

Pick Me Up
Art! Poetry!

corridor



Vol. 20

Embrace

On those days when skin can't contain us.
Raw to the world,
an open wound hit with salt water,
and anger
and tragedy,
it all comes uninvited.

Like the wire monkey's child
we reach towards embrace,
looking for another skin to wrap around ourselves.

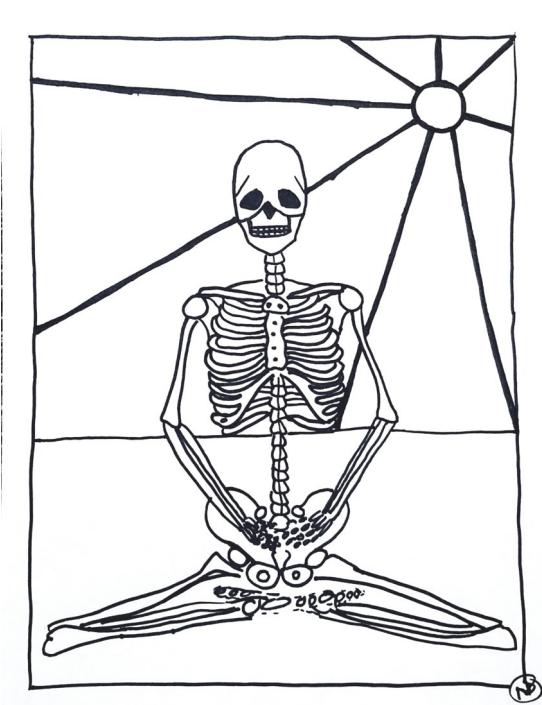
Sometimes it is enough,
the faux fur blanket, caressing the cheek
sharing warmth, softness.
Breathe darling
life can be soft, and slow, and delicious.

Warm tea coats our inner contours.
Follow it tracing our circles and curves.
The nest we call here.

Sunshine warming our outer shapes.
Here are the edges.
At this caress of light,
like hands folding in prayer, we greet each other.

Water.
If the shower could freeze mid-fall
and we were to step away,
we could walk around the empty space and study our form.

And poetry.
Words to wrap around ourselves.
Powerful and gentle words to nestle in
like mystery, roots, green, dappled, and home.



by Alissa De La Fuente
“Skeleton”

Fun Science Fact

Green iguanas are the largest. Of what, I'm not quite sure. Maybe the person whose job it was to post the fact of the day was up late studying for another test or wooing a college girl over Barefoot Pinot Grigio and French fries.

Maybe there was a technical error and the rest of the sentence got cut off and lost in the oblivion of little ones and zeroes that float endlessly above our heads into eternity.

It could have been a contest for kids – whoever colors the best picture of an animal and writes a fun fact, wins a published spot for a day on The Daily Atom. And then the adults in charge, overwhelmed by entries, simply selected at random the winner, which was a picture of a lizard colored moderately well in Crayola Light Chrome Green by Hector, age 6.

Or maybe, of the dozens of species of iguanas, the green ones really are the largest. Not that the distinction helps them in any way relevant to an iguana, having mastered life on the planet for the last ten and a half million years, now having to survive the hostilities of habitat destruction and extra pressure from predators, chiefly humans roaming around ruining things for the animal kingdom in its entirety.

These green guys could really do with a little more respect. Certainly more than a nod and a headline from an obscure online journal imploring Sustainability for All in an overly-full email inbox on an otherwise Sherwin Williams Repose Gray, November morning.



By C.J. Prince

I Stand by Her Grave and Weep

Standing on a large rock at Cape Flattery
Backed by a million Douglas Fir trees
She sinks into the ocean supreme. Grief sobs me.
A blazing setting sun screaming a red orange
Sunset of dreams she once allowed everyone.

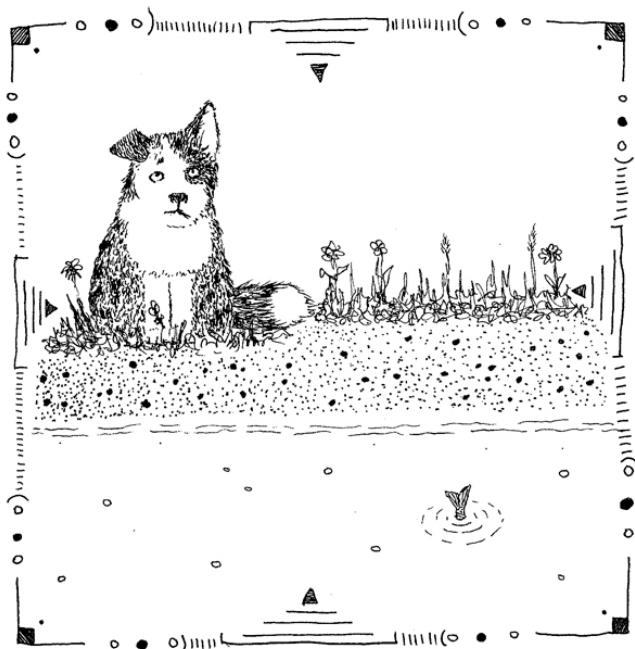
She was the morning sun's rise and shine...
She was the prairie wind the bison knew...
She was the wish on a silver Roosevelt dime...
She was the mountain trickle to a river grew...

She was the eagle's majestic circling flight...
She was the mother of jazz in New Orleans...
She was the baby rocked to sleep at night...
She was the immigrant and pilgrim's dreams...

She was the breadbasket of ripened grain...
She was the wild free wind in Kansas...
She was the gentle spring and autumn rain...
She was the messy fall Vermont forest...

She was a hamburger and chocolate malt...
She was our mother destroyed by default...

I kneel, my back rounded, my heart riven.
With a forest fire in front of me
This eighty-year-old body wizened...
We are dying at the same time. I cry
For America the Beautiful and I.



Art credit: Anita K. Boyle
Poems from the Noon Road Pond, Egress Studio Press, 2016

Blue Dog at the Pond

The blue dog and the goldfish
are, for a moment, together.
Then not.

The fish ran low; the dog
sat high. The water grew dark.

The fish-tail was the last
flash of light before the stars
grew upon the surface
and the heavens.

Just then the blue dog
leapt into the moon.



*Painting by Candice James
"Crescent Beach Afternoon"*

Becoming/Looking

It's like a gull gliding high in the sky
turning into a snow white dove.

Like a rowboat on the ocean
turning into a sailboat
when the sun is ablaze
and the warm winds gently blow.

It's like me becoming
a vision of love
whenever I look at you.

It's like a caterpillar on a branch
turning into a butterfly
Like a tulip in the garden
turning into a red, red rose
when the rain is silk
and the grass a dampened sheet.

It's like me becoming
a sweet, sweet dream
whenever you look at me



*Painting by Candice James
“Pale Desert Moon”*

Pointless and Maybe That's the Point

An eagle glides through the air, straight, no flapping.
Convertibles ride with tops down, at first straight
down the road, then passing on the left as hair flies
uncontrolled.

Moving these bodies—feathers, skin, vehicles.
Feeling the sun, and wind, and temperature just right
makes everything feel right.

Is what I'm writing too on the beak, on the emblem,
on the nose?

Epilogue:

The eagle glides and the car drives and I feel alive and
soon I'll be splashing in the bathtub,
moving my toes, feeling alright with what I've written.

by Tyson Higel



by Olivia, 7 years old
“Manager Jay”

Smell

Untreated
Wood of a new fence
Made of cedar boards

Dry grass
Plastic Lawn furniture
Under the summer sun broiler

Now
There is another
Smell in the world

Garbage truck passes
Leaks
Fermented stew

It splashes
On blistered asphalt
Steam slow to evaporate

Greasy
Cloud stench slides
Down a gutter
Dormant until rain

Two short poems

Pencil stroke erased.

Don't dream in chicken scratches.

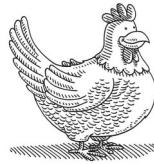
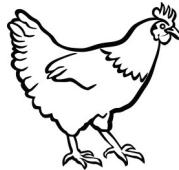
Write in ink. Commit.

Feet scuffle and slip. Nose runs, winter coming.

I pick my way through the bounty of loss.

Red, orange – the colors of death.

Such beauty in endings.



artisan quilting the Sunshine
October Come to think of it, also seems
responsible for the unexpected
patchwork
golds of a butterfly.

J.I. Kleinberg



Painting by Candice James
“Last Train To Avignon”

Gardener

Do you want to see? She says. I'm going to dig them up.
I crowd close, lean in, look past her hunched shoulder

as she takes the smallest shovel, lifts the fallen, faded plant,
plunges in the tool, exposes tangled roots, slides her hand

into the crumbling soil and pulls a small potato out,
so red and clean, perhaps an inch in width. We laugh,

delighted as she digs again, finds another, larger
than the one before. It fits so snuggly in my hand!

Having seen the wizened scraps pushed into soil late in May
this seems some kind of miracle. Let's dig some more!

Committed

Glazed eyes search for the right word

It runs from you scared of

what you might do to it

A crowbar works at the hinge

Pats of butter melt under the skin

Bowl of round berries feeds flies

While

the smell of an idea

the breath of a book

hide under the bed

Vol. 20 Contributors

All poems and art used with permission and submitted by the creator.

EMBRACE

Maureen Sandra Kane

FUN SCIENCE FACT

Taya Sanderson Kesslau

I STAND BY HER GRAVE AND WEEP

Lynn Geri

BLUE DOG AT THE POND

Bertolino Boyle

BECOMING LOOKING

Candice James

POINTLESS AND MAYBE THAT'S THE POINT

Tyson Higel

SMELL

Kathleen McKeever

TWO SHORT POEMS

Barbara Wells ten Hove

OCTOBER

J.I. Kleinberg

GARDENER

Linda Conroy

COMMITTED

Shannon Laws



BIOS BIOS BIOS

Maureen Sandra Kane is a Sue Boynton Poetry Award winner. Her poetry book is The Phoenix Requires Ashes. Her therapy workbook, A Guide Back to You, is a Chanticleer International First in Category winner.

Alissa DeLaFuente is a writer and artist. She mostly writes speculative fiction. Visit www.alissadelafuente.com to learn more

Taya Sanderson Kesslau believes that beauty will save the world, and poetry, cookies, and kindness. She lives in Fairhaven with her sweet husband and their many 4-legged creatures.

C.J. Prince's newest book "Pandamndemic: Poems in Isolation" will be published this spring. Look at your local bookstore or Amazon.

Lynn Geri lives in Bellingham... dreaming of flowers that taught her about beauty and how a garden's four corner structure taught her a way to seek understanding.

James Bertolino and Anita K. Boyle. Bertolino and Boyle sat at the pond, and wrote words in a journal about the extraordinary microcosm of the Noon Road Pond. They have been forever changed.

Candice James is a visual artist, poet, musician and songwriter. She is a League of Canadian Poets and Royal City Literary Arts Society member and the author of 21 books.

Tyson Higel lives in Bellingham, WA where he works as a nurse. To read more of his poetry or to say hello (yay for community!) visit tysonhigel.mailchimpsites.com

Olivia is 7 years old and enjoys drawing with markers. Her drawings are often inspired by her favorite series Ninjago. She also loves ninjas, Legos and dogs.

Kathleen A. McKeever has published two books of poetry, available at Village Books or Bellingham Washington Public Library, "Lightbound" and "Body/Today."

Barbara Wells ten Hove, (and yes, this is the correct spelling) is a retired Unitarian Universalist minister who brings her Southern upbringing and NW life experience to her writing.

J.I. Kleinberg lives in Bellingham, Washington, where she tears words out of magazines and stares at them until they turn into poems. Find out more at <https://chocolateisaverb.wordpress.com> or on Instagram @jikleinberg.

Linda Conroy, a Bellingham poet, and author of two poetry collections, likes to write about the complexities of human nature and our connection to the natural world.

Shannon Laws is in her second year of publishing Corridor. You can learn more about her at her website shannonplawswriter.com



What shall I do now...?

LEAVE | KEEP | RECYCLE | SHARE

Corridor Vol. 20

Cover art: by Shannon Laws, “Jump to Conclusions” Lukas Rodriguez (Seattle Skyline and I-5 freeway), Chase Stine (people & dog), Pexels.com

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The Corridor Collective respectfully acknowledge this zine being published from the traditional lands of the Lummi, Nooksack, and Coast Salish People; they have stewarded this land since time immemorial and we pay our respects to elders past and present.