a reel of film
cut up,
wormholed,
projected through magnifying glass.
My trauma isn't repressed,
it's avant-garde.
I am TV static in a crystal ball
suspended in bullet time,
a connoisseur of blanks,
the shadow of hum
within a nuclear blast.
This is my tapestry
built against gods,
thunder, wooden spoons.
I am rubble, aftershock,
refugee of my own body.
Even my birth was a shattering—
I have always been escaping
womb after collapsing womb.



Elise Hempel

Lost Words

I wonder tonight if you ever knew
I'd find your crossword puzzles almost done
on the table, take up your still-warm pen
and sit there thinking, finishing what you
had tired of or abandoned, a word or two
across or down, one section you'd left open,
wondering then if you'd notice them—
your empty squares filled in—as you threw
the paper away, those letters slightly different,
a few too dark amid your lighter slant
where I pressed the words you couldn't think of.
No substitute for what we never said
but something, some small synonym for love,
your hand and mine together on that grid.



Elise Hempel

Decanter

This hollow stopper of glass, the thin flared lip,
the long and slender neck, a fluted space
for fingers to take hold and slowly tip
the hobnailed body, its tiered pedestal base

and pour the long-aged brandy into those
etched glasses, gold-rimmed, on a sideboard once,
this bottle, stately and tall, flint-glass that glows,
the closest I'll ever come to opulence:

the chandelier's jeweled light reflected in it,
my mansion's dining-room each time I reach
and pull the stopper gently from its fit,
lift glass from glass, this little singing screech,

no bills, time just a bronze pendulum swaying,
my hand afloat in its marquise diamond ring.



Sue Crisp

Ages & Stages

I stand alone in this barren field. No other trees accompany me. My age is telling, I'm no longer who I used to be.

Once a proud and mighty oak, arms that stretched far and wide. The perfect umbrella for those who sought to hide.

Now, no leaves to whisper and sigh in the breeze, adorn me. No nesting birds or squirrels in my tree.

My naked limbs clatter in the wind. No longer a musical sound. My former dwellers have abandoned me. Another home they've found.

Each day, as the seasons pass me by, I long for the earth beneath me, to loosen my roots, let me go to ground and be free.



Phil Huffy
Gray Matters

You've seen him on his motorcycle rides,
though somehow looking slightly out of place,
in sturdy denim trousers as he glides,
a boulevardier of temperate pace.

His cruiser is most spotlessly maintained,
with throaty growls proclaiming pedigree,
although its use is presently constrained
to outings of declining frequency.

So back along a homeward route it goes,
reflecting brilliantly the summer sun,
and on its aging rider then bestows
the pride of an excursion neatly done.



Devon Miller-Duggan

August, After the Fact

Though it's gone now, well behind you,
and September far enough along
it shrugs the wet-salt towel off its now chilling shoulders,
August hisses its cyclic return:
Air to turn your sheets to syrup every night.
Every step you take will rub you against fleshy air.
No breath for any creature except slugs.

Even if you huddle in conditioned air
eventually the outside sucks you into its hot mouth
and slurps.

A month named rightly for bloated caesars,
rolled over thrice a day by slaves,
fed on tiny birds
and over-honeyed, rotting wine—
a month like history,
which will repeat.



Rebekah Spearman

You May Die Young and Tired or Old

You may die young and tired, or old
and tired. The choice is up to you,
whether you prefer self-inflicted cold
or the slow creeping of evening dew.

The hickory on the quad has turned,
and another hair on your head is white.
What's born is just as swiftly burned
into a wan and ashen light:

The fire in your blood climbs up
the skeleton beams and scorches brow
(the deeper you draw from life's heady cup,
the deeper cuts time's facial plow).

Or so I'm told by a poet or two.
Everything costs—freedom or yoke.
To escape life, you must pay life's due.
That goes for human, hickory, and oak.



Rebekah Spearman

I Am Glad That Beauty Must Pass Away

A thing of beauty is a joy for as long
as the sun takes to cross the space
between the neighboring fire escape's rung
and the chimney of my rental place.

But, I cannot afford a joy forever,
the terrible beauty of a work of art,
a Greek urn or some point of pleasure
engraved undying in the human heart.

For, so sharp is the sting of the morning light,
of the orange peel, the blue-rimmed plate,
so sharp is the sting when all is right
for a moment, when clouds separate

that I do not think I could bear to live
with a pain like that in my breast each day.
No, I certainly couldn't bear to live.
I am glad that beauty must pass away.



Ted Charnley

Damaged Goods

On market day, my nag and I will pull
our aching selves and overburdened cart
to town, with foraged fruit and garden cull.
For there, among the peddlers taking part,
the jugglers, fools and passersby, I'll hawk
these apples, soft and fallen, scallions scorned,
these battered, stringy beans from trampled stalks,
this mildewed melon, gap-tooth ears of corn.

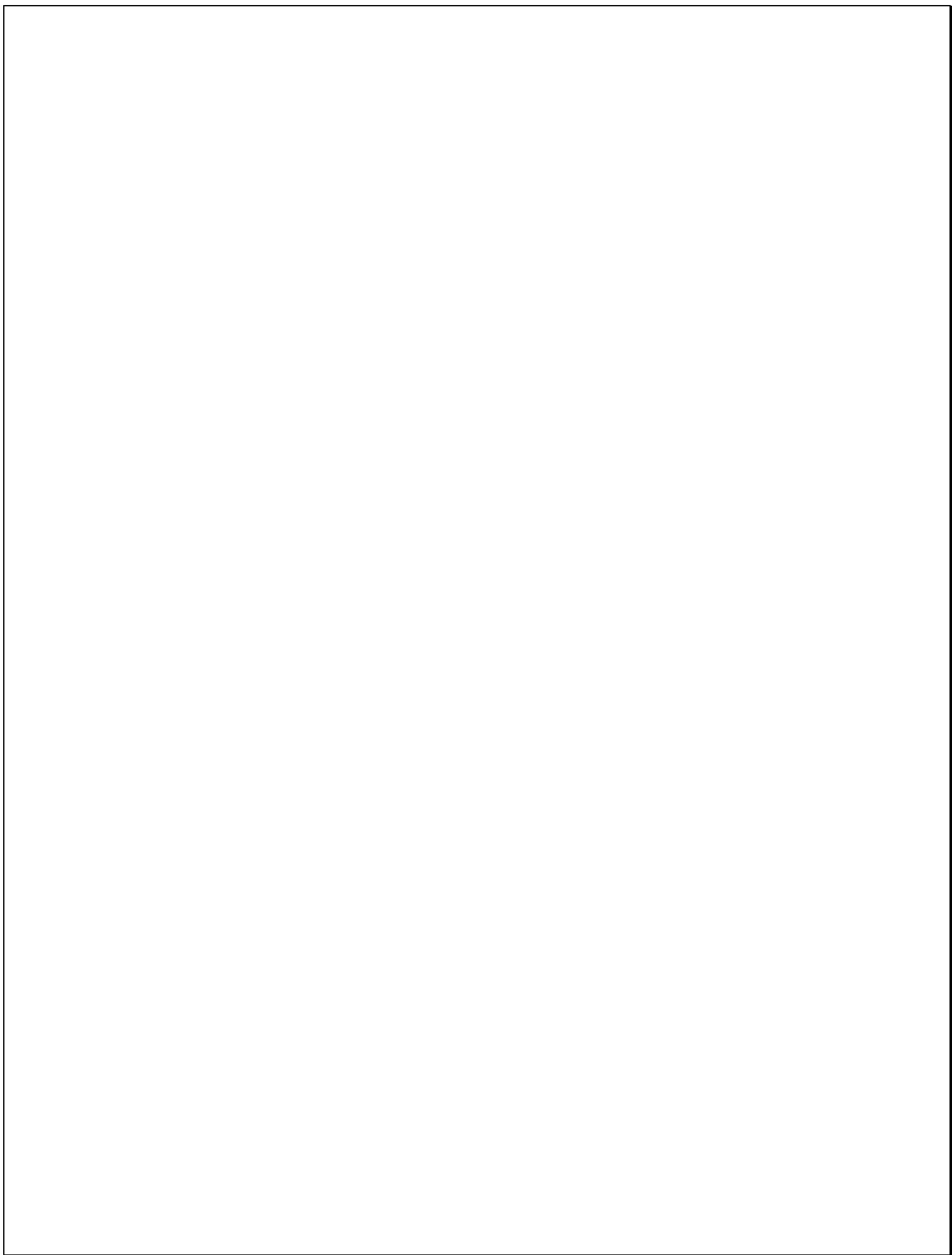
If just one shopper saw some value here
or stopped to bargain, she would find my fees
are low, my terms are easy. None comes near.
Once more tonight, my nag and I will feed
on foraged fruit and garden cull, our type
of damaged goods—the bruised and overripe.



Arnold Johnston

Romeo and Juliet: From the Balcony

Couples when new all feel the urge to touch
Each other as they walk from place to place,
Grazing, nudging, fondling, though not too much,
Lest friction lead to a full-on embrace
Before they're ready. But quite soon they'll be,
And then the touching will go on for years,
Or so they hope. For over time they'll see
Their hopes transmuted by their unwept tears.
We watch them walking on a small-town street,
He shuffling well ahead, and she behind
Five steps or so, intent on her own beat,
And no one knows what either has in mind.
We spy them from our balcony above
And thank our stars we're old and still in love.



Biographies

Ryan Apple's poetry is published in various journals, and he is one of ten poets featured in the forthcoming anthology *In a Strange Land* (Wipf and Stock, 2019). A music professor by vocation, Ryan enjoys spending time with his local church family, competitive ping-pong, and playing the guitar and mbira.

Ted Charnley holds a BA from Quinnipiac University, a JD from University of Maryland, and has studied poetry at Johns Hopkins University. His work has appeared previously in *The Orchards* and in such journals as *The Road Not Taken*, *Think*, *The Lyric*, and *Slant*. He lives with his wife in a 200-year old farmhouse they restored in western Maryland. There, he herds woodchucks, practices chainsaw topiary, and makes offerings to the nymphs of the springs.

Sue Crisp is originally from Bakersfield, California, now a resident of El Dorado County since 1951. She currently resides in Shingle Springs, California. Sue retired from 25 years of customer service and began writing at age 50, and is still writing.

Lisa DeSiro works for a non-profit organization and is an assistant editor for Indolent Books. She is also a freelance accompanist. Her publications include *Labor* (Nixes Mate, 2018) and *Grief Dreams* (White Knuckle Press, 2017), as well as several poems in journals and anthologies. Read more at thepoetpianist.com.

Robert Donohue's poetry has appeared in *Measure*, *The Raintown Review*, *The Orchards*, *2 Bridges Review*, and *IthicaLit*. The Red Harlem Readers gave *In One Piece*, his verse play about Vincent van Gogh, a staged reading in 2016. He lives on Long Island, New York.

Steven Duncan is a poet and medical student living in Dallas, TX. He often spends his evenings exploring new forms of expression (and studying the cranial nerves). His poetry has been featured by *Silver Birch Press*, *Ink & Nebula*, *Utah Life Magazine*, *Prolific Press* and others. Visit stevenduncan.tumblr.com for more.

Annalee Eagerton is an aspiring poet located in Kennesaw, Georgia. They pursue a Bachelor of Arts in English and a minor in Film Studies at Kennesaw State University, beginning in the fall of 2013. Their work has been featured in *Exhume Literary Journal*, *LandLocked Magazine*, *The Bookends Review*, *Across the Margin*, and *Cathexis Northwest Press*.



Louis Gallo's work has appeared or will shortly appear in *Wide Awake in the Pelican State* (LSU anthology), *Southern Literary Review*, *Fiction Fix*, *Glimmer Train*, *Hollins Critic*, *Rattle*, *Southern Quarterly*, *Litro*, *New Orleans Review*, *Xavier Review*, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry*, *Missouri Review*, *Berkeley Fiction Review*, *Mississippi Review*, *Texas Review*, *Baltimore Review*, *Pennsylvania Literary Journal*, *The Ledge*, *storySouth*, *Houston Literary Review*, *Tampa Review*, *Raving Dove*, *The Journal* (Ohio), *Greensboro Review*, and many others. Chapbooks include *The Truth Changes*, *The Abomination of Fascination*, *Status Updates*, and *The Ten Most Important Questions*. He is the founding editor of the now defunct journals *The Barataria Review* and *Books: A New Orleans Review*. He was awarded an NEA fellowship for fiction. He teaches at Radford University in Radford, Virginia.

Robin Helweg-Larsen's poetry has mostly been published in the UK, especially *Snakeskin*, *Ambit*, and *Candelabrum* as well as others including *Orchards Poetry*. His chapbook poem on writing poetry, "Calling The Poem," is available as a free download from Snakeskin Poetry Webzine, issue 236. He is Series Editor for Sampson Low's "Potcake Chapbooks—Form in Formless Times," and lives in his hometown of Governor's Harbour in the Bahamas.

Elise Hempel's poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *Poetry*, *Measure*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Tar River Poetry*, and *The Midwest Quarterly*, as well as in *Poetry Daily* and Ted Kooser's *American Life in Poetry*. She is the recipient of an Illinois Arts Council Literary Award and the winner of the 2015 *Able Muse* Write Prize in Poetry, the 2016 *String Poet* Prize, and the 2017 No Chair Press Chapbook Contest. Her full-length collection of poems, *Second Rain*, was published by Able Muse Press in 2016.

Phil Huffy writes furiously at his kitchen table in upstate New York. When not so engaged he enjoys hiking, camping, and cycling. Publications for 2019 will include *Magnolia Review*, *The Curlew*, *Hedge Apple*, *Light Poetry Magazinre*, and *Sheila-Na-Gig*.



Vera Ignatowitsch is addicted to poetry, raspberries, and the occasional good scotch. Her poems have been published in *The Lyric*, *San Pedro River Review*, *The Road Not Taken*, *Peacock Journal*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, and elsewhere. She is Editor in Chief of *Better Than Starbucks Poetry Magazine*.

Arnold Johnston lives in Kalamazoo and South Haven, MI. His poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and translations have appeared widely in literary journals and anthologies. Arnie's latest projects are *Where We're Going, Where We've Been*, a full-length poetry collection forthcoming from FutureCycle Press, and *Swept Away*, a novel to be published by Caffeinated Press.

David W. Landrum lives in western Michigan. His poems have appeared in *The Evansville Review*, *First Things*, *Measure*, *Windhover*, *Antiphon*, and many other journals and anthologies.

Larry Levy's books include *I Would Stay Forever If I Could and New Poems* (Mayapple Press), *All the Dead are Holy* (Atmosphere Press), and *What Outlives Us* (Atmosphere Press). Larry and his wife Cheryl live in Michigan where they direct plays for the Midland Center for the Arts.

Ruth Maus has followed a love of learning around the world until arriving back home in Topeka, Kansas. She represented Smith College at the annual Glasscock Intercollegiate Poetry Contest. Her poems have appeared in *Inscape*, *Grecourt Review*, and *Lighten Up Online*. Her book of poetry *Valentine*, published by Meadowlark Press, is due out in 2019.

Ann E. Michael's book *Water-Rites* came out in 2012, and her next full-length book, *The Red Queen Hypothesis*, is slated for publication in 2021 (from Salmon Poetry). Her poems, essays, reviews, and libretti have been appearing in print and online since the early 1980s in journals such as *Five Points*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *Mezzo Cammin*, and others. She lives in



eastern Pennsylvania and is currently writing coordinator at DeSales University. She is a long-time blogger on a variety of mostly-literary subjects at www.anne-michael.wordpress.com.

Devon Miller-Duggan has published poems in *Rattle*, *Margie*, *Christianity and Literature*, *Gargoyle*, *Massachusetts Review*, and *Spillway*. She teaches Poetry Writing at the University of Delaware. Her books include *Pinning the Bird to the Wall* (Tres Chicas Books, 2008), *Alphabet Year* (Wipf & Stock, 2017), and *The Slow Salute* (Lithic Press Chabooook Competition, 2018).

When **Carol Louise Moon** is not sewing, crocheting, or playing with her dog Barkley, she just might be composing poetry. Published in journals in four states plus England, Carol Louise enjoys a wide audience. Her other passion in life is doing Simulated Client Acting work at several universities in the Northern California area.

Erik Lloyd Olson is a writing teacher living in the Pacific Northwest. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Autumn Sky*, *Inlandia: A Literary Journal*, *Rat's Ass Review*, and *The Road Not Taken*, among other magazines and literary journals. He studied poetry at Portland State University, as well as at the Attic Institute of Arts and Letters under poet David Biespiel.

James Owens' most recent collection of poems is *Mortalia* (FutureCycle Press, 2015). His poems, stories, and translations appear widely in literary journals, including recent or upcoming publications in *Adirondack Review*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *The Honest Ulsterman*, and *Southword*. He earned an MFA at the University of Alabama and lives in a small town in northern Ontario.

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Rebekah Spearman, a native of Texas with a self-educated classicist for a mother, grew up in a cow pasture with Vergil wedged beneath her arm and a notebook in her hand. She has worked as an organic farmer, a Latin teacher, and a folk singer. She is currently writing her dissertation at the University of Chicago on archaic Greek poetry and has given numerous lectures on Greek literature and philosophy. Some of her essays can be found at *Ethika Politika*, *Ramify*, and *Philia*.

John W. Steele is a psychologist, yoga teacher, and graduate of the MFA Poetry Program at Western Colorado University, where he studied with Julie Kane, Ernest Hilbert, and David Rothman. His poetry has appeared in *Amethyst Review*, *Boulder Weekly*, *Blue Unicorn*, *The Lyric*, *Society of Classical Poets*, and *Verse-Virtual*.

