



SONOSONO

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Birds

(after Rufino Tamayo's painting *Pájaros*, 1941)

This one titled person reading poem
after oil painting depicting person
watching wall

we don't know what
intent the artist with out of place
syntax grammar indifference
refusal to punctuate thus indicate
parameter or contextual

perhaps but
not the at which speed the reader
each finishes line

how may return
beginning words above even head
the shake regard or dis- aloud

what
cur/editor approved such sense

I prefer a simple flight confirmation

Matthew Woodman

In the Boarding School of Air

My kids have a toy where they sit
and spin, then stand up and stagger,
laughing, drunk on air. I want that.
I want to change my name
to abracadabra, change my address
to are we there yet. On my drive

to work I pass heavy equipment
that scrapes the earth, pass workers dressed
in orange suits as they loiter
between breaks. Some smile, some glare.
They know more than I.

Bagworms dress the branches
of evergreens. My mouth is full
of dead things. I hop on one foot.
Then I'm spinning around
in nothingness, waiting
for the world to start.

Jim Zola

EMILY AS WE NAVIGATE THE EDGES WHERE DISAPPEARING
HAPPENS

I imagined Emily
as something I kept

& she was gone
because she wanted

to be gone. I never
slept again

after that. When she
returned, I was

too tired to imagine
her as a treasure.

I was happy for
a long time after that.

Darren C. Demaree

Contraband On The Reverb Mic.

ching ching ching
gut bucket bawdy
bronze breath
earshot flux
peels back sanity
and echo all those
pauses without

punctuation can make
all line breaks run
according to chimes
and clanging spectators
off stage of culture
brushing conscience

if you can
not read poetry
aloud then stroll
at roll around hip
and shoulder reform
the revolution from within

the audience
humming saliva burns
verse at the top
of the rhythm heap
retching on reverbish
canvas street talkers
conditioned to ring
a ling dinging

Michael Berton

ghosts of fire

we stared at glow sticks worn
round necks and wrists until
the national anthem came
and went out like the beam
of a lighthouse smoke stretching
its wings to the highway
where cars pulled over to watch
the sky burst into hands
reaching for us ghosts of fire
and waiting for traffic
to leave I found a glow stick
in mulch a lavender
grown so dull it could not shake
the shadow from my fist

Geoff Anderson

our afterlives

and we went to be a box.
now i'm not me. here, it's the next as steam
to smoke. they're creepily fancy
of god, the gray first lover, who seems
like a candle, steals again love,
begins to question flowers.

as i just me wants to tell your heart
was just a subject. what coming in the perhaps
of the scar in spring.
but whatever. we were riding
the sky, watched the bright barge of clouds,
trying to be contemptible.

the masks of my breaths twined
like a song for our day.
purple killflowers. and i said, curled
from the green gulls like desperation,
we know some musket to be order.
we'd call its calculus
of a little second, yes,
a lock of love, and the trails
still pressed to the fact of the funeral.

instead, this afternoon of god,
dying coasted this news
like a story of disasters.
even the corrections were good.
let the dark rot in the color-cold gravel:
everyone's a graveyard of strange.

B.J. Best and torch-rnn

funerals in singing

the whispers in the science of colors,
and a pasta forest in the air
before me, paper in the stars.
the way the back of my wife is standing
with the town of the electric blackboard.

i want to connect rusting,
the trains of someone who knows her cabin hands,
shards in your lips of my shooting
down. the sun should do.

you are the word of coffee; i am garbles.
you want to catch like a prayer
of a jet should with the day
at work that is all in its soul, each line.

the stars are funerals in singing.
repeating the moon, i was explained
again the colors of smoke. in the blue broken,
the party with the wind is more than it.
no one had a pick of her red throat.
and yet she had a locket
tied in the back of the noose.

B.J. Best and torch-rnn

Desert Turtles

are hard puddles on
the sandy subconscious

white toenails slow sails
not quite catching

or releasing
what might be

blessed as part
of the lumbering rank and file

hell bent
on smoothing one earth

after
another

erasing rocks and doubt
much less clearly now

fiddlefuck gaits
pursuing a new shell game

JW Burns



Jim Zola

KINESIS

Built a wall paneled with earlier goodbyes
urgent as to-do lists twenty lines long

Love bejeweled in tackier remedies:
ruby pout sealed wartime porn discretion.

My mother remembers
you rounded your shoulders to hide your height

Secrets refuse scabs and once I was not convinced
all wounds are sticky moans:

adhesive to the day when,
the place where.

Other girls spontaneously abort hymens
same ruby on backseats

like words you give me
wet distorting into chaos.

I was there when and never understood
how it happened

on my back saw everything
and cannot manage understanding.

Today's words wet running
through my fingers, puddled chaos

congealed
finally flesh.

Man becomes Man in the wilderness,
enlarged by its sustenance.

Pluck from it dreams for yourself, boy,
boil them, chew and swallow each bite

before the next.

The next might not be necessary.

darlene anita scott

MISSING PERSON

Leah has only been missing a week, and we have already memorized her height and weight: 4'11", 90-100 pounds, the size of some of our middle schoolers. So we search increasingly small places--the mop buckets in her apartment building, the green metal trash cans that dot downtown. We peer into sewer grates, expect to find her looking up at us from the bottom of the drain.

Those of us that don't participate in the official searches still look in our own way. We take walks to isolated places: the just-mowed pale yellow corn fields, the skinny trees of parks or along the dark edges of our neighborhoods. We never say out loud "This is where I would hide a body."

#

Families lean over dinners, watching the news. Heads shake. "What a shame."

By dessert it becomes "She probably just wandered somewhere she shouldn't have been, like that electrocuted Notre Dame student."

"Or maybe the guys she was with that night."

"Or maybe that white truck."

"Or she hitchhiked somewhere."

"Or."

#

I play the "or" game too, but I never join the official search. My lawyers thought it would be a bad idea. Instead I walk into the woods of Cascades Park. The same woods I smoked my first cigarette, sipped my first stolen wine, fucked in, ankle deep in the brown leaves of years past.

I climb the blackgreen slippery rocks of the waterfall, stand above the trails. She wouldn't be here.

#

I must have given her one special k too many crushed up and snorted through the same benjamin as all of the coke and the other pills and now her head leaned back and forth and back and forth too fast like what youd think a baby would do if you didnt hold it but shes 20 man thats not right and she has been throwing up and where did that bruise come from and now theres blood out her nose fuck we had done lines together before fuck

#

There is one possibility rarely discussed, my favorite. Leah had become tired of this life that felt chosen for her. The expectations of successful families are always the harshest. In the last security footage of her walking out of the apartment

building to go the bar, she knows how the night will end. I can see it in her smile. She'll send off her college career with a bender at her favorite bar, leave, hit the road. She is well liked, she is pretty, she is part of the campus community. She knows she can go far on the kindness of friends, count on them to stay tightlipped about things.

Where will she go?

Somewhere else. She looks like the type to have a plan. Maybe Europe, maybe somewhere in the Caribbean, work on a cruise ship, one of those horizontal skyscrapers.

This is what I think of when snippets of that night come back.

#

The family games of "or" become increasingly grim. The theories spill over into polite conversation. All it takes is the sight of one of the thousands of fliers--we become private detectives, lawyers, psychologists, doctors.

The games get especially dark when the last men to see her (also students, also young) all lawyer up and stop talking. Their silence is our opportunity to speak.

"They could've just shoved her in a suitcase, dumped her anywhere."

"How hard would it be to put her in a big duffel bag?"

#

I kick up a whiff of decay as I trudge away from the waterfall and towards the sinkholes, looking for clearings ahead. I find holes punched in the forest floor. Footprints. I follow the imprints back into the trees, around a thicket of thorns.

#

getting her into the duffel bag wasnt bad i knew it wouldnt be hard and shes so small so so small dude help me out here you always know where the cameras are is there someones car we can take dude im prelaw we are fucked either way she is gone and full of our drugs dead is dead we have got to do this or our lives might as well be over and it is prison either way lets at least try right

#

I round the thorns well off of the trail, recognize the place. Polyester sleeping bags litter the ground, grow fungus the color of beer puke. I find smashed Red Grape Mad Dog 20/20 bottles, plastic bags, a size 14 men's dress shoe, and a lumpy duffel bag the size of missing college student. A roaring cougar, my high school mascot, glares at me from the bag. My initials are on the shoulder strap.

#

As time goes on the "or" game gradually weeds out any of the idea of her being alive. Details become more concrete and vivid. Families at dinner talk about her probable rape and dismemberment with their children. The kids listen, then ask

questions.

“How could you saw an arm off without making a mess?”

#

fuck man where are we taking her what if we just dump her in the lake it should work no not the lake she will be found and they will know she was killed and then we will be suspects in a murder investigation its different okay and we cant do a field it is too obvious too flat too easy to be seen come on think think not the quarries those are too easy kids dive there in the summer

#

The mushrooms seem to grow taller as I stand in front of the duffel bag. I'd gotten one just like it for cross country in high school, but I can't be the only person with my initials to have a bag like that. Right?

#

After months of official searches, they are called off. No credible sightings have been called in, no evidence uncovered. Speculation grows wilder. We keep going on our walks, discover new routes for evening strolls.

#

Another girl is found in a cornfield. The crime scene photos are broadcast on the nightly news, as we sit down to eat. The photos look like the Pollock in the university art museum. The pale gold of the corn is washed out to a white canvas, the blood nearly black. The station cut the same central photo up into several as to remain tasteful. The tableaux show up as the newscasters speak tensely. Hand with speck of blood, other drippings weigh down surrounding husks. A fly away clump of hair, fused by a gout of blood.

She too is a college student. She went missing after going to the same bars.

We automatically assume the same person who did this to Leah is her killer.

Her name is eclipsed by Leah's. She is another installment in the saga. People transpose Leah's blonde hair onto this girl, her coke dusted nose, her age, her size.

#

not a cornfield but what about the one park with all the water in it what is it called cascades that could be good i got lost chasing my golf ball from the course there for two hours once no cell reception so it has to be remote shes not making calls but drop her there and it seems too close but too far and the homeless sleep there and they dont want blame they just want left alone easy enough no one hangs out there right now other than dealers and hobos they wont say shit

#

We don't question why the murderer of Leah, who hid her body so carefully that she hasn't been found in nearly 4 years, would leave his next kill somewhere so

obvious. Why would he be so careless as to not notice he left his cellphone at the scene, flecked with her blood.

#

I look around the woods for someone to help me open the bag. I call out, and hear nothing. The camp must be abandoned. I am here alone. I haven't been able to find my duffel bag at home in months. I don't want it to be mine. But.

#

taking her up the waterfall was some hard shit but shes tiny and theres a few of us lets just get her up take her so far out people dont think its possible to get her here well take her well take her over past the thorns yeah well get stuck but dont worry about that its nothing compared to murder just take her over there who gives a fuck about the bag just leave it

#

I reach for the zipper, but don't pull. The bag is too big to be her. I could be the guy who finds her, carrying her out of the woods in my arms despite the rot, cradling her carefully, like a baby.

#

She stands on the bow of a cruise ship. She is no longer Leah, she is Sarah, or Carly, or Rachel. Nothing that will stand out, but is familiar enough to her. The cruise line is a budget line that doesn't ask too many questions of the employees, so she doesn't have to provide any real ID. If she doesn't leave the ship she won't have a problem. She's fine with just looking at the white sands of the Caribbean islands for now, and she can go to Florida beaches anytime.

What she loves most is the land receding behind her, as if she can't get any further from it all. First the beaches turn into a line of white, leaving the pink and white stucco boxes of the hotels. Then they are harder and harder to see, and they are gone. She worries they will be lost, never to be found, but what she cares about is that she is somewhere that isn't back in the woods.

M. B. Thomas

Cyclical

1.

A door opening
surrounded by the random

nothing ideal assumes its place
we are fronting miniscule labors

the old ladies are dead
you will turn to the magnificat

the serried on high sparkling stones
I waver with the annealed hands

retract my talons and take my seat
at the foot of the mountain

2.

I did not give labors
have not toiled to the pinnacle

or caught visions on granite faces
my eyes often tormented by nature

up to my elbows searching around
the journey of my birth that begins

when I made casual steps
got far afield retraced my way

conjuring abstract Deities
as a form of solace

3.

To be observant
imbibe from all the senses

is as much upon practice
and kept promises to

sunder from the common
the daily the routine

summoning the water of
overflow cisterns

in a cool murk divine
pattern and rhythm

4.

A day like slate
wiped of all traces

my sincerest effort will be
foregoing the divine

a flat line a horizon
sun peeling through blue heaven

my body compact and fetal
the solitude of prairies

ripped open and teeming
insistent, slipping away

5.

There but for the center
everywhere at once and

nowhere light burns white

to dissipate to fluctuate

encoiled by ropes
in mind comes freedom

avoid the critical path
clear cut and burn

the fructifying salts
engulfing a river

6.

Like sawgrass appealing
to the sky I too

enfold a heat and
contain infinity

that knows one thing
the photosynthesis the

kernel of regenerating
unhindered by monastic

compromise turning only
outward

7.

Buried in folds of brain like
blankets where waft the sloughed

cells of dozens of encounters
in seven years time only a

dog could unpack that scent
that drives and divides along

party lines transmitted into
radio frequencies to be

collected divined puzzled
over as an alternative form of life

8.

Are we not the same though
I cannot recall when I took

orders from the master
when I fell afoul to be

banished into purgatory
only that he has been

idly forgotten consumed
by material and contingency

spurned like this I
refashion my attack

Robert Detman

Methodology of Protest

All we have are gestures for inarticulable silence
admit at times that fire is usually beautiful

with the requisite invocation place one on each eyelid hand or head
caution your neighbor only if sympathetic to the cause

walk with head lowered performing the ablative calisthenics
when exhausted return to the point of first contact

or frisson whichever is most conducive
wave your hands in the air as if you would do it for your health

it helps to dissuade the popular press

as if one had their hands tied while trying to do their business
an act most available to troglodytes woodsmen and self-described loners

if at the apogee of futility feel free to espouse random acts of violence
making love can become an art form

all the more so when performed in the street
as well as flower arranging or basket weaving

we are most fond of using our bodies well a practice the opposition detests
at no point should one become imitative of lesser flora and fauna

do not fall prey to feelings of overweening power or invincibility
such cravings will eventually pass

selection of a hooded garment lends menace and lessens culpability

Robert Detman



Jim Zola

Contributors

Jim Zola has worked in a warehouse, as a security guard, in a bookstore, as a teacher for Deaf children, as a toy designer for Fisher Price, and currently as a children's librarian. Published in many journals through the years, his publications include a chapbook—*The One Hundred Bones of Weather* (Blue Pitcher Press)—and a full length poetry collection—*What Glorious Possibilities* (Aldrich Press). He currently lives in Greensboro, NC.

Matthew Woodman teaches writing at California State University, Bakersfield and is the founding editor of *Rabid Oak* (www.rabidoak.com). His poems and stories appear in recent issues of *Sonora Review*, *Oxidant/Engine*, *Sierra Nevada Review*, *Tishman Review*, and *The Meadow*.

Darren C. Demaree is the author of six poetry collections, most recently *Many Full Hands Applauding Inelegantly* (2016, 8th House Publishing). He is the Managing Editor of the *Best of the Net Anthology* and *Ovenbird Poetry*. He is currently living in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and children.

Michael Berton is the author of two poetry collections, *Man! You Script The Mic.* and *No Shade In Aztlan*. Poems have appeared in *The Opiate*, *Volt*, *And/Or*, *Gargoyle*, *Otoliths*, *Shot Glass Journal*, *Hobo Camp Review*, *Do Hookers Kiss?*, *Night Bomb Review*, *Pacific Review*, and others. He lives in Portland, OR.

Geoff Anderson teaches foreigners English and Americans Italian. Work published in *B O D Y*, *Lunch Ticket*, and *Up the Staircase Quarterly* can be found at his site, www.andersongeoff.com.

B.J. Best is the author of three books and four chapbooks of poetry, most recently *Yes* (Parallel Press, 2014). These poems were co-created with torch-rnn, a neural network library that writes words one character at a time. torch-rnn is created by Justin Johnson, based on work by Andrej Karpathy. B.J. lives in Wisconsin; torch-rnn lives on GitHub.

JW Burns lives in Florida. He writes short prose and poetry, these appearing most recently in *Cardinal Sins*, *Rivet*, and *The Sierra Nevada Review*.

darlene anita scott's poetry has appeared in *Quiddity*, *The Baltimore Review*, and *J Journal* among others. Her manuscript *Marrow* imagines the Peoples Temple. Over 900 American congregants emigrated to Jonestown Guyana where they were coerced into suicide by their spiritual leader. The manuscript was a finalist for the *Crab Orchard Review* First Book Award. scott lives and teaches in Virginia.

M.B. Thomas is a graduate of the University of Evansville, in Evansville, IN, and was born and raised in Bloomington, IN. He was selected runner-up for the Virginia Lowell Grabill Creative Writing Award for short fiction in 2015, and he was a presenter at the Chutney Literary Conference in 2012. He also was an assistant editor of *The Evansville Review* in 2012 and 2014. He currently lives with his wife in Indianapolis, IN.

Robert Detman is the author of the novel *Impossible Lives of Basher Thomas* (Figureground Press, 2014). His fiction, poetry, essays and reviews can be found in dozens of literary journals. www.robertmdetman.com