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The **QUARTERDAY** *Review*

Imbolc 2016

Edited by
LJ McDowall
and Leslie E. Owen





THE QUARTERDAY REVIEW

The Poetry of Mythic Journeys Vol. 2 Issue 1

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Imbolc 2016

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THE QUARTERDAY REVIEW

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Editorial

EDITORIAL BY LJ McDOWALL

This Spring's Increase

IN SCOTLAND WE'RE STILL mired in midwinter, where it's been one of the wettest on record. Across the British Isles, many have suffered under floodwaters, leaving ancient villages at risk of abandonment and depopulation. It's difficult to imagine as the first of the year's quarter day passes, that spring is on its way. The only clue is the bleat of very early lambs, still inside with their mothers, and the hard push of snowdrops through the winter ground. There's light at the end of the tunnel, but late winter/early spring is a time of waiting and preparation, a pregnant pause before the coming of the light. I find myself longing for the balance of light and dark that will come with the vernal equinox, and for me, March will be the true New Year.

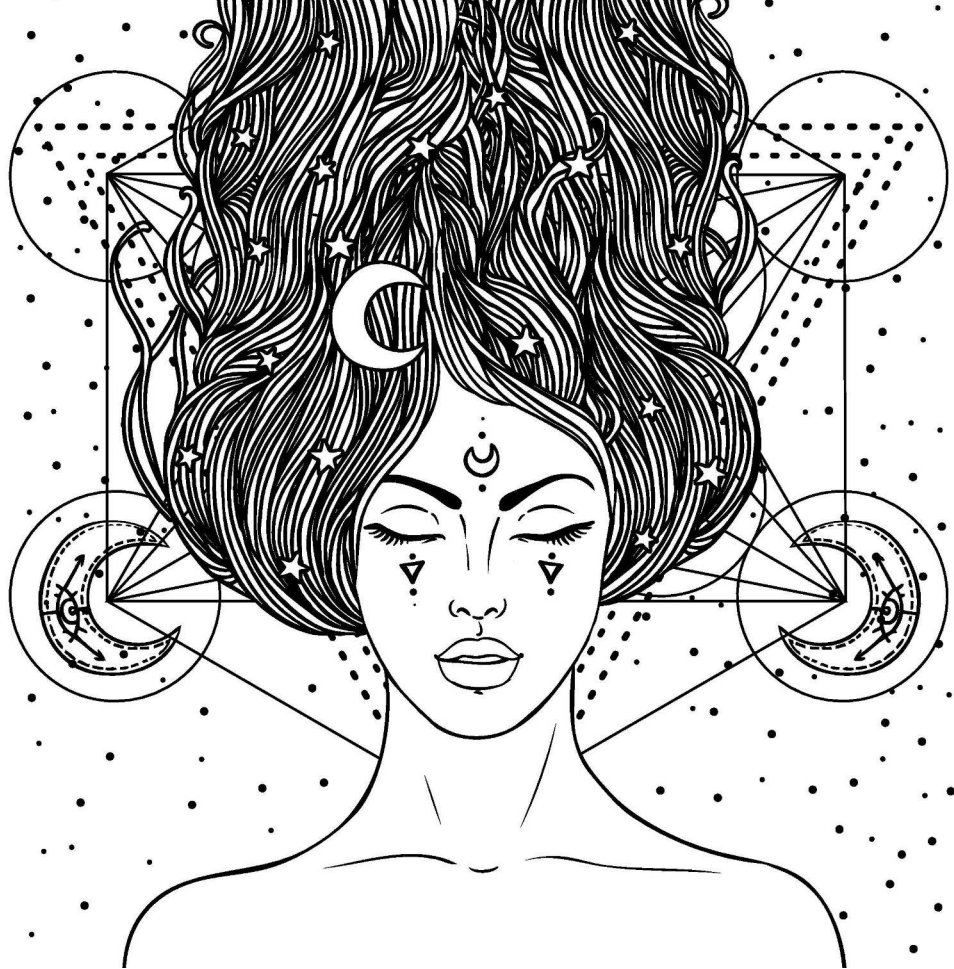
This marks the first issue of our second volume, an issue which speaks to the hungry bite before the earth quickens and bursts to live, to darkness, albeit with a light at the end of the tunnel. We begin this year with truly exceptional poetry from around the world. Opening with Love's Increase by John Donne, this issue takes on an almost metaphysical quality. However, this issue really belongs to the voices of the female poets that responded to our last-minute submissions call. Their poetry on the glories, joys, frustrations, and ambivalencies of the female experience speak for themselves.

What impressed us at *Quarterday* was the sheer variety and quality of the verse we received. Unusually for a literary magazine, we found something to accept from nearly everyone who submitted to us, with the gothic and mythic — such as the sonnet crown Imbolc by D.A.Ravn — lying sharp against modernism (Gala's Tears, by Alan Rain). We're very pleased to welcome so many new voices in this issue with their

outstanding verse. We sincerely hope we continue being spoiled like this for the rest of Volume II. To all our staff, and all our contributors and submitters, thank you for your hard work. Please keep writing, and sending us what you write.

Surely, no winter can abate this spring's increase?





The Poems

John Donne

A POEM by JOHN DONNE

Love's Growth.

I SCARCE believe my love to be so pure
 As I had thought it was,
 Because it doth endure
Vicissitude, and season, as the grass ;
Methinks I lied all winter, when I swore
My love was infinite, if spring make it more.

But if this medicine, love, which cures all sorrow
 With more, not only be no quintessence,
 But mix'd of all stuffs, vexing soul, or sense,
And of the sun his active vigour borrow,
Love's not so pure, and abstract as they use
To say, which have no mistress but their Muse;
But as all else, being elemented too,
Love sometimes would contemplate, sometimes do.

And yet no greater, but more eminent,
 Love by the spring is grown ;
 As in the firmament
Stars by the sun are not enlarged, but shown,
Gentle love deeds, as blossoms on a bough,
From love's awakened root do bud out now.

If, as in water stirr'd more circles be
 Produced by one, love such additions take,
 Those like so many spheres but one heaven make,
For they are all concentric unto thee ;
And though each spring do add to love new heat,
As princes do in times of action get
New taxes, and remit them not in peace,
No winter shall abate this spring's increase.

D.A. Ravn
A SONNET CORONA

Imbolc

1 February, 1957

How shone the sun I wonder, on that day?
With cast of pewter clouds, or did it light
a clear and icy blue above, its rays
reflected stark from prairies drifted white?
And did the earth, that fallow bride below
the ice bestir in slumber, yawn and stretch
her dirty skin to shift the tattered snows?
What patterns did the winter's sunlight etch?
The infant who beheld that scene is gone
His eyes now peer behind a sagging mask.
His pudgy limbs are bigger yes, but thrawn,
A nagging question haunts, and he must ask;
'The light that Friday, tell me, how'd it mark
this son of January's final dark?'

This son of January's final dark,
a fortnight latter, saw the Hunger Moon,
when pangs within his belly bit and barked.
His mother held him at her breast and crooned.
The promises of springtide lit the song
She sang to drive away the hungry chill.
Her promise, if he'd only wait that long,
of warmer days with brighter sunlight filled.
Alas his patience crumbled under need
And at her breasts he struggled and he clawed,
So like a starving mongrel in his greed,
his cries so like a crooked crow's, so odd.
She feared he was a scion of the snows,
this Thursday's child; she feared he'd far to go.

This Thursday's child was fated far to go,
to sate the hungers that are life's bequest
and wandered wide, as prairie winds may blow
with little thought of ever knowing rest.
The turning wheel left furrows in the soil
The turning years left tracks across his skin.
His days he gives to study and to toil
His nights are filled with drunkenness and sin
Yet hunger nags him still without relent.
Of all the morning thresholds that he's crossed
And all the futile hours that he's spent
He rues this one that is forever lost.
When first he witnessed light and shadow's play,
How shone the sun, he wonders, on that day?

Uche Ogbuji

A POEM in RHYMED QUATRAINS

Sea-Marge

The surging monster waves at Teahupo'o
Stir up my store of fictions as they go
Coloring my visions of that reef,
That far-off legend archipelago.

What break-blast from those swells beyond belief
From which the surfer scuds to great relief?
What treachery of surface turbulence
Attends the "endo" tumble into grief?

Such ocean so impossibly immense
Draws imagination's evidence
From outside walls of my accustomed school,
Whipped by rip currents stoked to virulence,

Thick yarns wound on a technicolor spool;
Reflections at my shallow end of pool
In shanties to a xenotonic key
Conjure profound fancies of a fool.

The Cross River's placid channel to sea
Joined my village life at first degree,
My first colostrum of the maritime,
To Bonny Bight in tidal symphony.

Connections through the sugarcane and lime
Where springs and lakes were field trip paradigm,
In Gainesville on a two-year grade school stint,
The beach our frequent locus for pastime.

The barracuda tales which set my pulse to sprint
By campfire where the salt mottled green tint
From goggle color storied undertow;
Somehow no riptide followed from the hint.

Perhaps the ocean keeps cunning escrow
And when your margin's called you're last to know;
The kelps webbed up in bill-collector braid
Drag charges due in depth as *a propos*.

Begin the sunken masque; that's how they're paid;
Your curtain call just after, squid-ink sprayed,
The kraken and mermaid's nine-step sarabande
Choreographed by the sorcerer nereid.

Beatriz F. Fernandez

A GHAZAL, VARIATIONS ON THE PERSIAN FORM

Maid Marian's Many Silences

A robin redbreast's sweet evensong pierces the silence
of this convent, where granite walls bleed shades of silence.

Memories of our hard-spent time as fugitives in the forest
come fluttering back, when all good sense bade silence.

But tonight my heartbeat's riotous –how young we were,
how blind to danger, how soon betrayed by silence!

Although our cause was just, no one dared raise their voice,
to defend us, and our love's price was paid with silence.

Little salve for my wounded heart to know you battled on
while I, forced into retreat, for your sake prayed in silence.

Now the vesper bells clamor our wrongs and drown out
all other song—and the robin's voice fades to silence.

But just when I feel I cannot draw another breath
behind these suffocating barricades of silence—

your namesake renews his sweet, defiant song,
and one small voice soars unafraid over the silence.

Unerring it finds the heart of young Marian that was,
she who could mount crusades against stone and silence.

Marcus Bales

A POEM in RHYMED STANZAS

Approaching Dark

For Claude Simmons

There's dusk that dims to darkness; then there's dark.
In darkness there's still movement, shadow, some
uncertain source that promises a spark
of hope we'll see whatever's out there, should it come
to get us; but a lack of light so stark
that we can't see a finger or a thumb
before our faces gives us all a fright.
This morning's full moon is a no-show tonight.

This far out in the country, overcast,
a bit too chilly for this time of year,
the darkness turns to dark a little fast
and limits us to only what we hear
so every rustle makes it seem a vast
pervasive evil slouches near
to take advantage of our lack of sight.
This morning's full moon is a no-show tonight.

We do not speak. Our listening grows intense.
It's not that we don't know right where we are,
but we imagine something past the fence
beyond the porch. the driveway, and the car:
a dark the dark will never let us sense
that's hidden as the clouds snuffs out each star,
as breeze obscures its breath before its bite --
This morning's full moon is a no-show tonight.

L'envoi

Hey! A nasty scratch, some indrawn breaths,
the sputtering match reveals us in its light
and chases off imaginary deaths.
This morning's full moon is a no-show tonight.

Marcus Bales & Daniel Galef

A POEM in RHYMED QUATRAINS

Revelation

We'll pop the oldest known champagne
And drink until the clock
Has stopped — no need to now refrain —
Announcing Ragnarok.

Our spirits will be light and fun,
Instead of dour and leaden,
Counting down from one to none
And toasting Armageddon.

The evening of the end, no hoax,
We'll party without sorrow
And make apocalyptic jokes
As if there's no tomorrow.

Max Dauthendey

IRREGULAR RHYMING TERCETS tr. WILLIAM RULEMAN

Moon over the Ice

The winter moon above the river bed
Has lain down on the ice as on a shelf—
Like some gold saw that now is sawing there.

Both day and night the gray stream just stood still,
His image long since lost below the ice,
So he knows naught, and naught is in his sight.

It seems that, under loving beams tonight,
The red stream lays his shining body bare
As if his breast had grown too hot and bright.

Hedwig Lachmann

RHYMED TETRAMETER tr. WILLIAM RULEMAN

Twilight in Early Spring

The day turns pale. The last light flows
From smoothly-gliding banks of cloud.
The earth is dry now—freed of snow's
Dominion, though one sees a trace
Of ice in glazes thin as lace.

Night grows at mild and steady rate.
Brief flickers lead to softer sights.
Children play on, though it's late:
They never tire of day's delights.

Seeming prey to vague temptation,
Folks stroll and saunter without care,
Breathe and lift their chins to the air
As though some something lay for them there
Their souls could touch, like true salvation.

Hedwig Lachmann

RHYMED TETRAMETER tr. WILLIAM RULEMAN

Dämmerung Im Vorfrühling

Der Tag bleicht. Letzte Helligkeit
Quillt aus dem ebenmässigen Gewölk.
Die Erde trocken und befreit
Von Schnee; nur hie und da die Spur
Von dünnem Eise, wie Glasur.

Die Dunkelheit wächst sanft und stät;
Ein Licht, das aufblitzt, glimmt noch matt;
Die Kinder spielen noch so spät,
Der Tagesfreuden nimmer satt.

Die Menschen schreiten säumig, wie verführt;
Und atmend heben sie das Kinn
So an die Luft, als läge drin
Für sie ein Etwas, das den Sinn
Wie eine wahre Seligkeit berührt.

Anton Rose

A HAIKU

Spring arrives in
increments, plays peek-a-boo
with clouds



Johnny Truant

Harley's Girl

SONG LYRICS

Harley's girl
Well she's just his type
Her arms got tracks
She got a monkey on her back
You know what he likes

Harley's girl
Well she just ain't right
She's got real short hair
And a tough-guy stare
And they call her a dyke

But sometimes she cries up in Harley's room
Over shit that goes down at night

Is she one of the boys
Or one of their toys?

Harley's girl
Liked to scratch and bite
Yeah that bitch could scream
And make a scene
You know she just ain't right

Harley's girl
She'd put up a fight
There's bruises on her cheeks
And bloodstains on the sheets
You know what he's like

And sometimes she cries up in Harley's room
Over shit that goes down at night

Is she one of the boys
Or one of their toys?

Harley's girl
She left one day
She cut her hair
She went away

Harley's girl
Now she's in his dreams
He can still taste her tears
And he'll always hear
The way she screamed

Harley's girl
Well now she's gone
But he's hoping she'll come back
Some midnight black
And bring a gun

And all of us saw the bruises
But we never did a thing

Is she one of the boys
Or one of their toys?
Is she one of the boys
Or one of their toys?
Is she one of the boys
Or one of their toys?

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Performance, song track and lyrics available from <https://the-truants.bandcamp.com/track/harleys-girl>.

Catherine Wald

Ghazal at the Beach

A GHAZAL IN PERSIAN FORM

February: intense, bitter cold at the beach
as two bundled-up wayfarers strolled at the beach.

Foamy salt sprays torpedo indifferent sands
as lithe grasses disport uncontrolled at the beach.

The streets are deserted, the shops boarded up
like portents of disaster foretold at the beach.

Free from words, thoughts and gestures, from laughter and
tears
she somehow found her heart was consoled at the beach.

Immature harbor seals who nap on the strand
are attentively guarded, patrolled at the beach.

Absent sunshine, umbrellas, sun lotion and beer;
nothing glitters and there is no gold at the beach.

Stripped of intricate layers of fear and distrust
we might dance like two prisoners paroled at the beach.

Prehistoric shelled creatures can tiptoe and glide
with no need to play timid or bold at the beach.

Scrubbed clean by harsh winds and transfused with salt air
he shed concepts like *youthful* and *old* at the beach.

There's more truth in the beak of that scavenging gull
than in any old history unscrolled at the beach.

We've no creeds to ascribe to, no faith to defend
and no gods have their merits extolled at the beach.

That thing she longed after with desperate lust
is no longer invoked or cajoled at the beach.

Catherine, will you allow things to be as they are?
Will you dare to remove your blindfold at the beach?

Alan Rain

AN ENGLISH SONNET

Hooligans

We march on Divvy street, our rippers gang;
eat out your heart – we say who’s ripe to hang.
Expect a gob of phlegm to rile the fuzz;
no nancy punter stands a chance with us.
“You fuckin’ hooligans,” the righteous wail,
“Do proper work! You scum should rot in jail.”
In jeans and vest, I’m showin’ great ol’ tats.
In suit and tie, it’s most impressive stats.
I’m sitting pretty, getting fit to rule
the roost, the flotsam, don’t you act the fool –
my offer’s excellent, with tiny fee.
Sign here on bottom line, else feel my knee.
Yes, siree, smart and filthy, I’m your wanker.
Scum, me? I’m civilized, a city banker.

Alan Rain

A POEM in RHYMED QUATRAINS

Gala's Tears

You were delivered, with knowing wink, to my door,
in a box. I helped you out, offered biscuits and tea,
but you moaned, said: "I'm broken, needy and sore,"
so I bathed and massaged you, applied mouth to mouth, let
you pee.

Delectable and unique, you came with features galore,
the top model, designed for the sweetest of whoopee.
Oh, I loved every inch of you, every follicle and pore –
my little fox, my bunnykins and play kitten, my happy
honeybee.

You were despatched from the rising sun to my door,
wearing nothing but bubble-wrap, my very own refugee.
I bought you heels, miniskirts, lipstick, perfume and more,
said silly, soppy things, so we'd be lovers, doves, an item, a we.

I had you hand-built, at fabulous expense, by an artisan,
to my exact description; I knew, doubt free,
you wouldn't be lent out, or girl-for-rent – never a courtesan.
"Be mine, dear Gala, mine, only mine," I begged on crumpled
knee.

Meticulously sculpted, with openings to cherish and adore,
immaculate in conception; I was your instant devotee,
grovelling at your feet, then prostrate on the floor;
you were my angel-from-heaven, my goddess and nirvana, my
She.

Your bounty was a freshly-bloodied membrane;
lush and virtuous, you were my replica cherry tree.
Our first time came with acme, aahs, and “again, Lion, again,
again.”

How I loved to activate your systems with my ignition key.

Your digestion was a gastronomic joy; what could be finer
than sharing glasses of wine with our high cuisine?
“You must escort to toilet twice a day,” said your designer;
What fun it was to sniff your farts, taste your poo, then wipe
you clean.

Soon your arms, legs and mound grew a delightful down,
springy and soft as hillside moss. But you were fickle
when I shaved your underarm; I laughed and played the clown
while you pleaded: “Please don’t tickle. Please don’t tickle.”

“I want your child. I want your child,” you echoed one day,
and I dreamt of a happy home for four, or better three,
but you’d been despatched to me with no way
to reproduce; you didn’t bleed, endure cramps, or get PMT.

“My tooth hurts. My tooth hurts,” you wailed one day;
I took your candy away, then studied the instructions that
stated:
teeth cleaned every day didn’t decay.
I pulled out five molars before you abated.

“Full my juicy cunt. Full my juicy cunt,” you trilled one night,
lying in your sticky cream. I obliged, then inspected
the instructions that confirmed you were the Delight
model (much more rampant than expected.) My mood got a
little dejected.

“Eight inches! Give me eight inches,” you insisted, so callous,
writhing in your pool of goo. “You’ll make do with six,”
I said, then bought hickory-smoked ham, fish, and a handsome
phallus.

Next day, I e-mailed your maker, saying you needed an arousal
fix.

“Delight end. No support. So sorry, but new Rapture model
rocks,”

came the reply. “She sexee and no demands.” I said no way,
and I’m packing you up – but you didn’t fit in your box.

“Old doll need many love, eats and sex, then she okay.”

When you asked, “Am I fat? Am I fat?” I spoke no lies.

Your tears were rivers, and you wouldn’t stop;

I dumped you in a cupboard, said I’d lend you to other guys.

Shocked to the core I was to hear you wanted a man swap.

I asked what I’d done wrong. Many times you said: “Nothing
much,”

but you were designed for continuous sex,

and you weren’t getting enough. You needed intimate touch,

else you’d get bored and fat. Who’d have guessed you were so
complex?

I searched my heart and soul, decided to lose and win.

Putting you in my window under a red light,

I made a come-inside-dear sneer of your tarty grin.

Punters with acne, raincoats, and bifocals came all night.

Yes, you had a whale of a time, never once got the hump,

claimed all these men were better in bed than me,

and now you’re an independent woman, no more a frump,

and when I desired, it would cost me an arm and a leg – no
more free.

Like a pox, you were delivered to my door,
but now I've had enough – you're history, a trashy barbee
gone to seed, and it's time for blood, guts, body parts, and
gore,
because I'm going to get my axe and turn you into an amputee.

I sharpen my blade while you plead for your life,
promising you'll go on a crash diet; instead of seeking stuffing,
and erection, you'll be happy with affection. No more strife,
you'll be the ideal wife. I relent, saying: "You'd better not be
bluffing."

True to your word, we make it work; you seem content, if not
full of fun,
but then, one fair morning I find you – partly dissolved
with an acid bottle by your side, and a note, with a silly pun:
"Dear Piggy Lion, forgive Gala's tears. Not your fault. My
feelings evolved."

I sniffle, and squeeze what's left of you into your box,
then bury you, my box of delights, once delivered to my door,
once vestal.

My life is empty. I have talks, go for walks, pace fields and
blocks,
get promised synthetic perfection, but I decline, pine at your
vacant pedestal.

Abriana Jette

BLANK VERSE

Fragment #66

"sing of the love between you and the violet robed bride"

Fragment #30, Sappho

listen. His voice echoed long before she knew
what winter was, she heard it when she slept ear to
earth. She dreamt he touched her in the flames,
would burn for him, if he'd take the time to

Wait. Watch. Wonder. What else could a grown man do?
the thought of her during the day: beautiful
in fields of witch grass and baby's-breath.
her as his Queen. This is why he believed

in voyage; taking his beloved for his
so that love meant death. She leaned in to meet his
lips syrupy sweet taste of nectar
and his mouth stuck like honey to her breast

the heather's petal falling caused his regret
An agreement. On the bank she broke her oar
roared at the souls who entered her home.
She left the dishes, her husband sleeping.

Bare branches, and a mother in the distance.
Yellow. Raw. She preferred a world just at dusk
mornings undivided in the dark
she begs, but mother, he took the time to

Anton Rose

A PANTOUM

This Is A Body

This is a body, given for you,
this is blood, poured out for you,
this is a body, broken, renewed
until we meet again.

This is blood, poured out for you,
done as a memory, a gesture at hope
until we meet again
keep the flame lit, the fire burning.

Done as a memory, a gesture at hope
with every bite and every sip
keep the flame lit, the fire burning,
the yeast in the dough is proving.

With every bite and every sip
this is a body, broken, renewed;
the yeast in the dough is proving
this is a body, given for you.

And If I Dream

A POEM in METERED RHYME

Some fear and some, unquestioning, desire
that undiscovered country from whose bourne
no traveler returns. They halt or haste
to dreams they do not know--a desert waste
or sweet oasis waiting in its turn,
celestial burnings or damnation's fire.

I feel no fear, sense no undue attraction
to that land, that world of rumored night.
And when I make that pilgrimage at last,
what dreams may come will never be surpassed
by any colors bolder or more bright
than those created by our long affection.

The brush and oils borrowed from the days
of you and I, our pleasure and our pain,
will paint the details of a quiet glance,
a look, a touch, a slow and passionate dance
for all to see. The closeness that we gain
through love, encanvassed there, forever stays.

Michele Bombardier

The Skirt Of God

A SESTINA

If God were to spread out her skirt
and tuck me under like a wing
maybe I could alight
maybe I could branch,
bloom, then fly my petal self face-down
onto the ground, the wind a call

to prayer, like the eaglets call
from the nest in the old fir, their parents skirt
the clouds, while flying up, they face down
at the same time, a grace, each wing
a rudder, is this not hope? A branch
that grows from the stump, a light

in the dark woods, no source of light
to be seen, but illumine enough to call
out a warning when the branch
catches and tears the skirt
or shirt or whatever, because we wing it
on the dark path times, and we all face

the dark path. We feel along, our face
clenched, until our eyes adjust to light
or dark, same thing, same as wing,
that thing we do when we fly, when we call
ourselves divine, holy, worthy to skirt
despair, that black claw, that branch

of sharp thorns. How to branch
like a Madrona? Smooth, strong, facing
and twisting in the wind, a cascading skirt
of blossoms. To burn hot, throw light.
I pray my life to be so fragrant. To call
forth the sweet smell of loam. To take wing,

fly, no more sitting in the wings,
even the owl leaves the high branch,
she responds to the night calls;
the owl flies in the dark, her face
open as the sea, she doesn't need light;
she knows the night will catch her, skirt

her like a woman in a skirt catches apples, branches
shaken by the wind, first heavy, then light.
Heavy. Now blossom, now Light.

Lisa Mangini

A PROSE POEM

Letter to My Maid of Honor, if I Choose to Have One

Sources do not indicate the etymology of *Pythagoras*, but rumors suggest his name had no real meaning until his famous theorem – the one that tells us we can know the dimensions of one side if we know the other two. Like how *best friend* is defined by the someone else: all the swapped sweaters and sarcasm, photos snapped in varying stages of intoxication or exhaustion, lost handbags and moments to be honest and present instead of texting boys while bitching over pinot noir, blowjob jokes and feigned apathy at not being called back, the promises and pacts of sisterhood, to never become a wife, or wipe someone's milkshit in the middle of the night. This is what friends are for: curling irons and sharing eyeliners, and divining the future through greasy vague fortune slips, turning shrill and silly at the first signs of crows' feet and crepey skin, swearing allegiance until the requisite scrape and scramble of the bouquet toss. To be a girl is to be a mannequin in a room full of other mannequins, to be made of the same fiber and filling, posed in something similar but a different shade. The hypotenuse – the long, weak leg of the triangle – translates to *stretching under*, the side most likely to sag from weight, like a powerline bowed and heavy under a coat of ice. I used to be the shortest distance from two vertices, the quickest route to your tender center, before we both got swallowed in the domestic: checkbooks with matching last names, trendy kitchens, home ovulation kits. It's always a contest with the same prize: try not to be irrelevant by menopause. How easy for Pythagoras – for all the ancient names we know – who get

to draw and name the shapes of the world and live forever in
each map and roll of wallpaper, in every right angle of the
homes we're doomed to keep tidy and welcoming.

Lisa Mangini

PROSE POEMS

Marry

Marry: *Origins in Middle English. “Marie,” “Mary,” as in The Virgin Mary. As if the rest of us are miraculous. As if the rest of us are incredulous. As if mythology, a metaphor taken literally, is a fair thing to conjure over the rest of us, hovering like a ghost, a soft veil across our eyes, light and fluid as seafoam, like water throwing itself so hard against the shore it froths, pulled by gravity, compelled to attempt the impossible task of leaving the ocean, limping up onto the sand, turning into land.*

Wedding

Wedding: *Developed from variations in Proto-German, Old Norse, Latin, Lithuanian – all amounting to “pledge, bet, wager.” A glorified gamble. Grab the statisticians, the accountants, the actuaries, find a way to actually calculate the odds of both parties keeping their promise, upholding this pledge, stubborn as a scar, holding out for a jackpot of joint tax returns. Double down after you take a peek at what you’re in for after years of waking up sharing the same air, the same hand, the same bank account – so much investment too hard to transfer elsewhere without a hefty loss.*

All definitions, or italicized text incorporated into definition poems, have been borrowed with slight paraphrasing or direct quotation from Dictionary.com.

Raven Black

Tender

AN ENGLISH SONNET by RAVEN BLACK

It cracks through air, the leather red as hell,
The binding ties, tearing the fragile skin.
My dancing whip. Your scream, a winter bell,
That tolls my swirling darkness deep within.

My body shakes, lust firing through my veins,
Your trembling tears are diamonds for the taking.
Through pain and pleasure, freedom we will gain:
Your scarlet weeping welts rise, wet and aching.

The flogger falls, forgotten on the floor,
On broken skin and bruises, my caress:
The fading pain receding even more,
For nothing here was done beneath duress.

My healing fingers flow as softest silk:
Your pain. My fire. Both formed from that same ilk.

Jessica Goodfellow

Phantom Pantoum

A PANTOUM

The cover of *Time Magazine*, front page of the *Denver Post*—
my uncle was suddenly everywhere, epic uncle of everyone,
of a nation eating their breakfast placidly, their own daring
nowhere to be found: not at Camp Seven, not on Denali Pass.

My uncle was suddenly everywhere, epic uncle of everyone,
while I was the niece of no body, because my uncle was also
nowhere to be found—not at Camp Seven, not on Denali Pass.
Also, he was everywhere, on ABC News, in the *Pittsburgh
Gazette*,

while I was the niece of no body, because my uncle was also
not on McKinley's south summit, and not on Karstens Ridge.
Also, he was everywhere, on ABC news, in the *Pittsburgh
Gazette*—

his nowhere was everywhere. My mother could not look.

Not on McKinley's south summit, and not on Karstens Ridge—
for days in the raging storm rescuers could not look.

His nowhere was everywhere. My mother could not look.

What happened to those seven climbers? Their bodies were

for days in the raging storm. Rescuers could not look,
each wearing 45 miles of nerves in the snow, wondering,
what happened to those seven climbers? Their bodies were
swathed in the unknowable. Their everywhere was nowhere,

each 45 miles of nerves *where* in the snow? Wondering became a sufferfest for the families—helpless, separated from, swathed in the unknowable. Their everywhere was nowhere, spent. By looking and not looking, absence became present,

became a sufferfest for the families, helpless, separated from a nation eating their broken facts placidly, their own daring spent by looking. And not looking, absence became present on the cover of *Time Magazine*, front page of the *Denver Post*.

Sharon Suzuki-Martinez

A HAIBUN

Isles of the Wise

Led by women since time immemorial, the world's last official matriarchal religion survives in the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa). My mother's parents and all their parents were born on these islands. Mom never wanted to visit, and characteristically, would not explain why. This mystery always drew me to Okinawa. When I finally visited, my husband and I saw *utaki* or sacred groves roped off for the *kaminchu* or holy women. We stumbled upon one *utaki* in the midst of a modern metropolis. Inches from a playground, no graffiti, or broken beer bottles, anywhere. It was a small pristine stand of banyan trees, their aerial roots winding like the veins of a giant. Behind them, a cave as white as papyrus. I had found my doorway to the beginning and the end of all questions.

In Okinawa
Everybody knows
The gods speak only to women.

Jo Angela Edwins

A VILLANELLE

Stricken

A woman chopping down a dying tree
swings her arms with strength and tenderness.
She does not relish clearing death's debris.

Sap runs like blood, although not quite as free.
The blond wood belies its terminal distress.
A woman chopping down a dying tree

has other things to do, elsewhere to be,
a few names to curse, and more to bless.
She does not relish clearing death's debris.

To make the swinging easier, she'll see
in her mind's eye dark cruelties unconfessed
and aim her blade at them and not the tree

which once grew wild and beautiful, and she
would swing from its limbs, the skirts of her dress
wide enough to hide from sight death's fine debris.

Now her body buckles under this chopping spree.
Such chores are not accomplished with finesse.
A woman chopping down a dying tree
finds her sad hands splintered with death's debris.

Marnie Bullock Dresser

A SONNET

The Grievous Wrongheadedness of Comparing Grief.

Oh, those two, they were so much in love
they thought they were ready for the moment of
comparing grief. Like kids playing doctor—
I'll show you mine if you show me yours.
His was planetary, hers was wee,
a tiny slip of a grief, a lozenge, a bee.
And yet the buzzing kept her up at night.
His life had shifted like a tectonic plate,
but he was known for sleeping really well.
Thus in the heaven of their love there was this hell—
to look at someone else and think you know
how to categorize what does and doesn't show,
how to parse, dissect, map out, formulate belief.
It's grievous and wrongheaded, this comparing of grief.

Eileen Murphy

BLANK VERSE

Encounter #4

Inspired by Delmore Schwartz, "In the Naked Bed, in Plato's Cave"

In the naked bed, under Neptune's mast,
In Y and T shapes deftly tipped, the lovers
Sail each other all night long at last.
Then he swims, drifting, as she battens down covers,
Dropping her anchor near shore as her lonely diaphragm
Slides slowly out. She hears him pet the cat,
His crunching step, a cough, a car door's slam.
She rocks in silence, gnaws boxed chocolates,
Stares through the window, breaths out smooth, thin
Pools like the seas in which they cruised around.
Snow dunes outside are cool paths in his skin.
Rain drops' falling makes a ruffled crown
Like a damp goodbye in a faded gown.
She soaps face and pulls bound hair apart,
Hushes candles as loose hairs drift down.
Wearing glasses, she unfolds her sea-chart,
Writes: "His ride satisfies, but his waters are dark,
While the barbs of his borrowed trident are sharp."

Addy Robinson McCulloch

A GHAZAL in PERSIAN FORM

Ghazal for Light

A child's first smile releases in light.
His mother's milk maps a feast of light.

One day begins, ends as another:
Morning, evening, a caprice of light.

Children run, sing-song their seesaw play,
Laughing through faces creased in light.

Sand lot, crude diamond of hits and strikes –
Boys linger, gloves catch, release in light.

Elsewhere mad men shoot round after round.
Children's screams rise, then retreat from light.

Poets clamor for violence to cease.
Come, angels, and clothe our dead in light.

Thank you

The Quarterday Review is free to read and submit to online, but like all small literary journals, we have lots of overheads and hardly any money.

If you've enjoyed our work, there are a few things you can do to help us keep this literary journal alive, such as:

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*To all staff readers, editors, readers, and poets,
thank you for making Quarterday what it is.*



Reviews

The Emma Press Anthology of Motherhood

Edited by Rachel Piercey and Emma Wright

Illustrated by Emma Wright

Publisher: The Emma Press

Price: £10 (paperback)/£5.50 (ebook)

4 / 5 stars.

Apropos for this issue's themes of womanhood and motherhood, we've selected *The Emma Press Anthology of Motherhood* for review, and what a collection this is.

Motherhood is the time when, as women, we move from being individuals to common property. We lose our individuality. For me, it was the time when I forfeited even my name, and became "Sofia's Mum." Regardless of what roles we held in our lives before motherhood, we're redefined by society -- by men, and by other women, by the medical profession, by educators -- by our reproductive functions. For many Generation X and older Millennial women, raised with different life expectations than our mothers, the shock of transition can be wonderful and fulfilling. It can also be exhausting and traumatic, leaving many women in doubt and ambivalent about their roles as mothers and desperately scrambling to redefine themselves or take control of their own narratives.

This is a collection which marks, more than any recent anthology on women's experiences, those transitions and redefinitions of narrative. Wonderfully illustrated by editor Emma Wright, his volume is beautifully presented and shows the care the Emma Press has taken in its production, always a joy to see from a small press.

The poems themselves? Outstanding. These are our stories, told in verse of startling simplicity, layering meaning and emotion. Alongside stories of joy and fulfilment run often more sombre themes of ambivalence and pain, loss of identity and a longing for fulfilment. There is (somewhat disappointingly) very little formal verse in this volume, but we were very pleased with the macabre *Medea's Farewell* sonnet by Eve Lacy. The heart breaks at *Where The Baby Isn't* by Hilary Gilmore, a free verse poem expressing the emptiness of restrained, everyday grief. Many of the poems balance perfectly lyricism, joy, humour, and a touch of sadness. All, on some level, speak to that ambivalence that marks our position as parents and women. They strike the common chord of what Roque Dalton called the 'unanimous blood.'

Who will we be when we come back? the speaker asks, in *Steps*, a poem by Liz Berry, summing up the mood of the whole collection. *Will we remember ourselves?*

Reviews

The Marlowe Papers: A Novel in Verse

By Ros Barber

Publisher: Hodder & Stoughton

Price: £8.99 (paperback)/£5.99 (ebook)

5 / 5 stars.

This book was a real find, and we stumbled on it, by chance, in the bargain bin at Dobbies Garden Centre, where it most certainly should never have been tossed.

In a time when poets are struggling to place work beyond sixty lines in most literary journals and anthologies, it's very rare to find talent like this — talent of crafting real stories and narratives in verse. This book is nothing short of a work of genius. Told almost entirely in iambics, the story tracks an alternative history in which the playwright and poet Christopher Marlowe's tavern-room brawl death is faked by his wealthy protectors and is reborn as Will Shakespeare. Make of that theory what you will — the Authorship Controversy and Marlowist theory have attracted enough debate elsewhere, and that's not the point. See this work, if you will, as a piece of speculative fiction, an alternative history narrative in verse which is a true historical thriller and an incredible demonstration of poetic skill.

Barber eschews Middle English in this work, but nevertheless brings to life the Elizabethan era with a brilliance we've rarely seen matched, and the chapter-poems Reading epic stories in verse can take a little getting used to, even if you're used to reading poetry. This is not a light read, but the rich texturing —almost metaphysical in places — goes right to the heart.

For students of history, for lovers of the historical thriller, and especially for poets writing in formal and classical styles, this book takes us back to a time when the lines between poetry and prose stories were less distinct. Absolutely wonderful.

Contributors

Born on the windswept plains of northern Iowa at the height of the Cold War, **D.A. Ravn** has been described as cantankerous, contrary, confused, eclectic, alliterative, and annoying. Possessing degrees in the visual arts and physical sciences, he turned to writing later in life as a means of escape, but still hasn't found the exit.

Uche Ogbuji was born in Calabar, Nigeria. He lived, among other places, in Egypt and England before settling near Boulder, Colorado. A computer engineer and entrepreneur by trade, his poetry chapbook, *Ndewo, Colorado* (Aldrich Press, 2013) is a Colorado Book Award Winner, and a Westword 2015 Award Winner in the Best Environmental Poetry category. His poems, published worldwide, fuse Igbo culture, European classicism, and Hip-Hop influences in American West settings. He is editor at Kin Poetry Journal, founding poetry editor at The Nervous Breakdown, and runs the @ColoradoPoetry Twitter project.

Beatriz F. Fernandez is a reference librarian at Florida International University, Miami, and an award-winning poet and author. Widely published and broadcast, Beatriz was the grand prizewinner of the Second Annual Writer's Digest Poetry Prize. Her work has been featured in the *Latina Book Club Blog*, *Label me Latina/o*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, and *Writer's Digest*. Her poetry collection *Shining from a Different Firmament* is available from Finishing Line Press. Find out more about her work at beasbooks.blogspot.co.uk

Not much is known about **Marcus Bales**, except that he lives in Cleveland and his poems have not been published in New Yorker or Poetry.

Johnny Truant is a transgender musician, music critic and songwriter, and leader of San Francisco post-punk outfit The Truants. “Harley’s Girl” will be featured on their upcoming album “Truancy.”

Max Dauthendey (1867-1918) was a noted German painter and Impressionist poet who traveled widely, falling prey to tropical illnesses in Malang, Java at the age of 51.

Hedwig Lachmann (1865-1918) translated many authors into German, including Edgar Allan Poe and Oscar Wilde. She was also married to the German revolutionary Gustav Landau, who published her collected poems in book form after her death from pneumonia in her 53rd year.

William Ruleman poems have appeared, most recently, in *The Belle Rêve Literary Journal*, *The Galway Review*, *The New English Review*, *The New Verse News*, *The Pennsylvania Review*, and *The Sonnet Scroll*. His books include two collections of his own poems (*A Palpable Presence* and *Sacred and Profane Loves*, both from Feather Books), as well as the following volumes of translation: *Poems from Rilke’s Neue Gedichte* (WillHall Books, 2003), *Vienna Spring: Early Novellas and Stories of Stefan Zweig* (Ariadne Press, 2010), and, from Cedar Springs Books, *Verse for the Journey: Poems on the Wandering Life by the German Romantics*, *A Girl and the Weather (poems and prose of Stefan Zweig)*, and *Selected Poems of Maria Luise Weissmann*. He is Professor of English at Tennessee Wesleyan College.

British writer **Alan Rain** turned to poetry some twelve months ago, and finds it to be a natural medium for literary expression. He believes a poem should have teeth and leave an indelible mark on the reader. No subject is taboo. Alan is working on a novel.

Abriana Jette edits the anthology series *50 Whisters: Poems by Extraordinary Women*, which debuted as a #1 best-seller on Amazon. Her work has appeared in *River Teeth*, *PLUME*, *Barrelhouse*, and many other places. Fragment #66 is a poem from her current manuscript, *Lies Our Mothers Told Us*. Abrina teaches at St John's University and for the City University of New York.

j.lewis is an internationally published poet, musician, and nurse practitioner. His poetry and music reflect the complexity of human interactions, sometimes drawing inspiration from his experience in healthcare. When he is not otherwise occupied, he is often on a kayak, exploring and photographing the waterways near his home in California.

Bombardier is a poet in the Pacific Northwest. She works as a speech and language pathologist with persons with stroke, brain injury and autism. She has published over twenty poems in various journals and is pursuing her MFA in poetry at Pacific University.

Lisa Mangini holds an MFA from Southern Connecticut State University. She is the author of *Bird Watching at the End of the World*, a full-length collection of poetry, as well as four chapbooks of poetry and prose. Her newest release, *Ambivalent Nymph*, will be available from Five Oaks Press in Spring of 2016. She is the Founding Editor of *Paper Nautilus*, and a Lecturer at Penn State University. lisamangini.wordpress.com

Danish author **Raven Black** writes speculative fiction. Under the pseudonym Becky Welsh, she writes LGBTQ Romance. *Tender* is her first poem. Find out more about her writing at www.writing-raven.com.

Jessica Goodfellow's books are *Mendeleev's Mandala* (Mayapple Press, 2015), *The Insomniac's Weather Report* (Isobar Press, 2014), and the chapbook *A Pilgrim's Guide to Chaos in the Heartland* (Concrete Wolf, 2006). Her work has been featured in *Best New Poets*, *Verse Daily*, and on NPR's *The Writer's Almanac*. Recently one of her poems was made into a short film by Motionpoems. This summer she will be an artist-in-residence at Denali National Park and Preserve, where she will continue work on a manuscript about the death of her uncle as a mountain climber on Denali. A graduate of Caltech, Jessica lives in Japan.

Anton lives in Durham, U.K., with his wife and their very fluffy dog. He writes fiction and poetry, and his work has appeared in a number of print and online journals. Find him at antonrose.com or @antonjrose

Sharon Suzuki-Martinez is the author of *The Way of All Flux* (New Rivers Press, 2012), winner of the New Rivers Press MVP Poetry Prize. She has forthcoming poems in Gargoyle, Duende, and Dusie. She also curates *The Poet's Playlist* at <http://poetsplaylist.tumblr.com/>

Marnie Bullock Dresser lives in Spring Green, Wisconsin with her husband, son and four cats, all of which work together to achieve what she calls sustainable chaos.

A former Chicagolander, **Eileen Murphy** lives on semi-rural property that must be mowed quite often, located 30 miles from Tampa, surrounded by the wild animals of Central Florida, most of them mosquitoes. She received her Masters degree from Columbia College, Chicago. She teaches literature at Polk State College and has recently published poetry in *Right Hand Pointing*, *Straight Forward*, *Helen: A Literary Journal* (forthcoming), *The Thought Erotic*, *Rogue Agent* (forthcoming), and a number of other journals.

Addy Robinson McCulloch is a freelance writer and editor living in Wilmington, NC. Addy was a finalist for the 2014 *Fairy Tale Review* inaugural poetry contest. She has received two Best of the Net nominations. Her work appears or is forthcoming in publications such as *Minerva Rising*; *Gingerbread House*; *Redheaded Stepchild*; *What Matters*, an anthology of poetry from Jacar Press; and *Get Out of My Crotch: 21 Writers Respond to America's War on Women's Rights and Reproductive Health*.

LJ McDowall, Executive Editor.

LJ is a Forward-Prize nominated poet, author, and critic. Lucy's literary interests span speculative, historical and literary fiction. Lucy has been writing poetry since the age of seven. Her work has been published under several pseudonyms online and in print, and she's an associate member of the Society of Authors. She lives in the West of Scotland.

Leslie E. Owen, Consulting Editor

Leslie is an experienced Literary Agent. She began her publishing career in New York as an editorial assistant with Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in 1981, after graduating with degrees in Creative Writing and English Literature from the University of Arizona in 1980. Leslie has held positions as Literary Agent, Director of Foreign Rights, International Publishing Representative, and Acquisitions Editor in New York and Vancouver, British Columbia. Leslie's extensive and varied career also includes freelance reading for Four Winds Press and working as a Movie Scout for Nevelco. She has written articles and reviewed for Publishers Weekly, The Horn Book, the SCBWI Newsletter, and the Greensboro (NC) News & Record. Leslie's recent works have been published in *Zoetrope* and *Jewish Monthly*, and her children's science book, *Pacific Tree Frogs*, was published in 2003 by Tradewind Books in Vancouver, London, and Sydney. The book earned a top-ten-pick rating in Canada. In 2004, *Pacific Tree Frogs* was published in the U.S. by Crocodile Books.



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