

# *BONE BOUQUET*

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*Bone Bouquet* is:

Krystal Languell, Allison Layfield, Trina Burke, Rachelle Cruz, Amy MacLennan

cover art & cover design by Jana Vukovic  
[www.janavukovic.com](http://www.janavukovic.com)

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# ANNA MARIA HONG

*from* H & G

## Ode to my love that you might know my power—by the New Witch

Ode to the smell of Hansel in the morning—

Ode to the saint of perpetual ascension—

My love, with the missing incisor.

My love, his chest a plank of wood.

My love, with legs straight as wool on fire.

My love, with eyes like blue famine.

My love, whose lips are full like September.

My love, whose lips are a berry infantada

& activity & unhappiness &

red shutters like the minds of old men.

Gretel as bad temper incarnate.

**I believe that those of you**

who aren't repulsive should be helping those of us who are. It's  
only fair.

That would be justice.

# PIA ALIPERTI

## Everything In This Room is Edible

*The invitation of the epigraph.*

<html> Some poems begin.

*I want to be a quiet saint living in a shack in solitary meditation of universal mind.*

*It was a dark and stormy night*, wrote novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton in 1830.

*It was a dark and stormy night*, wrote novelist Madeleine L'Engle in 1962.

*Don't worry; we can get rid of those stutters.*

HTML, the language web browsers use to interpret text, is a language designed for prose. In theory, prose's re-flowable text can pour easily into the constraints of a predetermined box, whereas poetry may require a line that doesn't end when the box does. You cannot indicate to the browser that the text you are describing is poetry.

*By day, I am nothing, and by night I am I.*

Since 1954, patrons of the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia can walk through a model of the human heart.

*The squalor of mind*, Robert Hass called formlessness.

White poplar wood, polychromed.

The materials for Donatello's *Mary Magdalene*.

*Spell your name with these objects*, the note enclosed with George Macianus's gift box to John Cage.

*I will astonish Paris with an apple!*

*Parlando*, Beethoven thought one of the bagatelles to his Opus 33 should be played.

*What I put into words is no longer my possession.*

*Have you noticed that I give myself to you in pieces?*

Following tradition, erasures produce what the original works would look like if someone went through them with white-out. To create *The ms of my kin* Janet Holmes typed out Emily Dickinson's poems from 1861 and 1862 on her computer and "colored" the erased words white.

*With Dickinson's poems floating, ghostly, behind them.*

*That's not writing, that's typing*, said Truman Capote of Jack Kerouac's style in *On the Road*.

A.R. Ammons wrote a long, thin poem on a tape reel of long, thin paper.

Jack Kerouac called his manuscript "The Scroll." Some of Emily Dickinson's most well-known poems are ones she copied on the



backs of envelopes and discarded letters. Bits of wrapping paper. Edges of newspaper. The backs of recipes or grocer's brown bags.

Louise Glück has said that she remembers, verbatim, most of what she's written through the course of her life.

*This wound was not done with a knife: there have been teeth here!*

*To etch is to cut away.*

*His book is a feast.*

William Gladstone claimed he had read over 20,000 books in his lifetime.

*I just ran to the well between rows of trees (two opposite pleasures: an empty pail, a full pail).*

The “doodle-do-do-doodle” piano flourish from Beethoven’s “Für Elise” was written in 1810 and sampled in 2003 by the rapper Nas in “I Can.”

*Go on listening because eavesdropping is the only way to write.*

Actually, the beat from 0:00 – 0:10 seconds is from James Brown’s “The Boss,” the main beat is from The Honey Dripper’s “Impeach the President” and the piano flourish is from “Für Elise.”

*My feet don't exist anymore. I lost my feet years ago.*

The famous Queen of the Night’s aria from “The Magic Flute” is sampled on a loop in “Like You” by Kelis.

*You can fluff my feathers.*

*O tree into the world, Man the chosen Rose out of Chaos: song.*

Even when all alone at Desolation Peak, scanning the horizon for new smoke as a fire lookout, Jack Kerouac would turn off the radio to write.

*Press Enter to Exit.*

*I began to delete to find something like poetry hidden.*

*I asked the mind for a shape and shape meant nothing.*

A poem in the language of HTML could be described as a series of paragraphs, could be described as an unordered list. The poem could be an image.

The realization that Poet would like to cover the tracks of Frost's speaker in "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."

*(I composed the holes.)*

Through x-ray analysis we can see the paintings underneath the paintings of the great masters like Rembrandt, Caravaggio and Vermeer.

*An eyelid, a shadowy wisp of a comma, could be made out just under the lower lashes of the other; a nose poked through beside the mouth.*

Positions of objects—chairs, maps, musical instruments, and dogs—have been shifted.

*Nothing was distinguishable. Everything reduced down to gorgeous greens and purples, said Luther Price who buried found film in vinegar.*

*In singleness the parts Strike each in each speechless song, being many, seeming one.*

Poet wonders: is invisible, inaudible?

*Not the voyage, but the distance: and then the sea is a barrier—*

*It'll have to be something that I'll miss de Kooning said after flipping through one, two, then three portfolios to find a drawing for Rauschenberg to erase.*

*Beware of a scene that becomes too dear to you, dearer than the rest.*

Susan Howe describes her process for composing “Frolic Architecture.” The affinities she felt with the table; the scissors; the tape; the one-sheet Canon copier.

*Every mark on the paper is acoustic.*

A black line can be sculptural.

*The slow release of a form as it emerged out of the stone.*

*I have come to feel that specificity of the + and— marks in relation to Dickinson's work are aligned with a larger gesture that her poems make as they exit and exceed the known world. They go vast.*

*Did you ever read one of her Poems backward, because the plunge from the front overturned you?*

Poet recalls suddenly her grandmother's story about the moving cart that caught fire when she was a girl. The photo albums, the trinkets that were on that cart.

What else is Poet forgetting?

*I am all the book resembles of itself.*

It's not an unburying.

*Touch me like an old stamp.*

*You were dreaming that you're going to rust,* said George Oppen's therapist.

It's not the poem underneath the poem.

*the root of the root and the bud of the bud*

Poet's mind will never be organized. Poet will never get her drawers in order.

Andy Warhol's medicine cabinet.

*The room we abandoned is anyone's to inhabit.*

*A page with a poem on it is less attractive than a page with a poem on it and some tea stains.*

What is a book with no sign of its owners?

*The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* was written by Thomas Jefferson with a razor. The miracles extracted.

*White apples and the taste of stone.*

*Not the actual thing, but the imprint. It would be short and precious.*

Writings from the Sumerians made by pressing circles and semi-circles with the tip of a hollow reed into wet clay tablets and then baking them still survive. Documents written on computer punchcards in the 1960s largely do not.

One word written in Cleopatra's own hand. *Ginesthoi*, in Greek meaning "Let it be done."

*How plain the language of joy!  
Everything has come before and will again,  
But only the moment of recognition is sweet.*

At 7:58 a.m., there was a nervous edge to Amelia Earhart's normal calm. A log entry had her saying "we are drifting but cannot hear you." An operator changed this to "we are circling." Gillespie believes she actually said, "We are listening."

*I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth.*

The strangely placed word.

*Closing one book and opening another.*

*We are always in our own company.*

*If it is winter in the book  
spring surprises me when I look up*

It's not writing, it's looking?

*The word “invention,” which once meant “finding” rather than making from scratch, now means finding again.*

*Pathetic Crusoe*, the heart is located on the second floor.

“Everything In This Room Is Edible” borrows words and phrases from Janet Holmes, Jack Kerouac, Susan Howe, Pessoa, Cézanne, Marina Tsvetayeva, Charlotte Brontë, Ronald Johnson, Tom Phillips, John Ashbery, the *New York Times*, Kelis, an ATM, Srikanth Reddy, Brenda Hillman, Susan Daitch, Jen Bervin, John Steinbeck, Michelangelo, Mary Ruefle, Buck 65, e.e. cummings, Christian Hawkey, Thomas Jefferson, Donald Hall, Robert Kaplan, Anne Carson, Osip Mandelstam, *Fox News*, Nietzsche, and Guy Davenport.

# DENISE RODRIGUEZ

## Mourning

Sun on curtains,  
a gold bird perching. White-  
soaked mound clings  
to wet palm  
beside bruises—purple  
lilies on dirt skin.

A red tongue begs for moistness,  
black silhouette curves toward  
a shining window.

Each time there is less—

# ALYSON MILLER

## Swallow

A girl searching in the shadows for a wolf, finds a story. Hears the words strung up as neat as teeth and swallows them in, rib-deep. Pressing hard against the sharpness of bones, the story sleeps, but she stays awake. Ears open to clues in the murmurs of trees and bed sheets. In her dreams, narratives float like the cobwebs between fence posts, and she nets them, swallows them deep and feels them kick down her throat into the cavern of her belly. In the day world of traffic lights and train station queues, she searches for more and gulps them in, mouth wide and lips stretched as though pushed against glass. She bloats with adultery and a broken shoe and childhood and a bad day and a friend of a friend and a moment last Friday and a funny thing that happened on the way to work and a coincidence and a memory and guilt. Stories crush into the spaces between her vertebrae, the cracks inside knuckles, the gaps under her nails. For some time, there is only the enormity of their weight pressing skin-tight inside her. And then she is gone, broken up with the violence of escape, of words exploding back into the secrets of tongues and stairwells and sleep.



# Monster

Her body is a monster. Cow-heavy, she is flesh held by an architecture of cartilage, muscle and bone, the strange wet silkiness of eyes and the protection of hair, nails and skin. Alien things move inside her, the travel of blood and the intestines, the pulsing of abject shapes and liquids. And there is the curiosity of her face after sleep, with its oils and crusted rheum and breath of decay, a grotesque echo of the night's biology. On the TV, she watches a documentary about a man who imagines a doll into something real. He pushes himself into silicone, the symmetry of her baby gaze suggesting something about the mysterious desires of plastic. Held with the intimacy of necks and wrists, he carefully wipes her insides clean, retouches the lipstick. This is love. On the couch, he shares his favourite movies, talking her through the intricacies of character and plot as the bright images from the screen reflect dully on her forehead like a stain.

NIKKI WALLSCHLAEGER &

LAURA GOLDSTEIN

*from* Home is a Collaboration

1

I want to number this, lest the new rains wash some remembrance of it toward the lower depths. it starts at the bottom of a stairwell in a bath. the landlord works in the garden. now, at the end of the month, I owe him rent. one day during the summer I fled, I was taking a bath and waiting for it to come, drinking strong black cohosh tea. it was pouring outside but I had to get out. after graduation I wanted to exist on wheels so I sublet a room that had a partial divider with a friend who came with me. he worked for a law agency. I was busy drafting a pre-hypertext essay onto a floppy disk, which was lost in transit before it could be published. there were multiple sections leading to the body and the last section described the tattoo that I got for the occasion, of a fish, on my ribcage. I had missed the ark and was nowhere. I have never seen rain like that before, the literal sheets, alone, so I left and wandered down the stairwell to the lower depths where musicians played on damp steps. what are you doing here?

2

in some ways, it's getting worse. the sky whitens and the breeze keeps may at bay. I've been sleeping on this couch in the mornings after I wake up in the middle of the night. I want to be in the

middle of my home. from the vantage point of a blade of grass, there's a saturation of red and blue bodies, with yellow blossoms in the background. there's a garden with huge, firm forms under large leaves. from above, from two windows that face opposite directions, a pink quilted girl stares back from a mirror across from the bed. but I don't have a mirror across from the bed. the girl smiles and I wake up. what are you doing here?

2

wondering why blue is the color of the dead and of the sidewalk and of the sky who is watching me now. one of these days I will weld a lachrymosa locket, but I'm useless when it comes to tools of western industry. it makes more sense to use an already polished sea glass, to rely on theories of umber. he teaches me about resourcefulness. one single cat hair could be the treble need of a neon tetra flushed before its time. I was tempted, the free rabbit on craigslist said she was litterbox trained. I get jealous of the inland weather, but not enough to live there. you comfort me but I worry, oh I worry about drainage especially in the morning. an excellent defense mechanism says you are warm enough to swim in for about a month out of the year, but people love cold cold glasses of water as long as modern sewage systems have garden district PR systems. the lethologica textbook is more powerful than any paternal flex because they are arm's-length in providing their clients with the perfect mental block for their tourist party on the riverboats downtown. they swill beer and luxuriate on the successful capturing of storms. I am at another hologram commitment. what are you doing here?

we replaced the rug. and the closets. I feel so ill. it's returned. but now I know how to not let it show. my smile even gets broader and more free. I feel calmer. we don't agree on the colors: salmon pink, turquoise, and gray, in small ruptured squares with white shadows. a huge pink flower accents the room. a huge white desk. in a fever I run to the mirror and take a long look at it. it reaches out to choke me and I manage to scream "mom" to wake myself up. I cry that no one came. on a slant, a house sits on a hill. the sun appears at its base. branches blacken a burning beginning. my friends all draw the eye in the tree. I spend the night on the grass in front of the house with my friends. a small shoot plays the air. what are you doing here?

she waited on the steps for him to arrive, very pregnant with me. he told her when she was in labor that he never loved her. fine brittle letters later, but not under a tree. she wore purple leather pumps and I sampled vials of magnolia lip gloss. when we went to the planetarium I dreaded the false sun setting, and when he moved the stars to show us the migration of constellations I felt abandoned, too. my knees would feel lofty. I don't know if I had a bus partner because I cannot remember things like that. I brought the frog home, but by the time I got there, he was dead. the hammock collapsed so I dared myself to steal a play food donut, and then it became delicious. what was also delicious was the naked woman in black negligee I found by the plum tree, her legs open. someone had dropped their favorite picture. now she was mine. she was blond, like so many models. what are you doing here?

there's a bath, but I'm never in it. claws under low light. she quickly ushers me out and we trade scars. they take photographs of me in the bath and I climb out the window. there's a red line that hums along a strong breeze but everything else is orange. unfortunately, he ushered me out, with her help. after showing me what they were doing under the sheet. after trashing the house and getting on the bus. after all the bottles were broken. I was up in the attic taking these pills that were full of crushed herbs and he started sucking on my fingers and I laughed. we put a mattress on the floor and the seven of us slept there all summer. she said that once you start eating sugar, you shouldn't stop. we all shaved our heads and put different colored light bulbs in. people wandered around all the rooms. he wandered into my green one. what are you doing here?

a convent with stained sheets for the woman with the ability to see ninety-nine million colors. there was a rumor you went missing overnight, but you showed up. we listened through the mailbox and heard her crying. one of those gothic revival houses shuttered in george washington blue. I remember her family pointing with a monied fescue, the family motto that self-deprecation is the best way to enter into a relationship. welcome home savings and loan candied with no mouth is apparently the only way their bills get paid. I've often felt dangerous. and now a group of us are looking for you. we are considered hoodlums. if we can get dude who makes his own helicopters that fit inside of doorways, maybe we can shrink ourselves to fit into the mailbox where we heard you in the first exchange. I've always been occupied with dreaming the most obvious of rescues, so I'll wear my favorite pair of acid

washed overalls for bed check tonight, under their covers of incontinence. what are you doing here?

4

there never seems to be enough room for us under the covers with all the back and forth the wind does to push us all closer together. when someone is distant, it is more difficult to get their consent. same as similar situations before, it was reviewed in a different color light than the one that was previously thought to determine what was happening. clocks run out and reset. numbers split and fold. there are a million minutes that separate me from you. in an anteroom, a raccoon methodically eats apples from bags hauled from the orchard and set on shelves. the cat that had been a stray looks on calmly. the door is opened and closed. risking betrayal is the best way to enter into a relationship. bank accounts fade on faith. any resistance can easily be justified as someone who has made a mistake. it will be a partially drowned memory inside of which I wonder. what are you doing here?

5

as a little boy he was startled. I don't feel like I should, he said. when he's sad, he says I want to go home even though we were home and I was holding him. the bathwater was warm and it startled him. I knew what he meant, he was three and I said I get these same feelings when I ease into hot water. so called my mother who will give me no answers as usual, she's at her best in a red bikini in the backyard. there are flounces to everything she wears and her coverlets are covered with violets that are of a different variety than the ones I imagine growing in the inner city neighborhood where

I live. we were in the sitting room when we heard a male voice coming through the speakers that told us to get out, even though the stereo was off. I think she's being followed. what are you doing here?

# SAMANTHA ZIGHELBOIM

## Axle Of the World, With Rabbit

All the clouds paused  
a white spot walked out from the parting  
bleating supernova a stage set too large to  
measure but exactly twelve meters long  
that began expanding reproducing itself  
folding over eclipse after eclipse after

And then ten thousand  
images in half an hour ten thousand times  
continents and castles beautiful castles  
memorials the glory of the world with no  
color as in a drained photograph but still  
beautiful still all the castles all the glory

The judgment revealed  
to me in burnt bursts no one could fulfill  
so he himself occurred spiny witch creating  
the world it was the first of April it was Fool's  
Day he was no fool in his choosing he chose  
this day this day these pictures these hands

He chose a running rabbit  
spinning on a roller the uncertainty of good  
fortune then the rabbit became a zebra his head  
full of stripes everything was shaved he started  
running something fast when he became a glass  
donkey lucky enough to wear God's napkin



# CARRIE CHAPPELL

[Silver & I in the yellow kitchen, cruel in paper]

Silver & I in the yellow kitchen, cruel in paper  
towels, sparring locusts and making pork chops,  
stand great meat-eaters above the broiler. Out

of doors, fireworks across the wharf freckle  
the brown water in reflected light with flurries of gun  
powder. In between booms, Silver & I slide

outside behind the vine-laced wall  
to the porch. We sit, him & me, back in Alabama  
on the porch made for roaches, in the yawn

of historic Northport, on a porch not unlike  
the one we occupy now over beer and scrambled  
ash, a curious welcome mat. Each morning

we wander the corridors of the house beyond  
this one, pause to stand still in the blue rays  
of the neighbor's transom window. Imagination

that could wed us. We feel our stomachs, then  
remember we are wrapped in swine, that we danced  
with our toes in insect wings. In between breaths

grow weeds. We are quite sprawling, and so we splinter  
humidity, dividing water becoming easier when  
we transcend the end. Silver says, *Are we lucky*

*to have meat?* And in no time, we picture our planets  
spread thin on the plate, honey-cured domestic  
carcasses. Above pool our hearts—tepid, little

victuals. Then, Silver & I wink to each other over after-  
dinner cigarettes, reminding our tongues that whatever  
heavens are above can't be consumed in one night.

# CHRISTINA ROTHENBECK

## Girl's Guide to the Apocalypse

Everywhere: a city waiting to die, and who knows  
waiting better than you? Just a little push to the bed  
rock and it'll buckle, plates shuddering  
as they shatter against each other. What's sexier  
than plate tectonics, really? The hills rolling  
themselves over, tsunami like a giant tongue.  
You'd be amazed what steam can do for skin,  
how it will silver, how it all slides clean  
from the bone. Don't be caught dead  
without your lipstick. What outfit matches your potential  
for mass chaos? Under your feet, fire always burns  
to the surface. Put your shoes on. Grab your axe.

# RUTH ELLEN KOCHER

## Sequence Ending in Tides

The eggs you would never make for yourself So you make them for someone else Which is no refusal at all You cannot wrap your hands around a thing that will not have you Who wants that To have a refusal

Transparency is not about the desert and sometimes not about the ocean When is the ocean in the kitchen when you are making eggs Only in your head The ocean is not always the ocean Sometimes the ocean is about more than you

Forget about any of these things not part of you in any way Today or tomorrow You will come back  
to a smell and forget things not in your hands Onions Parsley Butter cooking you remember also as  
only one thing

Without speaking of your childhood Which is the same as anyone else's Not so much remembered as  
tacked down Without your childhood you wanted nothing from the way you wake up in the morning  
the same way everyday A childhood would not want everyday like this

Someone smells cooking in the kitchen Remembers a split field in front of him and pigs squealing  
somewhere down a dirt road Chickens with pigs A barn so he couldn't breathe at all

In your kitchen A childhood has a blue bike and a scar inside someone's thigh Your own thigh you  
realize opening a cupboard Someone might say no one needs to know this so This stays blank Who  
we are means so much more now When I am telling And you are listening easily Out of habit The  
way you would look for salt on the shelf

You think of a man selling vacuums from a binder with pictures in cellophane the way you remember  
also cigarette smoke While cooking Reaching for salt and then pepper The ocean wants none of this  
trying to hold on

In another room you come home to someone who waits and smells eggs And the ocean off a cliff  
You talk about it sometimes An island with a name you can't remember You tell people about the  
island As though it's not true

You always return to the same L-shaped room The same and you love this As anyone could The  
sound outside the door day and night

# JENNIFER ARCUNI

## washing day

the neat neat sheet, fitted neck

-line and the morn

-ing out

straight

fold      straight row of light-catchers and sun

clutch, like my knee, my bended bent

one

patch first and then pants, each button's backing

each undead bulb

married a socket if

i were alive the dryer would be

full of scorch

and      torn

threads shorn-dark

a lint-caught thread

caught in my cut-  
crease

throat

like finch song



# a storm, hello cloud

like a stiff distance or

a violet dark pierced with dark  
umbrella rain

as opposed to filler or chords  
channel-deep

with air  
happiness drops and has no bottom

of which to track, it  
rains for weeks on end

tropically  
we go back and forth as quickly as we can to avoid getting wet

or involved with a pressure system

here that the breeze

was un-strange  
was where thunder might begin

the perpetual damp  
slow-moving in the overnight hours, a reminder of

the first time rain fell  
other things have fallen but

what little has been mentioned in the forecast

other than the obvious  
between-ness

rivers once weren't cause  
for alarm advisories

backlit with day and  
greetings again there is nothing left to pray for

a question of branches  
where they will crack, whether they fall

a child looks for venus and doesn't find her

in the little world of  
what's and after's

this perch, a minaret  
Venus as both the evening

and morning star  
a child  
a bird

as with the deception of a woman's slanted knife, we are

taught to slice on the bias, taught  
this against the grain

the heave and levee of all that is  
tied together twig by twig, scraping

and weeping  
what is and  
is no longer, so

how do we reach  
these littlest of places, curved

necks of morning or  
how do we remake this minaret as lighthouse, as both

how do we make the stork reappear, how do  
we reassure the child

that the way to  
the port is lost and that love

is hiding  
its blue face and

that all of this is only a response, that only  
a reflection is speaking

# SARAH DRAVEC

## Virginia is a Common Name

for someone who should have given everything  
and should not. A person who would never

call herself a teacher, entrepreneur, or wearer  
of clothes. It is uncomfortable to always keep

my elbow bent and to always store papers  
in the crook. It is discouraging to always be

set up for failure when refusing any move  
on a chessboard but castle queenside. To be

the cat in someone else's window instead  
of the cat in my own window, angry that

the crows in the street below are the  
only ones doing any scavenging. This is such

a ridiculous ink stain that has now bled into  
the most delicate skin of my left arm. Today is not

a day for laundry, but I am not too cold yet  
to be in the colder outside. I must wash myself off.

# RACHAEL WOLFE

## Two Sexts

I'd like to put gold leaf  
on the cage. Scrape it  
off with my teeth.  
You know  
what. Which parts  
I like. Order breakfast.

My grandmother's lipstick  
and a wackadoo  
anti-abortion pin. Tiny  
foot. Put this in  
your wedding bouquet.  
I made you mean  
this padlocked loss. Files  
no one wants to go through.

# BETSY FAGIN

whatever we want wants us

new diamond and gold seeds  
plated all the kicked in doors  
with pictures of still making sense

lay fallow wise action public  
sky bruised by scarcity  
of attention as much a hardship

as each a mercy  
caffeine me or high  
stimulant the depths

of ocean fulfillment mutual  
and authentic acknowledgment  
become slippery guises

gateways into shattered visibility  
mirror worlds bound up  
to welcome others

*from* ♥ ♥ ♥ ☺ *Active Denial* ☺ ♥ ♥ ♥

*(having anything to do with a charity organization  
close to the heart of the corporation's CEO)*

you think?  
just click here. just tell me  
your password. I love you. we'll reset it.  
can you just let me cut in front of you  
in line because I really need to, baby,  
cut in front of you in line, sweetie. darling.  
pixie picnics manicured garden lawn  
cheese and grapes or pita and hummus—  
might as well be spring. or olives and figs:  
you know how we do.

one more for the road. for the highways.  
the arteries, the ditches alongside strange  
new streets filled with soiled soil filled  
with spilled oil, crude. giddy. your tanker trucks  
and fossil fuels spread where we used to  
have rivers dance through higher and higher  
building my cock size, every skyline your valleys  
my peaks. piqued curious to revitalize fantastical  
fantasia: renfest everything, everyone, everywhere.  
no rest for the wicked. this is so real.



# ALLISON FAIRHURST

## The Rant Of the Rib

I think I am allowed feelings.  
I get annoyed when  
the brain and heart make the body  
sob like a baby.  
This lung I hold in is tiresome.  
I tire of sticking out  
but all my buddies are bloody and happy  
always meeting up  
at the spine and they have no problems holding in the lung.  
They like their job.  
I have gotten sick of the heave of breathing,  
the sluice of juices,  
the thudding of blood. There is constant noise.  
My landlord is a real slacker,  
my roommates are terrible, my job is boring.  
I wish I had a phone.  
I'd call The Mouth and tell it to shut itself awhile  
and maybe I could get some sleep.  
I want to get out of here but I am helpless,  
just a little white bone.  
But deep down I know I have a destiny.  
Ultimately I just want to be like  
every other rib. I know my task. I have nothing else to do  
but stand around here,  
I just have to do this: I must keep this lung in.

# MARA ADAMITZ SCRUIPE

## Velvet

Velvet, oh!                      Frighten me,

For no one else keeps  
this intemperate pace      brush past me on your way  
to someplace else          look away          the flat of  
your hand          sliced                  like a slap!

Stay me high up on this wire,

Make me dread both the plummet  
and the yield                  Menace me ill from want:  
push me                      pull me in cadence with  
your belly's creasing,      cast me out,

Deny me in marks the size

And shape of your fingertips paired, stigmata  
of my thighs, forsake me but only  
steer me                  for I am your way

In all directions home.

# LEOPOLDINE CORE

Veronica Bench

look at me I'm a clown  
when I'm forced to breathe  
I become a different clown

look into the bowels of my face

am I like you  
or are you like me?

is there a difference?

yeah. there's a difference.

alone and stalking the empty fridge  
it's like having nothing  
twice  
just the salad  
getting smellier

it's like you're kissing me  
but from a strange country  
dark eyed

peach

a bum doesn't work  
a tramp just travels

13<sup>th</sup> street never surrendered  
its junkiness  
it just looks like shit  
relaxes me

brown night  
the ions  
their pure bouncing joy

I wish I had a big horse blanket to put over us  
wouldn't that be nice

# LESLEY ANN WHEELER

a little hell of its own

*winner of the 2013 experimental prose contest  
selected by Barbara Henning*

Hurricane Sandy tore through Coney Island and set everyone back. The *New York Daily News* reported on the “Sandy Generation,” and profiled children in public housing, separated from the shore by subway tracks and two blocks of amusement parks, who since the storm were unnaturally afraid of disasters. “The world is coming to an end. We didn’t do nothing to God,” Tyril said.

It's August, the week before school starts. I am exiting the auditorium during an orientation, answering the phone to find out whether or not our rental application has been approved. Last week a man was shot on Chauncey Street, in front of the building behind ours. The bedroom window was open at the top and the shots stopped whatever conversation my boyfriend and I were having in our lofted bed.



76  
247

Andrea C.  
New York, NY

★★★★★ 8/22/2007

Went on a Saturday night, expecting long lines and attitude but was surprised to find quite the opposite.

Great outdoor area, we scored a table with benches and were able to chill out most of the night - yes, a lot of hipsters and guys with very skinny tight jeans - but I didn't care.

Drinks were served up promptly and bartenders came over when I made eye contact with them. Cool spot, would definitely go back!

Was this review ...?



What a strange day. I slept while  
the rain came in and made  
your things wet. The cable man  
is coming tomorrow. So life  
should be back to Awesome.

*I can hear the baby of the man who was  
shot last week crying on the next block over.*

18. August 22, 2007  
2:26 pm

[Link](#)

The Honeymooners lived at 328 Chauncey Street in  
Brooklyn (not sure if it's Bed-Stuy or Bushwick).

— Joe

## INFANT'S BODY FOUND

Roundsman Sheehan of the Coney Island police found the body of a new born infant lying on the sand under the Iron Pier at Coney Island Saturday afternoon. The remains had evidently been buried in the sand and had been dug out by the tide. The officer took it to the morgue on West Eighth street and the coroner was notified.

### ITS SLEEP WAS DEATH.

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#### **The Discovery Made by a Young Mother at Coney Island.**

Mrs. Lizzie Sherwood, of 224 East Seventieth street, New York, took her baby to Coney Island yesterday afternoon, in the hope that the sea air would benefit it. The child was suffering from cholera infantum. Soon after her arrival Mrs. Sherwood noticed that her infant slept, and she walked with it toward the water's edge. When near the drug store she found that her little one had passed from sleep to death. She shrieked hysterically and refused at first to part with the remains. After a time she was quieted, however, and the body was taken by undertaker Stillwell to await the action of the coroner. It was with the greatest difficulty that the mother could be made to understand at once that the law prohibited her taking the dead child back to New York with her.



The Coney Island Houses were without power or running water for weeks following the storm. When the sun went down, it was dark. Hallways lit by groups of bodega candles, stairwells appeared in the flick of a lighter. In the morning, mothers filled buckets at open hydrants to cook breakfast and flush toilets. NYCHA still expected rent at the end of the month. A future rent reduction was promised.

The people of the CI houses stage a protest in my dreams. In the now-shallow shore, everyone is lined up by floor number in neatly parallel rows. The tide comes in and out around their legs. I see this from above and also in tight shots on their wet ankles.

In front of the bathroom mirror I rub Crystal Visions dream balm into my temples. I go to sleep I am in New York, coming home from work on a Manhattan-bound B train, explaining to the co-worker who took the seat in front of me how much I miss holding the cold metal pole on a fast train going over the Manhattan Bridge. Then, there's the sense of being back on Maple Street, proximity of people being the strongest sensation.

Here, there is almost no one. Yesterday I sat on our root cellar and watched the trees' branches move on sky. Small planes flew over at what felt like regular intervals, towards the downtown Kansas City Airport. I closed my eyes and faced the winter sun for a long while. When I opened my eyes, everything appeared very blue, as things do in iPhoto when you drag the slide tool towards *colder*. This took whole minutes to fade.

Twists of fate are never simple: there is a date, barely visible in the concrete of the root cellar. 1917. I know everything would be easier if I didn't care about New York. Dear Kansas City expands in the view from my front porch, now that the trees have lost their leaves. At night it sparkles like an urban dream.

*To enquiring friends: I have troubles today that I had not yesterday. I had troubles yesterday which I have not today. On this site will be built a bigger, better, Steeplechase Park. Admission to the burning ruins — Ten cents.*

—George C. Tilyou, posted on a sign the morning after the 1907 fire that destroyed Steeplechase Park

The girl from the fifth floor's baby died somewhere between getting in the elevator and reaching her apartment door. Shifting him in her arms to get her keys she realized he wasn't sleeping. There were screams and yelling and an ambulance. From my sixth floor bedroom window I saw women from the building falling over themselves crying. An empty gurney went in and came out with the girl holding her baby close to her chest. The way she holds him, it's impossible for the EMTs to work. *It was with the greatest difficulty.*

A shrine grew in the lobby. On the floor next to the elevator were devotional candles wrapped in the images of saints, stiff new teddy bears, blue dyed carnations. A piece of cardboard taped low on the wall above the shrine held messages of sympathy and promised strength to the girl from the whole building.

*Coney's Games Still Go*

*and now the children are afraid  
of snow, night in the hall*

*a society of abandoned children  
we cannot muster the family*

*they are owed / a parade*

*down fifth avenue ending  
at the beach for summer sorries,  
so*

Sallie Mae called me nine times today. Their number ends in 3321. Normally I take any unplanned occurrence of 3-2-1 in my life as a positive sign, something saying *you're doing the right thing, this is the right path*, etc. The faculty member at who hired me for my first adjunct teaching job was in room 321 of her building. When I worked as a camp counselor for an international writing camp in Iowa, my dorm room number was 321. We lived at 11 Maple St, 220 North Dodge St, and then 3308 Bell St. A natural progression, An order relievingly simple, and because of obvious contexts very primary.

## MYSTERY OF A DEAD CHILD

### Body of the Waif Picked Up at Coney Island Is Unidentified.

The police of the Coney Island Precinct have so far been unable to learn anything as to the identity of the infant's body found on the beach at the foot of Twenty-ninth street yesterday morning. A number of theories have been advanced as to how it came to be where it was found, but no facts have yet been brought to light to substantiate any of them. There have been no inquiries at the station house about the child, and no person has offered to identify it. The infant was about 6 months old, a boy, dressed in a long white cloak, with black stockings, no shoes and a white lace cap. It was partially covered by sand and had apparently been resting where it was found during all or the greater part of the storm of night before last. There were no marks of violence whatever on the body and nothing on the clothing by which any information as to its name could be learned.

There is a day when all but two of the campers go to Des Moines on a field trip, and I am asked to stay behind. It is the fifth consecutive day of 100°+ weather in Iowa, and so I decide to stay inside of my dorm room with the A/C pointed at the top bunk while I stream a Lifetime movie. It's a dramatized take on the 1998 incident at the high school in Gloucester, MA when the school was suddenly full of pregnant teenaged girls. The made-for-TV-movie's angle is that of an investigative journalist returning to her hometown to gain true insight into the situation, but she largely becomes overshadowed by her bumbling use of a camcorder as a reporting tool. Her genuine care and compassion for the misguided teens is underscored when she offers to turn off the camcorder and just *talk* with them.





A hawk sat on a low branch over the playground at recess. His feathery brown back was to the children. I heard violins playing in unison. I'm overly warm, but I believe it is because I have on three shirts. The loan company called me seven times yesterday, nine before that, and so far four times today. There is a framed picture of Maria Montessori at this tiny teacher's desk. Is the sun out? It is cloudy. The Baptist church across Wornall Road is placing orderly small white crosses in its yard in rows. The seven colors of colored pencils are ordered by color in same-colored cups. It is nearly time for dismissal, I can hear the spinning wheels of the janitor's bucket.

relinquish *to*,  
surrender control *to* another power

If the baby is left in the sand, what power is asked to take control?

## Encyclopedia

*Encyclopedia Britannica*

### **abandonment**

in Anglo-American property law, the relinquishment of possession of property with an intent to terminate all ownership interests in that property. Abandonment may occur by throwing away the property, by losing it and making no attempt to retrieve it, by vacating the property with no intention of returning to it, or by any other act manifesting a complete disclaimer of ownership in the property. The general effect of abandonment is to give full ownership of the property to the first taker.

Learn more about [abandonment](#) with a free trial on Britannica.com.

# **MOTHER PETS BABY SHE HAD ABANDONED**

**Child Left in Coney Island  
Marsh Holds Out Its Arms as  
She Bends Over Crib.**

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**SHE BLAMES TAXI DRIVER**

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**He Said Child Would Be Picked Up  
In Half an Hour—She Is  
Locked Up.**

I fall asleep in fleece sheets and wake up after a nightmare. I move to a recliner. I fall asleep two hours later. In my dream I visit a psychic I know and have visited with before. She knows me. I don't have an appointment but she is ready for me and asks me to have a seat on her couch. I need to focus more on the women in my project. A psychic in New York needs a personal assistant. She is comforting, understands my anxieties, and laughs them off. When our time is over I ask her *how much do I owe you?* and she reminds me my special price is \$16. I hand her a twenty and she hands me a twenty and a five back.

## PART OF A BODY FOUND.; The Remains of a Woman Recovered at Coney Island.

[ DISPLAYING ABSTRACT ]

The lower part of the body of an unidentified woman was found yesterday afternoon floating in the water at the foot of Kensington Walk, Coney Island.

 E-MAIL

 PERMISSIONS

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## Page Removed

We're sorry, we seem to have lost this page, but we don't want to lose you.

Coney Island is my playing board, the ocean the southwest border. The surface ends not far from there and the top is an avenue with auto repair shops, ATMs, and a thousand shuttered windows. And all the deli men are in dirty plastic candy thrones. I play my pieces all over it, entering and exiting the game on the elevated path of the Q train. The map is glued to a foldable square of cardboard whose edges are tucked over with linen like the headband of a book. It's an original contour drawing of a brand new coastline filled with Dutch rabbits, printed off of the internet yesterday. There are eight men in a row who are asleep on the train. Only one man opens his eyes at each stop, the others know when to get up.

'This boat has wings, they flap when we settle in to our plank seats, the man announces the start of our journey, we fly on.  
My sweetheart, my man on the moon. What an odd place to land after the Whip and Top, the Down and Out Slide, the Ghost Train, Honeymoon Lane, the Hell n' Back walkthrough.

This school used to be a Montessori school. It's written in the concrete pillar outside. *Good luck*, a teacher says to me in the hall—a reflection of her own struggles more than how my day will go, I remind myself. Zonnie can't understand why I walk backwards as I walk the class down the hall. And why I sometimes switch to walking frontwards. I tell her I learned how to do it at teacher school.

The windows are opaque. They let in light and shadows, but you can't tell what's out there until it comes real close—a face with a hand cupped at the brow, a basketball's quick approach and disappearance.

The pledge starts at 9:35. Murmurs from all directions. *Liberty and justice for all*, the child's voice crackles with extreme volume on the PA, the excitement of being the loudest of all in the whole building. Office phone ringing in the background. On the regular teacher's desk a Bible quote typed, printed, and taped carefully.





POVERTY GAPPERS PLAYING CONEY ISLAND.



# PORTIA ELAN

## After the Cowboys Ride Out

Alone, ecstasy cherries us, each  
in our separate cells;  
the very kingdom & the glory enter  
the first, the fist, the nuclear,  
the thunder's diving tongue.  
What/O the bright forked  
through the brush: wildfire, wildfire,  
wildfire, taking all the hills.

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Pia Aliperti** is a poet and teacher based in New York City. Her poems have appeared in *Rattle*, *The Best American Poetry* blog, *Saudade Review*, and *A Clean, Well-Lighted Place*. She is currently at work on an erasure of *Jane Eyre*, an excerpt of which appears on the Augury Books blog. She holds an MFA from The New School.

After making her home in the Netherlands for many years, **Jennifer Arcuni** more recently resides in northern California. Her work has previously appeared in *Bateau* and *Xantippe*, among others, and online at [tuxedolit.com](http://tuxedolit.com). She received her MFA from Saint Mary's College of California, and is currently a poetry editor with the journal *Versal*.

**Carrie Chappell** is originally from Birmingham, Alabama. Currently, she serves as a Writer-in-Residence with Big Class and lives in New Orleans.

**Leopoldine Core** was born and raised in Manhattan. Her poems and fiction have appeared in *Apology*, *Open City*, *the Literarian*, *the Brooklyn Rail*, *Big Lucks*, and elsewhere. Her chapbook *Young Friend* was published by Perfect Lovers Press. Her first full-length book is forthcoming from Coconut Books.

**Sarah Dravec** is a graduate student in the NEOMFA in Akron, Ohio, where she studies poetry. She is a poetry editor for *Barn Owl Review* and an associate editor for *Whiskey Island Magazine*. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *And/Or*, *Dressing Room Poetry Journal*, *Squalorly*, *Star 82 Review*, and others. Write to her: [sarahdravec@gmail.com](mailto:sarahdravec@gmail.com).

**Portia Elan** lives and writes on the West Coast. Her work has appeared in *Birdfeast*, *The Journal*, *Ninth Letter*, *Thrush*, *iO*, and *Sonora Review*. Her chapbooks—*To Yield Like Water & Nothing Else* and *Remedy: ghaazals for the body*—are forthcoming from dancing girl press and Mindmade Books, respectively.

**Betsy Fagin** is the author of *Poverty Rush* (Three Sad Tigers, 2011), *the science seemed so solid* (dusie kollektiv, 2011), *Belief Opportunity* (Big Game Books Tynyside, 2008), *Rosemary Stretch* (dusie e/chap, 2006), and *For every solution there is a problem* (Open 24 Hours, 2003). *All is Not Yet Lost* is forthcoming from Belladonna\* and *Names Disguised* is forthcoming from Make Now Press.

**Allison Fairhurst** graduated in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in Literature and Creative Writing and is working a poetry collection about dreams at the present time. Alongside poetry, she frequently blogs and is also writing her first novel. She lives in Montreal.

**Laura Goldstein** has published six chapbooks, including, recently, *phylum* from horse less press and *let her* from dancing girl press, as well as poetry and essays in *the West Wind Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Tenderloin*, *How2*, *Jacket2*, and other fine publications. She teaches Writing and Literature at Loyola University and is the co-curator of the Red Rover Series with Jennifer Karmin. Her first collection of poetry, *loaded arc*, has recently been released by Trembling Pillow Press, and her second book, *awesome camera*, is forthcoming from Make Now Press in 2014.

**Anna Maria Hong** is the Visiting Creative Writer at Ursinus College and was a Bunting Fellow in Poetry at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study. The recipient of *Poetry* magazine's 2013 Frederick Bock Prize, she has poems appearing in *Boston Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Verse Daily*, *Drunken Boat*, *Fence*, *Unsplendid*, *POOL*,

*Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Southwest Review*, *The Nation*, *Best New Poets*, and *The Best American Poetry*. Her chapbook *Hello, virtuoso!* was recently published by Belladonna\* Collaborative.

**Ruth Ellen Kocher** is the author of *Ending in Planes* (Noemi Press, 2014), *Goodbye Lyric: The Gigans and Lovely Gun* (The Sheep Meadow Press, 2014), *domina Un/blued* (Tupelo Press, 2013), *One Girl Babylon* (New Issues Press, 2003), *When the Moon Knows You're Wandering* (New Issues Press, 2002), and *Desdemona's Fire* (Lotus Press, 1999). Her poems have been most recently anthologized in *Angles of Ascent: A Norton Anthology of Contemporary African American Poets*, *Black Nature*, and *From the Fishhouse: An Anthology of Poems that Sing, Rhyme, Resound, Syncopate, Alliterate, and Just Plain Sound Great*. She has been awarded fellowships from the Cave Canem Foundation and Yaddo. She teaches at the University of Colorado – Boulder.

**Alyson Miller** is a lecturer in literary studies at Deakin University, Geelong. Her short stories and poems have appeared in both national and international publications, including a book of literary criticism, *Haunted by Words: Scandalous Texts*, and a chapbook of prose poems forthcoming with Dancing Girl Press.

**Denise Rodriguez** received her MFA in Poetry from Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas, and her BA from The University of Texas at Austin. Her work has appeared in *Room Magazine*, *A River and Sound Review*, *VAYAVYA Magazine*, *The Doctor T. J. Eckleburg Review*, *Kweli Journal*, *The Pedestal Magazine*, and other fine places. She was also a participant in the 30/30 Project for Tupelo Press during August 2013 and several of her poems are available to read on their website.

**Christina Rothenbeck** is a doctoral student in poetry at The University of Southern Mississippi's Center for Writers and holds an

MFA from West Virginia University. She is the author of the chapbooks *Girls in Art* (dancing girl press, 2012) and *Erasing Innocence* (dancing girl press, forthcoming 2014). Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *The Paterson Literary Review* and *Reunion: The Dallas Review*. She lives in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Find her on Twitter: [@C\\_A\\_Rothenbeck](#).

**Mara Adamitz Scrupe** is a visual artist and writer. She has an national and international art exhibition record and has received fellowships from the Washington DC Commission on the Arts, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, MacDowell Colony, Irish Museum of Modern Art, USF Verftet/Stiftelsen Kulturhuset, NEA/CEC Artslink, and the Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI), among others. Public works have been commissioned in the United States, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Estonia, Lithuania, and China. Her essays and critical reviews have been published in periodicals and reprinted in art history textbooks. Finishing Line Press published her first chapbook of poems, *Sky Pilot*, which was nominated for the 16<sup>th</sup> Library of Virginia Literary Awards in 2013. Scrupe is based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where she is professor at The University of the Arts.

**Nikki Wallschlaeger**'s work has been featured in *Decomp*, *Esque*, *Word Riot*, *Spork*, *Likewise Folio*, *Horse Less Review*, *Storyscape Journal*, *Coconut*, *The Account*, and others. She is also the author of the chapbook *The Frogs At Night* (Shirt Pocket Press) and the chapbook *I Would Be The Happiest Bird* (Horse Less Press). She's also an Assistant Poetry Editor at *Coconut Poetry*. She lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and you can reach her at [www.nikkiwallschlaeger.com](http://www.nikkiwallschlaeger.com).

**Lesley Ann Wheeler** is co-editor of *Strange Cage*, a poetry press, and a graduate of the Iowa Writers' Workshop. She teaches writing at the Kansas City Art Institute. Visit her at [lesleyannwheeler.com](http://lesleyannwheeler.com).

**Rachael Wolfe** earned a BA in English and Gender Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she was an editor of the journal *Laurus* from 2007 to 2009. She has been published in *Handsome* and her chapbook, *Sauce*, was released in fall 2012. She helps to run SP CE, a poetry studio and art gallery located in downtown Lincoln's Parrish Project. <http://www.sp-ce.info/>.

**Samantha Zighelboim's** poems, book reviews, and translations have appeared or are forthcoming in *Boston Review*, *BOMB*, *Maggy*, *Rattapallax*, and *Ragazine*, among others. She lives in New York City with her cat Buddha, where she teaches Literature and Writing at Mercy College.