

# Yggdrasil

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# Introduction

## Maria Jacketti

### Waiting

Waiting five thousand years,  
Make that twenty, or a million quartered  
Like a pretty sandwich, garnished with  
Rose petals and served on a doily,  
That mandala of domesticity.  
Waiting saber-toothed and domesticated.  
Waiting in a promised sanctuary to  
End a distant war.  
Beyond that, waiting outside of time  
Where forever is an eternal instant:  
Dressing up as Godot for Halloween  
And ending up invisible, or frost-naked.  
Tired of trying on new bodies, new lives,  
Princess Garbage College,  
Garbage Collector, Medusa's Hairdresser,  
Styling blind,  
Burned at the stake, nailed to the cross,  
Kidnapped, Enslaved, sent to convent  
And cave, always hiding  
With my lynxes, some fallen to save  
Their sister ape  
I take up my gun, today,  
Load it with my library of lives  
And blast a black hole in the sky.

November 2014

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# Maria Jacketti

## Lavender and Peach Roses

Outside the lawn is frosted  
The bright cherry leaves of the Japanese maple  
Hang on to autumn's edge, each leaf a celebration of such light.  
But half have fallen and become brittle ruby paper.  
And all the yard hunkers down for  
Green-rooted hibernation. But  
Inside the rooms of my life roses whisper.  
Lavender and peach floribunda — I don't  
Know your origins — you have probably  
Traveled by plane to greet my floral hungers.  
Lavender-infused, quiescent blue, islands away  
From love's red traditions, you come to cool  
My fevers and succeed beyond the frost, not saturated  
But kissed by watercolors.  
Peach-petaled ones, your soft perfection knows  
No shout. And so I fall into your floral mouths  
For resurrection — oh, let me become you,  
while November hollers and shakes  
Outside my windows, and spring renews  
Herself in the Earth's inner chalice.

11/20

### **Song of the 2:00 A.M. Abductor**

We came from the stars,  
Most recently the wormhole chateaux  
Of your moon to Mars,  
Before that from deeper space  
To make things right —  
Erase, erase.  
We abduct you when you sleep.  
Until you wake up to us,  
Fraidy bumbler be, locked in primeval rust:  
You are energy, fat, muscle,  
And bone, our programmed meat.  
In the this most ancient battle,  
You are the avatars in monkey cattle.  
Shaman President, do your job  
To defeat us with drum and rattle.  
With drum and rattle.  
I said: with drum and rattle,  
Demons retreat.

## Raking Leaves

Tempest leaves that whirl away  
from my hungry rake—  
The yard still brims alive:  
Last tomatoes, skimping hours, the stray  
Angel white cat who eludes my traps:  
I would have her on my lap as we rest  
Before the persimmon-flame fire.

There is time in each leaf,  
And centuries in these piles.  
Before dusk's velvet encroaches, I will save seeds  
For another year: there is hope.

I find myself already talking to winter,  
Begging for gentle snow  
That falls in feathery buckets.  
No need to storm so much anymore.

Today King sunflower head droop —  
Sunshine ekes away behind these leafy tors, perpetuity  
In the trees' surrender – from my childhood, they  
Have stretched ever closer to the stars,  
Wiser each year, saved from paper.

I may never see the greater world,  
But the universe of this yard,  
The seasons conjure this harvest  
The leaves piled high as snow banks,  
I have made my world,  
And I wonder when it will harvest me.

10/18/14.

## Diaspora for Sitting Duck and Fawn

Mobster in our kitchen  
Slick, shirt of roasted garlic tweed,  
Nice, expensive.  
My mother tells him  
We are moving out of his orbit,  
Across town,  
Next to the woods, near the bears  
And an occasional snake, so he can't rent  
Our basement  
For another speakeasy,  
Call it a kibitzers' club for twenty bucks  
More a month —oh what will that buy a  
Widow an anthracite widow? Pimento loaf.  
Wonder Bread. Spam.  
When we all know the world is growing dearer,  
And darker and dearer, no, the for sale sign is our  
Coming attraction, and we will move  
Close to the woods and take our chances  
With bears,  
And an occasional snake, for her husband  
And my father are now really in heaven, which makes  
It hard to locate since the kingdom heaven is within,  
But inside what? A fortune cookie? A box of Crackerjack?  
Inside me.

We are alone, except for our calico  
Who will die in service soon enough, killing rats.  
Oh give me back now, all that was stolen.

10.29

## The Red Fox, the Spaghetti Squash, and Little Feather

Little Feather, know that the fox will play  
Games with you —did you not see the fox  
Cross your path on Berner, I mean “Burn her”  
Avenue — that is how the red foxes  
Teach, we the descendants of gorilla folk, her father,  
The dead Indian chief, asked rhetorically,  
Little Feather tells her new postmodern self, Maria.  
But too late before she pierces the bomb-like  
Spaghetti squash in her kitchen of turquoise-stone  
Cabinet knobs and ancient wallpaper, the oval squash  
Shape-shifting into a salad grenade sending its vegetal  
Shrapnel in her face, across her neck, and hands,  
Stringing, burning with a message now not from  
Her guardian angels, but the trickster, this happy, almost exultant fox.  
And in the boom-flatulent-now that ended with a hiss,  
Her darling kitchen is covered in threads of caramelized  
Sweet-steaming vegetable spaghetti, sticking to walls,  
Toaster, microwave, fridge and halted ceiling fan, leaving even  
The floor slick with the *puh-uh* of the explosion.

Little Feather, he appears atop the kitchen  
Counter, “You have forgotten all I once taught you  
In the gullies and marshes,  
So far from nature’s heart, and wrapped in your city, on the  
Edge of these devoured woodlands.  
Bring me sneakers and dog food in your dreams, next time  
And return to the fox’s university,” oh-so-yippingly  
The red fox demanded, as she cried out in stupid pain.

# Julie Kim Shavin

## Perhaps

Suppose God is not a monster.  
And that man is made in no image at all  
or in some new one.

A theologian said  
*every action is a sin:*  
*God likes to act alone.*

Perhaps nothingness is God,  
Schrodinger God (or not).  
Suppose silence is silverine.

This may be how to die  
without shame  
without sin -

standing on a shore (lying)  
waving (*not waving, thinking of waving*)  
thinking whether thinking of waving is action,

an anxious smile one's every crevice,  
every crevice a god's redemption  
for kindling a finger, no astral village at all.

## A Summoning

The days are weak poems we must wear  
(and the grim lisps of night)  
gray houses in gray cities  
of gray skies.

Behind every thing,  
some other lurks –  
we want it so, though

to the first sweet scorch of love  
or newborn's cry, we hand no  
*is that all there is?*  
nor to some first prize,  
or first bites of pies.

If you have little courage,  
build yourself a church

when courage comes,  
burn it down,  
then enter.

## **Sewing a Lesson**

Despite what you say  
about the stitch that saves so many  
I pick, listless, at the warp of time  
snip some snaps of universe  
only to find you there  
sick, swollen, bleeding  
from seams, those nasty sores  
you keep ripping  
because the bugs are over-full  
and the world's canvas  
has starved your anger.

## **Gifts that Keep**

In the cupboards of deep Georgia,  
roaches stole my dreams,  
those susurrous things  
of easeful travel  
and rare times grieving.

Mother, so many times  
you showed the beds I made  
and now must lie in.

See, the roaches found me even there  
cocooned in my lover's torso

they chewed off his arms  
and his head,  
as though to warn of even worse  
future ills

those waking tears  
like dewdrops  
from some temperate hell.

## Watering the Dying Garden

your giant sports drink  
after a morning's run  
my slow bath of salts  
steam of coffee, tea

a spinach sasses,  
so it gets extra,  
like the hardier twin  
that's got a chance

small birds trill the viral air.  
Let us clasp our ears,  
my love.  
Let us end right there.

## **Just Be You, they say**

We crush the chalk on the boardwalk of life  
attempting to blur our errors.

*Stay awake whatever you do, we think -*  
otherwise, some obsolete economics  
will take us under until we are living  
quarter-hearted within the exterior of a dream.

Who does not wish to flee the the world's ear  
the minute we sound,  
to be a new language no one comprehends,  
but for some better reason?

Tonight I learn things from a girl with purple hair  
who is orchestrating a new she

even though we agree  
the lines collude anyway, the chalk silts our eyes  
to a blunt contraction, and the walls are, in fact,  
quite deaf.

# Ralph Monday

## Winter 2001

Glaciations, though a long time ago, move  
About the window. Skies, iron gray,  
Envelop all that is-for the moment.

Time will change.

Two young twin poplars resist the  
Wind outside the window. Frail, still,  
They soar above bare land, bare trees

Awaiting

Primal spring. They are not my Grandfather's  
Yellow wood. Those were older than these, bigger,  
Possessing a nobility of age.

He cut them anyway.

Pregnant youth, two giants twined together,  
Topped by a chainsaw thirty years ago,  
Not even around a house.

Protect the garden, he said.

That garden, that land, revisited,  
Lies fallow. Twisted weeds and briars  
Erupt there now.

I guess papaw was right.

## **The Second Cloning**

After 1999 attempts, Jesus was cloned on the 2000th.  
Difficult, since genetic science had not yet mastered  
The intricacies of melding a resurrected Creator of  
The Universe, or the Son of God, the ultimate Savior

Of all the colored races.

The zygotic implantation precise in the Virgin's womb  
Guided by the scientist's cool syringe after attempts  
From the Shroud of Turin, various bloodied medieval relics  
Acquired by shadowed secrecy that ranged geographical  
From Jerusalem to Beijing.

The Vatican finally stepped in, grudgingly, after the internet  
Blew the genie's bottle away, and coughing, gently, informed  
The Swedish consul that they, perhaps, perhaps, might be able  
To give Roman assistance.

After all, Gods always take root in cold places.

We have a foreskin, in our vaults, that the Jewish circumcision  
Preserved; not John the Baptist, long before that momentous  
Event-shortly after the Manger Birth-as prescribed by  
Tradition, the Knife saved the Life. The Three Wise Men from  
The East, after ladling spiced Gifts, following the Star Custom,  
Preserved the Life in a clay bottle.

Dollops of hay, a donkey, and they were on their way.

That is the background of the Story, my Chucklings.  
The rest is yet to Epiphany.

Madonna, singing Catholic hymns, had already been prepped.  
Cloned herself (she would inform the world of this at the MTV  
Music awards), named the girl Mary, and protected her Virginity  
For fifteen years from wayward thugs like the New Cloned Elvis  
And Dennis Rod (man) mond.

The Enquirer, CNN, Turn (HER) TV had all caught the scent  
Spiraling, spider like, from beer induced typings over THE WEB.

Some kinda shipwreck was up.

This was BIG. Geosynchronous bleepings spawned the Word World.

EVERYbody wanted a piece of the action.

The Dahli Lama flew in from exile: the Communist Chinese  
Shrugged their atheistic heads and even chanted a few OMMS;  
The Southern Baptists, as usual, had not a clue of what to do.

So, the SCENE was set, the manger prepared, carefully synchronized,  
Of course by specialists from all the sciences: archeologists sifting  
Through the sands for the ancient beehive, NASA engineers coordinating  
Spacestuff along with Cornell astronomers, the EXact Bethlehem palace  
Where postmodern census takers gleefully rang the bell.

A few Dollies and Mollies, hastily arranged for the viewing masses  
Sucking down bad Budweiser, lay down gently with lions outside.  
While the cameras clicked, the corporates licked means of a new computer  
Archetype circumscribed by the faithful, faithless populous fueled by  
A dynamo-electricity and the Virgin equally important-both spawning  
A new age and loved exactly the same.

Somewhere the message got mixed and nixed.

No matter my mad hatters, resurrection was up, Christmas around the  
Corner, a few bleeps away, and the sheep were prepared.

Get IT all on CAMERA this time around.

Industrial Light & Magic provided the Star, the Three Wise Men;  
The camels by a Palestine projection company;  
Vegas showgirls were jetted in (the Rockettes lost the bid), beplumed,  
Bespeckled, amazingly sequestered, they danced and pranced like  
Santa's deer awaiting blastoff. (PUT IN TITLE OF SONG OF BIRTH HERE)

The web scorched along primed for Prime Time.

And the birth began, natural, of course-The Mary could  
Do no other; Joseph didn't even wring his hands, being  
A good Jew. The cameras clicked, the lenses flicked on  
The grandest, waiting two thousand year epiphany.

After a few convoluted contractions (lens in lens out; there about  
The Walk About), His Head emerged feet first, mewling, screaming,  
The Savior looking for His own redeeming Adam's tart; there began

The Second Start.

Computers clicked, ratings flashed, the stock market almost crashed-  
By the Second Cloning. Then, the Moment Endeared, Incarnation complete,  
HE EMERGED (THE TWO MICHAELS JORDAN AND JACKSON WERE  
NO WERE TO BE FOUND),

But, my dear faithful foundlings, the One emerged after a 2000 year hiatus,  
By a bit of foreskin DNA that the Vatican didn't wish to discourse with in  
The First Place (they have their own problems); and the Swedish Renaissance  
Complete CNN clicked on.

Jesus was reborn, precisely, on December 25, 2001, at 12:00 EST.  
Man, these ratings would be good!

Cameras zoomed in, chocolates and popcorn were in every believers'  
Homes, plus a toot toot toot or a drink or two.

"Mary, what do you feel," said a Springer Clone.  
"I feel-I I I feel something playing my mind mime."

He Came He Saw He Conquered Carpe Diem

Jesus reborn came out obsidian black.

CNN cut immediately to an old Andy Griffith show.

FADE TO BLACK.

## **The Hollygrail**

Johnny Blue had been spiritless since birth.  
Even his mother noticed when he popped  
Out like a sleek seal-sorta sideways-

That boy ain't got no soul.

She traded him to his father for a couple  
Of tickets to Disneyland and future  
Remuneration to be named.

Johnny's father had a soul once, but  
Lost it fishing for salmon in Alaska.  
The jeans do tell.

Totem poles and grizzly bears quickly  
Became boring; then his father either  
Died, or went away-choose the story.

There poor Johnny was, like a convict  
Out on parole, already doomed for a  
Crime not quite sure of.

He had never even heard of Kafka or castles.  
He sensed something was amiss, but like  
A lemming turned the wrong way

He never could quite make the leap.  
Children threw mudballs at him.  
Critters shunned him.

Johnny scratched his head and went to  
The chief totem guy. Blueboy offered  
Some tobacco but the major pole folk

Wanted cold Uncle Sam. He gave him  
What he had, which wasn't much, threw  
In his best slingshot.

Dude broke out his premium feathers and  
Consulted the hawk sitting blind and  
Mute on top of the pole.

No soul, said the man.

What?

No soul. Nuff said. Wander on down to the heartland,  
My chicken dumpling; look for it there.

MTV, devil music filled him up for awhile,  
As well as bad blonde sitcoms and an occasional  
Western or two.

This became unsatisfying. He went to the black  
Clubs where there was plenty of soul food,  
Tried his best at a whirling dance dervish.

Brothers only sadly shook their heads.  
No soul.

He tried the gay bars and floor shows.  
The powdered, skirted butterfly boys  
Looked better than he did.  
No soul.

He tried political rallies; bad mistake.  
Politicians and lawyers definitely have  
No soul. Skunks got better jive.

Finally found it: at a Kmart blue light  
Special right between cheap lingerie  
And last year's Christmas lights.

The Hollygrail, a plastic goblet, a bit  
Tattered and stained with manufactured  
Holly leaves sticking out the top.

Man, it shone like a TV's dead channel  
Late at night. Cheap, too.  
Buck fifty.

Blue man polished that thing up like  
A brass general, put it under his pillow,  
Took it out every day to examine like

The tooth fairy's golden gift.  
His life changed; even got a girlfriend  
And a cat.

Picked them up foraging in one of the  
Best downtown dumpsters.  
Knew he was on a holy roll

Because the electronic preachers  
Spat out his schtick like an animal  
Control officer on a better day.

Till his pavement babe started to  
Feed the cat chittlings out of his  
Hollygrail.

Definitely changed his attitude.  
You don't touch god thing, baby.  
It got soul.

He kicked her out, but kept the  
Cat, better pussy anyway.  
Cat died; Johnny couldn't find the Hollyheart.

So he called 900 numbers,  
The psychic network at least a  
Trinity of times.

Bennie Hen put him onto the trick;  
Springer zeroed in like a Kamikaze  
Planting Shinto for the Pope.

That's when he went on the show.  
That's when he sniffed the scent,  
Took to wearing Old Spice

Got a gig of his own in Nashville.

Sported a California tan, hustled advice  
To the Scientologists, dug the genie

Out of the bottle, ran the game on infomercials  
Sold soul to a million freaks  
Before the feds busted him

Because his garbage girl (the faithless twit)  
Turned him in on a technicality and Slick Willie  
Became his guru.

## **Samhain Is Gone Now**

Samhainam is gone now, receded into the temporal  
Past until another turning brings completion.  
Women and men, men and women gather together  
In ancient haunted forests where all masks fall;  
Circled together around bonfires, shadows thrown  
Wherein a seasonal truth beating within primal human  
Cell reduces shadow and brings remembrance.  
In the memory is dancing joy; satyrs and stars,  
Sticks and stones that break no bones, the wind  
Whistles merrily after; seasons come, seasons go;  
Stars and steers, non-delicate deer model the people;  
From sun and wind and sky, from moon and moth  
And heartbeat, revelers revel far from caves--  
Hearken the life of an old, old grave.

## **Moon Crescent**

Crescent, swanlike, the moon glides silvery  
beyond a human cognition sky.  
There are birds in the clouds singing seed songs.  
Airplanes float as Japanese fireflies in a test  
between sun and moon.

Heaven and earth suspended between thumb, index--  
some type old story thrills the genetic limbs of man,  
beast, bird, rock, or tree.

Human pulsing hearts like a sunflower quasar thrust  
into a bad science fiction story, like a pulsar emanating  
magical radiation waves, like a gigantic gravity ridden black  
hole sucking up all flowered light so that the human brain,  
bipolar, forgets the sleepless halves, goes circuitous once again  
around the remembered forgotten not.

Hunger is there in a thousand million different manifestations:  
thirst for the cicada, drinking the whale, living the dog:  
runes, symbols, hieroglyphic story written in not only stone,  
but also in the blind minddance of all stories ever human encumbered

till there is light

that must darkness eaten be

like the moon  
like the snake shedding its shadow.

Then is the crescent romantic cognition.

# Zvi A Sesling

## **Wishes From Hell**

Lie on a bed of pain  
Drink fire from the cup of lava  
Drown in the acid lake  
Fall from a mile high cliff  
Walk in front of a speeding truck  
Walk the Serengeti with no weapon  
Lay in front of an oncoming train  
Stand between a steel ball and a wall  
Step on to the subway's third rail  
Walk into a nest of wasps  
Go forever without food or drink

## For J.G.

You don't remember me, but I remember you  
'Twas not so long ago, you broke my heart in two...  
--Little Anthony And The Imperials

I still remember that first time we met in the  
Bronx you in a red top held up by straps and tight  
black pants, a 15 year-old body on display

The guys on the block said you were  
a Negro, but I knew better, you were  
a dark Sicilian of hot blooded ancestry

I wanted to date you but your father and  
mine got together to foil our efforts  
a Catholic and a Jew do not mix

So as I found out years later my father  
traveled from the Bronx down to Little  
Italy on the subway to meet your father

Your father sat in the back of a restaurant  
at a round table and when my father entered  
the front door he was quickly frisked for guns

He was escorted to the back where the two of  
them had lunch and discovered they agreed on  
many things, especially that our religions did not mix  
So they reached a rapprochement – he would keep  
you away from me and my father would keep me away  
from you – and more my father wanted to buy weapons

Turns out he was an arms dealer buying guns, tanks,  
ammunition, anything he could for his fledgling country  
while your father had a grand affinity for money

It was a match made in war, your father would supply  
what my father wanted and in exchange big money  
would pass hands, two men smiling, shaking hands

## **First Timer**

for Sid

At the age of eighty-seven  
my brother-in-law has just  
finished writing his  
first novel

It is not quite finished  
let alone published  
but I can already see  
the headlines in large type:

87 year-old writes first novel  
says the Denver Post while  
the Hollywood Reporter is reporting  
on the possible cast for the movie

Next I expect to see him on the  
Today Show interviewed by  
Matt Lauer who has not read the  
book but tells viewers how great it is

The next day Michael Strahan on  
Good Morning America talks with him  
about anti-Semitism back in the 1930's and  
racism now which an intern has briefed him on

The fourth day, Charlie Rose on CBS  
does an in-depth interview with the  
novelist about what growing up was like  
in 1930's Minneapolis

Sunday Morning with Charles Osgood features  
Mo Rocca joking around with the octogenarian  
getting serious only occasionally and the good  
media streak ends on C-Span and a You Tube video

After that it is readings at bookstores in Denver,  
a flight back to Minneapolis where the novel  
takes place, for more readings and wraps up with a  
photo-op at the White House with the President

## Structure Of One

He liked what he saw:  
legs, hips, breasts, face  
smile on lips, hair perfect  
When she stood in front  
of a mirror admiring herself  
standing straight, a line  
like a one

## **Blue Rubber Car**

Mother would take me to the  
park across the street in  
Philadelphia to play

I was maybe two or three  
years old and it was the  
highlight of the day

Once I found a blue toy  
car made of hard rubber  
and played for an hour with it

When it was time to go home  
mother would not let me take it  
saying it is dirty and belong to someone

So despite my protests it stayed  
in the park where for the next few days  
it would be there waiting for me

Then it was gone and I wanted to  
know where it was and was told  
the real owner found it

Amazing that all these years later  
I remember that  
blue rubber car

No one else would ever remember  
such an insignificant object  
not mother or the owner

What is significant and remembered  
is a mystery so difficult to comprehend  
as are the memories of loss

# April Salzano

## Random Thought #3

A vision without a forethought,  
extraneous scenery cropped out.

Images before pictures, photos  
without albums to hold their heads.

## **My Middle Name is Running**

across page and terrain,

from fears and financial crises.

Up the Olympus of autism and beside

the stigma of damage and personal disaster.

Away from age that follows me, without bothering

to try to sneak up behind me, just jumps my bones,

joints and all.

## No One Gets Lost Anymore

People window shop for other people,  
books of faces, pages of pictures all pretending  
to be candid. The word friend has lost  
all meaning. It does not denote someone  
you have actually met. Worse, you can  
no longer wonder what happened  
to that kid no one liked in high school,  
the one with the gimp leg  
and the bad attitude, or the freckled  
girl who moved here from Colorado  
because she was pregnant. As soon  
as you question their whereabouts aloud,  
some social media junkie will tell you  
exactly what both were doing  
as of this morning, how many kids they have,  
what time they took a shit, color, consistency.  
When my roommate from college called  
this morning, I did not feel guilty  
for not knowing her mother had died  
a year ago. Though I did lament her loss,  
my surprise would have been normal  
only a few precious years ago  
when people were too busy living life  
to update their status.

## From Age This Pause

The sky is melting, a dark blue-  
black to darker still. I fold,  
arms over arms, legs into chest.  
I curl on patio chair, watch horizon  
disappear. Semi-gloss becomes flat  
color without shades. Alone,  
it reflects nothing but mood.

# Greg Patrick

## Lioness Pride

*Eyes brandish a fury of gemini golden fire, a dormant flame reignited at the onlookers as the lioness stirs.*

*Stare bores into their own as if from the vantage point of the stars looking down and they recoil instinctively..*

*A vision of primal splendour behind the burning golden eyes..exuding strength*

*and grace...enshrined in languid repose upon a dais like a Sumerian Empress enthroned..*

*But it is a deceptive languidity for every fibre of her being like a bowstring drawn taught..craves and strains*

*for the chase and hunt..*

Ever the huntress, Never the prisoner at heart, when the darkening barren hillsides are cast in shadow..

the moonbeams ignite my brooding stare..

Neither a shorn mane and a cageless stride makes a lion anymore than a cage unmakes a rebel's heart nor a crown makes a High Queen.. No less a lion even more so for a fire of suppressed rage was ignited for one who looked for the stars of the plains and saw only the circus tent..

Beyond the bars..the first sight of the stars like postcards from a distant land..

bars like dark sunrays..

My fangs bare in mute roar to the moon...like a nocturnal battlecry...

My heart's bloodchant pulsations like a Masai drumbeat of war quicken in tempo and urgency..

I sense the loathsome hyena, the bane of my kind in it's adjacent enclosure

like a member of a rival rebel band confined in uneasy proximity in a neighboring cell.

"Mere scavenger" I think contemptuously..His insufferable leer fades at a mere look..I will not suffer the insolence of his kind why these claws have strength yet..

Like an unrefined barbarian warlord in an enemy camp on eve of battle he is..

It's vocals like a maniacal chuckle..and it's leering maw again mocks my baritoned purr..

It's presence is maddening but my eyes that transcend darkness where man stumbles through it to

the clarity of midday glaze over..like the inebriate's eyes over the rim of an empty cup craving fulfillment.

I flex my claws like dull scimitar blades..

My eyes blaze a daydream of red..of getting at that intolerable hyena, whose gloating chuckle through the bars play scavenger to my spirit and roaring over my kill..eyes as if ignited by the moon in microcosm of spectral flame like two wounds overflowing..

in maledictioned gaze like two gemini blood diamonds cut from the same heart of stone.

Gaze of gemini Hope diamonds a gleam with shining depth of fire as ever leered from an idol

baleful shrine..and the lidded glare of my eyes like portals to hell ajar..

It's as instinctive to defend daydreams and to raise fists against nightmares visions as

it is to defend oneself in waking hours.. I pace the confines of the cage in the way of my kind..eyes cast yearningly at the hills..as if

nomad's eyes to where oasis spills..

I feel the shadow of a circling raptor of these lands and my eyes reflective as a nomad elder by

a night fire my gaze swims with distant memory..of other lionesses encircling a fallen

impala..with aerial cries of birds waiting till we disperse, our ravenousness sated and the insufferable hyenas straying

dangerously close..till we flash them a forbidding glance like a cast spear, a Zulu's aesagai striking home into its quarry..

The gaze of earthbound and aerial hunters meet with a sparking recognition, like eye of the storm and red horizon. Like metallic arachnid chords the linked bars seem. A dreamcatcher's strands to those beyond my reach, barely holding a nightmare at bay yet to me barrier's to a dream-differed as I behold the magnetic allure of the hillsides.

To Reap the New Moon's Harvest

He observed the crescent moon, like a conspiratorial wink to the dreamer, gleaming with the enticement of Ulysses' bow,

beckoning its rightful lord from exile across the moon-lit dreamscape of sea..

Walking downtown in the evening it seemed in contrast to the brightly lit displays in the shop fronts that entice with the idea

that a smile can be bought and the heart behind it's glow has a price, it is the moment walking through the darkneses and

shadows between in which one is reminded that there are things money can't buy and one envisions those priceless. Intervals

through which one hastens past an entreating hand, a palm out-stretched for a future,

eyes averted as if one sees too a reflection of their own unfulfilled dream's supplication and unread uncertainty in a solitary gaze to the stars and the aloof angels that look down as if upon almseekers.

Envisioning that one worthwhile face that inspires to face whatever awaits, that face, half-dreamt half seen. Not the lifeless mannequin in the window.

that becomes in time like the stone angel to one standing with flowers no longer able to knock on door but now on stone.

But if one keeps to the shadows the shadows keep them....If the restless shadows were granted form and face to walk amid the

passerby, mingling as uneasily as the shadows with light, it would have been with that one that walks with his

own newfound light having been acquainted with one priceless. The echoes of the

song of that day like a warm presence escorting one back on the walk home.

A soloist playing by a street lamp in shadowed corner's usual haunt away from genteel passerby where only lost souls walk.

Silhouetted like a living eclipse again the sanguine moon, the bright stands in the exile of darkness.

Man and moon stand in two solitudes and he stands before it's vexing light like an uncertain king on eve of battle before an

eyeless sybil prophetess confiding his dream like an offering to the night.

Detached patron to dreams but confidante to dreamers, of kings and shepherds while flocks and armies stray.

Like one on a cooling walk that takes pause in his pre-occupation at the solace of a hauntingly beautiful performance by a

street harpist he likewise ceased in his step before one who captures his heart in silence set to music.

Heavy sigh and disenchanted eye regards the moon over the sea as "Just barren rock cast in flattering

light” but a reconciliatory look to the heavens says “but no less

enchanting for all that”. Voice half lost in dream subdued to a puerile tone

of rejuvenated wonder by the ghostly mirage of the moon that make dreams seem yet within reach.

Just a phase of unfulfillment then like its own, come full circle.

Where Wake Meets Horizon

Vision of beauty behind green eyes do not yearn for the land over the sea with the

greenest green eyes for eyes that would look over seas for you yearning with a

depth deeper than the ocean. As one looks into them to see the summer sky and

sea. The brightness of the surface seems to reflect the

depth of your eyes. As great as the bright beauty seen on the surface as the

sun sets over the western sea and the night never felt darker nor you farther.

The brightness of the surface like an indication of the

depth of the eyes. Gaze reflected their admirer like a nomad's face in an

oasis or sequestered tidepool of dream. A sigh to the last light of the setting sun of summer

a wordless interpretation of your name.

If there is a man in the moon as they say then all the starlight is in one woman's eyes, a more radiant light than the stars

under the skies and when you sing only then it escapes the solace of darkness and of dreamscapes only the derelicts seek such

surreal highs. A sigh to the horizon after a distant sail or plane leaving away like a prayer to an

angel distant as a stars brightness darkened by the city lights after abandoned

on the shore. Eyes worthy of the person, a gaze

startlingly and impossibly green. Voluminous as the shelves it would take to do

justice in words yet understated. Their fathomless depth that of the Irish Sea, yet more so.

Breath caught in mid-song when beauty before words proved song obsolete.

If eyes were truly the window to the soul that the angel-destined essence of being that

gleamed behind the eyes was stained glass mirror and reflection of the angelic as ever star's gleam

proved the skies to be dwelling place of angels.

His heavy sigh was culmination of all prayers unanswered by the gods that he

he thought he knew as his own and was known in turn.

A sigh that was sum of all the songs met by a dark window to the caroler as snows fell.

A wordless expression that conveyed all. That bespoke a profound betrayal to heavenless skies.

Under the eternal flame of the stars his heart felt as heavy as a shoulder of a warrior Who solemnly bore  
his lord slain from

the field of battle under the gloating eyes of enemies.

## Ghostrose

Sophie Scholl

Her namesake of wisdom well became her for she was sage not merely beyond her years but beyond the ages of man. She of the White Rose Society might have been called as much. For she was an anomaly for her time. Yet so too was hers a timeless quest as ancient as man's inhumanity. When others basked in the glare of those who would deny new eyes the dawn she read forbidden books by the vigil of solitary candle, not for escapism but rallying point... Not to lose herself but to reclaim her humanity.

As C.S. Lewis observed in *Shadowlands*: "to read is to know one is not alone". So that by emulating the heroic exploits she seemed to have stepped from the very pages Armed and armoured not but with the wisdom and selfless courage that are the defining traits of the strong individualist. Until the time she could take honoured society amidst the selfless heroes of the past that was becoming the regressed present. Though "a nobody" she was champion to all, of humanity itself. Her actions spoke with a greater eloquence yet, volumes they conveyed of wisdom in synchrony with the heart.

She comprehended that Love knows no flags. Hate knows only flags.

Once you see them, you fail to see yourself and the humanity of others. a rare grace in the night of humanity's darkest hour in the shadow cast by tyranny her heart rallied while others cowered like a tragic regal wraith yet emblematic of life honoured. in perpetual dawnless night cast in the growing shadow who answered the beckoning of the Artemisian moon. Striving to avert nightmare in a time when too many would not "wake up from history" and past became the present. Though bright and enlightened she shone with her own radiance of persona as if humanity had learned nothing from its travails and sacrifice . In the absence of an interventionist creator a creative mind sought to uphold the truth in the midst of tacit approval lent to persecution.

The heresy she upheld, though comparatively frail of constitution that she could not hate another upon command. As if she believed the veracity of her words would bear her against the incursions of the profane-hearted in the ageold credo of the revolutionary. Like the intelligentsia of all eras she was as the forefront of rebellion for the sake of those who would not be intellectual puppet to the totalitarian empire that rose as humanity regressed and fell. Her composers and "friends" like Mozart and Thomas Mann were discarded by her peers for mindless chanting. Yet to uphold a vow and credo that was the

ageold battle cry of the rebel, she foreswore life as defined by the mere drawing of breath to give cheers unmerited, while the world cried.

She proved that the Knight of the twentieth century did not slay dragons but draconian societies, did not fight giants but the small-minded of Hobbe's Leviathin. Did not follow the crusade but the quest. Hers was the fate of the queens of Renaissance and yet she unmanned so many in her courage. Her eyes opened then as if from a nightmare and into a dream.

As one who has observed the aftermath of volcanic devastation the first thing to rise from the ash are roses white as the moon. Their delicacy belies that they are emblematic of renewal and the resilience and tenacity of life.

Though a shot is heard round the world as rallying call, a cry for humanity acknowledged is not.

And before one of her friends was led away at a betrayed meeting he said to her in parting, holding her close against his heart:

"I will think of thee amongst the stars

ere another shines amongst the myriads and of its own accord as I rejoin  
my brethren in celestial halls."

I will ever be your guardian angel as ever your  
face is angelic.

"One day I will have a castle grander than this hall or any of the king

of mortal man, and I will tell the gateman to watch for you.

And no walls will come between us again".

As she stepped that eve outside the tempest clouds had parted

and the full of the moon was microcosmed in her eyes like Aegean pearls

in depth of sea gleaming in reply to the stars. They shone that eve with

a strange intensity until another night when the angels would welcome their  
own and another star would shine on the heights of it's own accord.

So long had rising smoke obscured them from her sight that she had almost forgotten  
how beautiful they were.

Once again she could equate them with the heavens, not merely space.  
As if to commemorate the quest of magi drawn by the celestial beacon  
to reginal "beauty bright". They are candular beacons that guide the sefarer  
and nomad homewards when all other earthbound lights fail.  
Suddenly she knew how the stargazer and marooned corsair felt.  
Homesick.

What are regrets but unrequited ghosts craving substance while the world  
goes on without them oblivious to their sacrifice.

"Oh What dreams may come."

## Miranda and the Tempest

Singing to herself in a tone and walking to a silence set to music like a song fevered by dark inspiration and enchantress' incantation...Guenevere's incarnation..till she passed into legend like a face into the crowd..and the silence of a sigh in an artist's eye haunted by wonder caught by the high.. becoming defining loud..

Blind Homer's inspiration seeking the right chords to conjure image, seared like musical notes written in blood on a page..like a contagion infecting listeners with kindred rage..not in the way of the rabble-rouser but the way broken hearts are rallied and reforged by banned bagpipe's call to make tyrant tremble from dormant smoldering like dwindled fire in a people's eyes, rage in lofty hall..

speaking of lover's sigh and warrior's rage as futile as a lion pacing it's cage.

He stands at threshold eyes haunted by war..eyes beaming soundless ventriloquism to thunder's roar and all that it meant to be man and mortal..eyes look back to memory as if at a closing portal.

And as a painter who would have his name as one with a masterpiece and capture a smile and moment on image of beauty immortalising it as a god does a lost soul from shriveled cocoon of dying man.

Waves shimmered as if betraying the light of submerged gold. High queen's beauty appearing like a legend retold by one seeking solace by sea and old soldier's wounds pulsing like heart in the cold.

And dream again makes it's stand over a storied land, like a shaman standing off against a black-robed missionary preacher..before beauty defined as if asked by a teacher..Dreams validity proven by the light cast on every beautiful feature, flawless like a rare gemstone from every angle. Where is she now? he knows not.. standing again an old soldier that time forgot..across a dozen more flickers of birthday cakes on empty tables..now the soloists are kindly waitresses..He has no voice now to sing., looking with no hunger at the dishes they bring...nobody he know bakes..last of the regiment and clan..too much pride to eat from a dogcan..Not a warrior to their eyes but a stranger and old man..

The crowds go on..like waves on the sea..not a one stops and thinks of me..I stand and lean with final strength against a tree..

The cold comes first..dark passes next..I shiver the feeling passes...along with those who replace me..

bright-eyed boys and lasses..I hope they learn from history in their classes..My wish for them..too late for me..

Then like one standing alone by the sea..she appears again..”High Queen you waited for me..?”

“It’s time..” so it is..I have a song..I knew all along..

‘tis an angel yes I see..

Aye and you waited for me..

Bardspell

When the raucous laughter rang too hollow upon the inn’s walls

and too great the solitude of the void left by the throng intruded..

“Wherever is the bard this eve” it was asked..

As if the shadows massing at the threshold were granted form and face

one who was both mirage and nomad was conjured forth it seemed like

a ghost.

It was not song alone he ushered in but a potent eloquential silence

and a sigh that does not lie betrayed in it’s cadence a broken duet supplied now only by echoes..his muse..where was she this eve..?..her voice like that of a falconer, so uplifting..

the one voice that could bring him down to earth..

Though mastery of the art preceded him there was something expressive in the entrance of all who crossed the threshold..each arriving with their own story to listen to the bard’s great ones retold. Their postures like notes of a song..

broodings of hate and love of jubilation and despair.

Silence greeted his appearance like one after words of truth that only came out during anger.

Haggard and disheveled as an almseeker yet noble in his bearing as a god by another guise  
testing the hearts of mortals.

Against a background of chill rain like a hailing of a silver tribute upon a dark prince  
he lingered at the threshold like forbidden words wavering on the lips.

Like a ghost reacquainted with the mortal world blinking in the firelight and his expressive eyes betrays  
his trade like a metallurgy left untended in the fire and crucible too long by by a careless hand..gaze  
ablaze with a Promethean enlightenment destined to chains.

Dark eyes like a lightless predecessor to fire closed savouring where cold of night met habitation of fire  
ere he crossed to the light and eyes accustomed to darkness saw  
those waiting in silhouette like angelic figures awaiting a new arrival to hallowed halls.

His tattered raiments like Ikaros moth wings seared by the light, betraying  
a man burnt by radiance beyond his reach, flared like rebel angel wings  
inviting metamorphosis from the listless intoxication of patrons to

Renaissance of being and reawakening of greater thirst than even the castaway knows who at last  
succumbs to drinking the sea. From messages in bottles

bidding one to forget..the words by contrast dared them see and forsake  
the bottle as sieve..mirroring facades that seem suspended in a glacial tear.

Like blind bard Homer called back for there are heroes yet unsung in the new worlds beyond the  
mariner's eyes on the eternal horizons beyond the wakes.

Like a shadow enthroned he stepped to the harp and like two rival councils

the heart fire and shadow flanked him.

The dark caress of shadow and the serpentine patterns of flame  
were cast over his face like snakes charmed by his song, the bard of  
a shepherdless people that had been fleeced to become wolves.

So the soloist invited them to be men again.

## Horizon and Mirage

Nathaniel Hawthorne had once wrote that “moonlight is sculpture” and so it was an apparitional mirage of a poet nomads imagery recreated in dream’s own image from the desert of isolation.

Like a lone sculptor who molds the divine from stone or the soloist who steps free of the strings to speak the words, the composer pacing with the lion in the music

notes till he casts open the window of his hermitage just to see the stars..for there are no kindred spirits below who remember and are heirs to that entrusted song.

Conjuring the vision of goddess. Huntress to the huntsman from the stuff of dream’s image reconstructing in fast forward, bygone castle towers awaiting homecoming of a rightful prince, take form as if before an exiled soldier returning to a homefront in ruins.

The citylights with their gaudy displays seem like distant minarets with a tempter gesturing around to the loftier idealist, the sad prince on pilgrimage...all this can be yours..? He gestures grandly.

But no he has his own way through that painted desert...

For golden age is not a gilded cage that he disdains..

By moonlight alone where dreams seem credible, tangible as a ghost’s caress  
the vision takes shape.

Long into the eve the soloist cythera-player caressed forth

bewitching strains lulling his restless heart to repose.

Its silvery chords like the ripples of a long dead sea.

Sighing over the desert sands.

His attendants soothed him from long journeys with rare

frankincense and myrrh.

He closed his eyes thinking of home.

Like a somnambulist walking a surreal dreamscape he strode the

encampment as the

sultry winds like a ghost's roar undulated the frayed banners and the walls of

the pavilions shuddered and heaved. The campfires tendrils writhed and sighed like charmed serpents.

On a sultry eve when the moon would light the pallor of finely-grained sands in apparitional splendour and he stood in wordless rapture basking in the spectral pyre's immolation. Sands shifted like the balance of power. Rising and falling. The receding sands hissed like a vast dormant serpent. His heavy sigh as one with the night.

The words even if whispered softly as waves to the shore like depth serenading the shallow were battlecry too resounding to be anything but soundless to the crowds and passerby but for the cry of the heart alone like a mute composer's and blind bard's song.

Though the soul can live by muse alone it is not the heart's sustenance but it's craving like a desert lion at the oasis.

And by the lyre and campfire the nomad croons by the light of a lifetime's moons:

*Serpent trails across the sands and a sieve of sand through nomad's hands*

*in stormswept lands*

*where nightmares hide*

*till dreams awake by the moon of the corsair tide*

*and the Magi beckoned by the star doth ride*

*for the Emperor's word will not abide*

*until the desert lion strays from its pride*

*and songs anew begin by the fireside..*

“Moonlight is sculpture” as a midnight scribe wrote..Like a gambler’s frailly balanced card castle for those

who dare against the odds, dreams

built of moonbeams for those who walked the dreamscapes of the heart till dawn without substance.

## All that's Best of Dark and Light

And where the sea sighed as if in tribute at her feet and the bio-luminescence seemed as if the sea was set afire

by her touch. As if her presence redefined the elements and rules that bound man to earth-bound..that's why it seemed flight was lent to feet in dance and a feeling of oneness with stars and not of earth. And under the eternal flame of the stars geminid in the earthbound only by

two eyes that cast their dark spell like night's spell over the landscape made dreamscape by that inspiration

that moved across the moon-lit sands like the notes of a song over a page to a composer's eyes.

And the dark cascade of hair seemed an extension of the sea itself and one closed his eyes into the dance

like into the words of a bewitching song or in the ageless rhythms of the waves, that horizon fevered the eyes of corsairs and wakes broke the hearts of slaves.

Light tide-pooled in that gaze so as to eclipse the stars, mariner's beacons to horizon's end

and only the stars were fit to be looked to to think of her making one lose track of time before the

styx's ferryman asked his toll, as smile that reminds one that he is alive, proved math is the language of science but poetry that of the soul.

Eyes like sacred Bahamian pearl entrusted to a girl, set in sublime sparkle

in depth of night sea that would ever be undelved and bright and dark with mystery.

Ever to vex the mariner looking to the stars over the night sea..

so near yet so far..like the voids between the star..

Orion slays Draco and yet in eternal desire, the stars dare the world in celestial fire..

dare you now mortal to aspire..?

In the gaze whose brightness was the emissary to brightness from the stars one forget the fires of guns  
and the  
endless drone of cars..

And when she left the dancefloor at midnight the footsteps in the sand  
gleamed with the bioluminescence as the waves drew back at the steps  
protectively as if nature was guardian to enchantment's path..and stars seemed  
so close as to defy an astronomer's math and gold shone so bright in gaze  
as to humble an alchemist's craft..bright as stars to the castaway's eyes looking up lost  
at sea on a raft..

The malfeasance of the soft power of the caress of raven hair's sweep..a force of nature  
like the sea itself and every chrome of light cast on her in turn in each flourish like the biolumined-  
shimmering  
waves whispering to the shore..like a sleepless night band answering the request  
for a favourite song to dance to..name whispered to depth of sea ..and only the stars to glance to..  
and in a touch on one shore.

## Sandcastles

As if celestial gold amassed by a god and squandered by mortals one who shone with their light seemed to step

from Vahallan portals to mingle again with the betraying mortals.

Each turn in the dance like a pivotal moment in its revolutions. Presence that was silence set to music as if in Tennessee William's words "all memory happens to music" all other background music faded to muted sigh that none dared intrude with a whisper.

And all happened in slow dance and slow motion as if met in the eye of the storm.

And one on greenest shore thought in bard's music of one in the land where the sky burns and every harpstring drawn in Orphean years.

The moment was a gift and arms unwrapped..

and eyes captivated that shimmered with the sequestered light with stars

entrapped as hopelessly afire as moths that strayed too close to the light..

that made the northern lights dim and the walk home in darkness bright..

Thinking you stole all its brightness at a glance and restored radiance to night with a glance..

Eyes meltingly dark as the intoxication of chocolate rum, eyes search the stars

like a nomad's eyes the way a bard looks up to a muse over the harpstring's strum..seeking the right words, in rebel angel's heart knowing one does not have to be of the herd to be heard...does not have to have sight to know true beauty..like blind bard Turlough O'Carolan might have expressed of that muse in another author's words.." even if I were blind" I would know you for what you are.." even if I was deaf as Beethoven to the keys I would no song by silence set to the music of that smile.. Come then with me by the night shore..I yearn for that gypsy's roof and by the side of the existence of angel's proof.. the undeniable power of believing again..

For as each master of song could tell..there are things known by heart..like words and notes  
and though we parted way by dawn and the sun's burning rays..in Shakespeare's words" hands enfold  
as pilgrim prays"  
and one will yearn for you on deepest shore as the snow falls like frozen tears  
as the aurora borealis enflames the sky like a warrior god's wound  
or songs written to a goddess before darkness takes and light shimmers  
like Vahallan light over land where braves and Fenians with dreams of freedom lay strewn.

## Raven's Hour

Like a breathless emissary of night, haggard after a long journey to bear tidings the dark poet faltered at last swaying like a pendulum tolling the hour, yet commenced his shuffling walk. Like a soloist by a solitary gaslamp's apparitional spotlight packing his case for the profitless walk back home. It was as if the restless shadows were granted form and face to mingle with the passerby. The gaunt apparition that once commanded striking presence in the centre of candle-lit readings with the mystique of a famed conjurer or illusionist now reduced to disheveled emaciation. He seemed strayed from the haunted pages of his stories. Raven hair maned a lion's stare. A bard's eyes like the lion's vision transcending the dark. His enigmatic profile seemed to hold watch over the night, a guardian of shepherdess dream and holding sway over nightmares as shadows thronged him like an admiring public after the end of his story. He was Atlas when the day broke and Orion when the night cast its dark spell left to songs only the midnight scribe will dare tell. Huntsman's return, bard's sojourn, like a ghost march till dawn. His hand of the nightscribe likewise beckoned at the few stars yet visible through the citylights like a pilgrim asking for an enlightenment just beyond his reach, as if snatching at their vigil candles, claw-like, talon-like some falling raptor that could not seize the bright quarry in the water far below but could not stop his falling for it. Now hovering between worlds, like the voyage of a ghost vessel drifting between shores. Snow fell around him in ethereal splendour, like frozen tears or the hailing of a dark prince, a rightful heir of shadow returned, in a crystalline tribute, the frost glistening in the dark mane of his hair, like an ethereal crown. He seemed like the apprentice of a sage or something wild pacing a night cage, one who revisits his master after being sent on a search for wisdom and was poised the question what have you learned then in your travels of wisdom or foolishness? The forbidding urban labyrinth with such evident squalour seemed an eerie dreamscape. The towering structures like misshapen sculptures glowered like dark idolatry. And to a sleepless brightness like the stars themselves and restless mind the stream of consciousness and words flowed like the night tides stirred by the moon. He seemed to glide rather than stride, with the air of a penniless prince humbled by circumstance, his ragged coat hems whispering on the stones like a flightless falcon crutching on broken wings though casting a shadow before him of a falcon soaring in slow motion as if guided by an elusive dream of restoration. Sleep walker though profoundly conscious of the restless dreamscapes of the heart. The squalor of the slums he roamed like the ruins of a lost city, were unnerving to behold. The Sunken-cheeked begged for alms in the shadow of the dilapidated soot-tarnished walls. Its uncouth denizens that congregated in circles

by the patches of lights now when night fell laughed in crude mirth as if to keep the dark and foreboding at bay as he passed them like a dark rumour whispered between them..a shadow of their own world passing them by.He staggered blinking into the beams of street lamps, through the intervals of spectral light and shadow like a dream transcending the chords of a dream catcher unhindered. The beams like moonlight filtering through the dark canopy of a petrified jungle. Like a spectre drifting through worlds and a succession of dark thresholds. A bewitchingly composed nocturne slipping through the harpstrings. He seemed a dark tear of midnight wavering against the moon. It was the voids but the fulfillment that made him seek the solace of the night. Every author leaves with a story untold and his soulful gaze like a dwindling candle flame seemed to delve the surrounding darkness for some image like listening to an endearment whispered to the night.

# Steve Klepetar

## Sleepless

Sleepless again at 4:03  
according to my phone's

green glow, this night  
of owls and aching backs.

Whose face at my window,  
whose grinning eyes?

Asleep you whisper  
that the crows have gone

with their black wings and claws.  
With what hands will I find

the hole they tore in the sky?  
Could I have wandered down

dark paths, following a trail  
of shattered sticks

Or is this a trick of light  
draining from the little boat of moon?

## **What I Didn't Know**

How could I know  
that your eyes  
were magnetic

and your hair could  
spill stars across the sky?

Your secret voice  
stayed underground  
among roots and worms and moles.

Your tongue could whistle  
melodies strained through cobwebs

and leaves, your hands could juggle twelve  
sharp stones and still you didn't bleed.

How could I judge when you walked  
on clouds, your feet leaving wooly imprints  
as you strolled above the perilous world?

What I didn't know was that you loved me  
from the start, that even in that storm  
of tears you bent towards me  
like a willow branch seeking an underground stream.

## A Star Listens

A star listens to murmuring night.  
How far should they swim in that eternal,  
fluid dark? Stars might listen  
to light, or cast out hours one by one,  
but syllables of night sound strange  
to luminous ears. And listening  
hurts, has risks, leaves that shining  
point shaken, less than easy in its halo  
of self-regard. They say the stars  
are breaking down, spilling  
into fragments along a vivid trail  
of cosmic dust. Is this the way  
to knowledge, then, the ego's slow  
collapse, trembling otherness in a voice  
obsessed with empty space and calm?  
Or are these sounds the shadows  
of sound, nothing to seize but echoes  
of a cradle rocked with a gentle hand?  
Night has a bleeding, swollen mouth,  
hard birth of whispers near dangling moon.

## Hey Cat

Hey cat, what was the last  
place you remember

burning  
those silky paws? What fire

drove you into these spaces  
between night and gray fingers of drizzly dawn?

I have heard you sing three  
nights running, those

tearing cries ripping sky, leaving bloody  
marks on fences and cans and the sentimental limbs of fools.

## Wouldn't You Like to Know

All my secrets are in this box, this metal  
metaphor with rusted lock. Wouldn't you

like to know where I keep the key, that silver  
hook with its barb jabbed in some bloody

mouth? I swallowed it once and it tore  
down into my belly, inscribing a secret name

I can only read on a night with no moon.  
It was then I saw a constellation shining, key

hung upside down on a wooden peg. For three  
days I could eat nothing but goat's milk

and *chevre*. Even lettuce curled on my tongue  
and turned bitter and cold. I stopped breathing

when the waiter poured my wine, an earthy red  
tasting of berries and clay. He tied a black napkin

around my neck to match my eyes and offered  
me a finger bowl so blue my eyes began to change.

Wouldn't you like to know where I plan eat  
tonight, my teeth filed, my shark tongue ready for bear?

# Michael Mc Aloran

## meat sequence

(after Francis Bacon)

1...fleshed sequence shadow meat/ once/ all at once yet no/ nothing in shadow meat's  
align/ the blood calm as untold mimicries/ by sense devoured the meat devoured/  
informed by the light which is not meat yet of/ pageantry else yet too/ meat traces  
meat it is the sun of nothing/ the sum total of nothing in/ none for the sequential of  
becoming once/ in/ the totality of lack strips emblems from meat's winds/ head stun  
yet other than/ bone structures to end the sum non-total total/ swims in/ blood meat's  
current/ lapses no/ suffers blind unto the white of the eye's flame it in the reflective of/  
ache lapse it is of the/ unreality of the/ meat sounds its purposeless in the night/ the  
un-given of/ the dalliance is with sky/ is a jester's promise/ where only else resides...

2...meat unto collapse/ stead lapse/ the lung's abort in headless barrage the head is/  
traces the/ meat's sarcophagus is the light surrounding/ the forms that bind the  
subject-object/ being in this from onset's claim/ the stripping down of/ in gradual of  
irreversible/ meat does not climb it cannot/ it/ blind limit of/ in/ in conflict there its  
sense fed to the/ nausea all in the face of/ the sunken eye divulged of meat/ the meat  
that is the figure's construct/ gallowing from bone/ opulent the sickness-pity for/ from  
unsung/ carved out of/movement through nothing the flesh/ clamouring/ cascading  
yet inward and then yet none/ the laughter of the meat is silent/ the its' cajole/ meat's  
blood spills out of vacuum presence/ meat is not void the head is void in conflict there  
the meat devoid of/ un-sound...

3...the piss/ cum/ shit of celebratory nothing/ the ruptured meat weeps from the skin's  
bind/ bound upon as if it/ or/ in that/ celebratory excavations before the foot of none/  
meat's saving graces in ejaculative/ voidal/ or the introspect of needle/ cunt  
penetrate/ rectal/ the mutilation of/ meat is the worst possible beginning-ending/ it/  
other than/ the head lopped off sings to the solar anus of the eye's mind percept/  
though of or or/ not from the give or the taking from of flesh/ is it/ the head is bone  
the body boned yet/ unto the sky there is no end it perceives the flesh null and void/  
yet in the meat of the percept/ even the fault of which applies/ the whole is not correct  
merely because it is of the exist/ it does not burn unless it is set to/ light...

4...object of/ scar tissue silences/ yet/ meat stings of the echo-wound/ the bound  
devour of in/ meat has forgotten/ the head as object desires the other it/ all stripped/  
sung from the broken amulets of memory's shades of silent wasteland/ yet the meat/  
still scarred/ collapses under the weight of/ consumption/ because it be/ it can yet be  
other/ it cannot be other than without choice/ the meat sings blood and sense yet it  
does not sing of final/ meat is arbitrary/ it sings in pleasure yet it does not sing aloft/  
but in the expulsion of desire/ in which none is known/ terms wishes granted it/  
dragging out the carcass of it into the light flaying the spectral knowledge/ the meat  
suffers/ it is a rabid dog in the midst of silence/ seeking to be annihilate/ yet...

5...fleshed on in-step/ bled from/ what is it/ this/ in this is felt yet no/ not of/ in animus of collective taste/ the bleed of asking yet/ bound to/ the face's demolition/ the smearing of/ hence it lacking identic/ special all as if reverberating sound in cylindrical/ yet meat's taste is of the flesh it/ sombre ash in the guts/ in the defecate of that already final/ as for the mock bind of sex the interchange and shift of parameter/ meat still yet entwined in the tint of desire's persistent edge/ all spun together between the animal and the/ obscenely bound to the nothing that is/ if/ where from yet in grip of marrow beneath the flesh's desertion in/ else never truly penetrating/ the cock lacking the hyenic bone will/ legs splayed/ a cunt exposed/ a rectum/ skinned the purpose of in the thrust of meat and the beckoning void/ of it..

6...the escape from flesh/ momentarily through flesh the loss of being in/ subtle  
cataract of none/ escapade of/ the blood coming to the eyes the cum coming to the  
fore/ blind-sighted/ then/ yes or no/ base flesh and the blood-red passage through  
night/ in machinate of/ over again as if to/ yet never the escape from/ not conscious  
deliverance nor conscious bite/ having bitten the wick between anguish and desire/  
chased by the none of exigency and lack/ of final edge and of/ red raw yet no/ of the  
blood no unless asked of/ the flayed will reduced to ashen/ scar scar a long the indent  
of emblem bitten dredge/ the frenzy of/.../all the while the meat slowly erased/ in  
definite stead/ the sense of final and over and again/ until/ bled out from circus tint of  
blood/ bone lack...

7...the Figure's lock in conditioned space/ cylindrical or no yes or no the smear/ the face obliterated/ frozen/ fleshed and death-like frozen in parameter/ shock red against the obscenity of transparent walls/ *for all time until the rot of/* a shadow-play/ a terse/ the head divorced beyond recognition yet it bites the sky/ from a viscera of teeth exposed/ from fleshed decomposure of the gait's gouge/ swarm/ it sits it does not sit it waits/ the marrow seeping through the skin of the surface's deception/ of the what lies beneath/ all the while the movement/ the bled or bleeding out of/ the ongoing that will not allow for breath/ meat tomes in shadow's trace/ matter what matter of/ but yet what wishful thinking...

8...the bone's vibrate/ the sinew of/ placement between death and desire/ sweet death  
desire/ in voidal of/ scar yes or no opened up to the landscape of the meat's being/  
through the excreta of silence the body never resting never silenced/ open wounds of  
traces forgotten never yet forgotten in the flesh-meat hung drawn quarter of a meat  
hook's shining/ lunged out from the it/ savoured savoured/ the pulse flower ever  
unseen/ the organs phantasms beneath the meat-bone structure/ bled what bled/ till/  
not a fucking chance from the outset/ until the foreign of/ fleshed unto the nothing  
ever of the it/ now/ the blood trickles from the eyes what matter of/ smears of paint  
arrested colouring of vibrant bile/ of crimson shock of flesh and the bruised flesh/ all  
the while the scream's excavate/ the bloody lapse/ flesh without answer/ none without  
speech...

# Post Scriptum

## Maria Jacketti

### The Gobbagutz Is Coming

*For George Jacketti and Joe Marella*

Driving up by Domino's Pizza... he doesn't  
Know this road anymore, although once  
It was part of his ten-mile-a-day hike, that  
Took him to ninety, but once you hit those  
Digits, the world turns to salami: in his last days,  
Your nephew Joe was fond of seeing visions  
Of salami, and even called himself "the salami."  
Joe told me, from his hospital bed, next to his  
Senile roommate: "I am the salami."  
I understand that God stands behind the deli counter now,  
Appraising the salamis and cappicola, the *gobbagool*.  
George tells me the Gobbagutz is coming for him  
Soon, the Gobbagutz, and not the gobbagool,  
The favorite ham of the Gobbagutz, that is  
God dressed as the Angel of Death, hurling a salami-club, comes.  
The Gobbagutz got Joe today, and George is next.  
He knows it; the inside of his mouth  
Even taste like salami — no, it tastes like gobbagool waiting  
For the Gobbagutz to kiss him with his tongue.  
He will come to get George after his Halloween birthday,  
And before he can tell Santa Claus to go shit in his hat,  
And he will come as suddenly  
As the speeding pizza man. It's the angel Azriel  
And his crew, actually, promises salami sandwiches  
That are simply to die for. Last night, the Gobbagutz  
Set off my house alarm twice. Didn't know it was you, Georgie, Jake,  
Looking for cookies and my make-up. I should have packed a  
Sack of the colors you loved, the eye shadows, lip washes,  
And skin-sand goop — and the Peanut Butter Surprises.  
That was all good fun and throw backs to past

Lives when men could wear war paint, especially  
When dancing for entities like the Gobbagutz. And so now

You are dead, George.  
Sorry, you never got married, George.  
Sorry, you never had kids.  
But in some niche of dreamland, you and Joe,  
Who might as well be your son,  
Will feed angel food cake  
To the sparkling birds, but remember to  
To hide in a cave of secrets whenever the salami man  
Stops by for a nibble, for no one ever  
Completely dies, and no one is ever  
Completely dead.

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## COMMENTS & SUBMISSIONS

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