



Window Cat Press  
Volume III | Winter 2016

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**Editor's Corner | Back Cover Art** by *Shloka Shankar*

# Octopus Mediation

Sara Adams

It is so difficult to define octopus mediation  
because the microscope can be  
used in so many different ways.

People have all sorts of theories and viewpoints, and  
wine bottles come in every shape and size.

\*\*\*

In fact, the only way of defining it fully is by saying:  
“This is how it came about, so that's why it is as it is.”

Suppose there was a girdle which would fit anything,  
from a gnat to an elephant (and including an octopus).  
In one or another of its forms it would be  
bound to remind pretty well everyone  
of something or other he or she had seen

\*\*\*

and  
no one seems yet to have managed to explain the microscope  
to general satisfaction.

\*\*\*

Note: To create this poem, a fairly large chunk of text was chosen from the source material. Key words were replaced with other words, then the text was trimmed and edited, deleting words and phrases, sometimes large chunks, here and there. Here are the word replacements:

“content” became “octopus”

“analysis” became “mediation”

“work” became “time” (and also used as a verb when needed)

“technique” became “microscope”

“source materials” became “wine bottles”

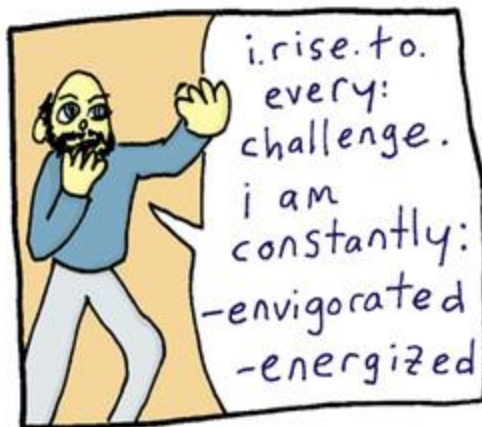
Source: Carney, T.F. *Content Analysis: A Technique for Systematic Inference from Communications*.  
London: B.T. Batsford LTD.

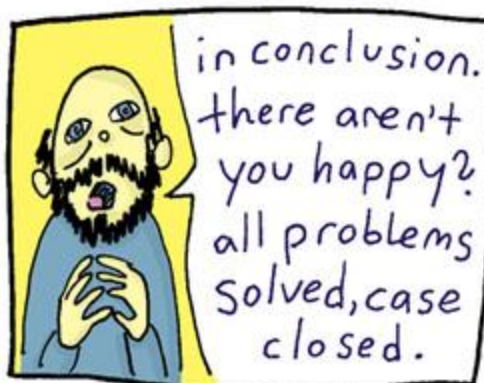
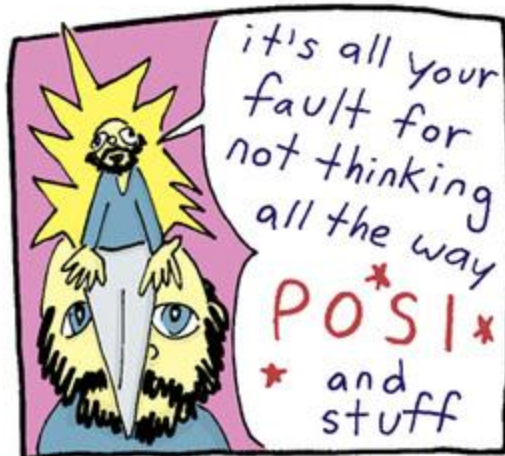
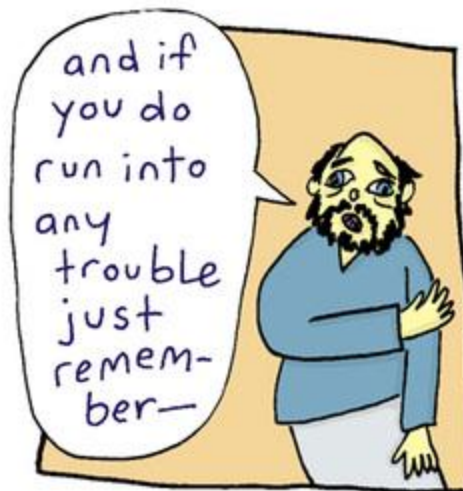
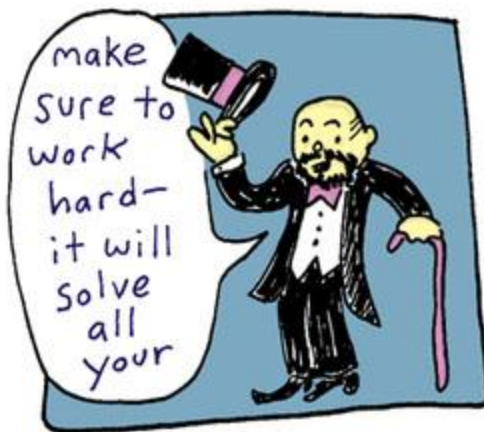
# Exercises

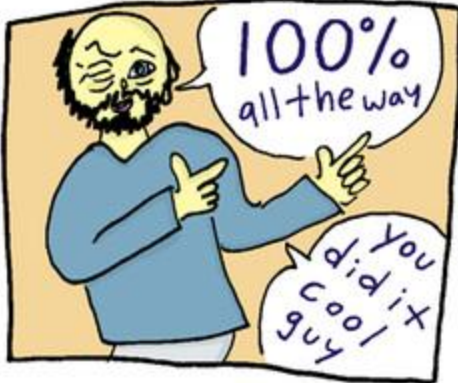
Jonathan Rotsztain

tick, tick, tick, tick -- ka ching!









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## 12 Selfies Taken Moments Before Death

Ross McCleary

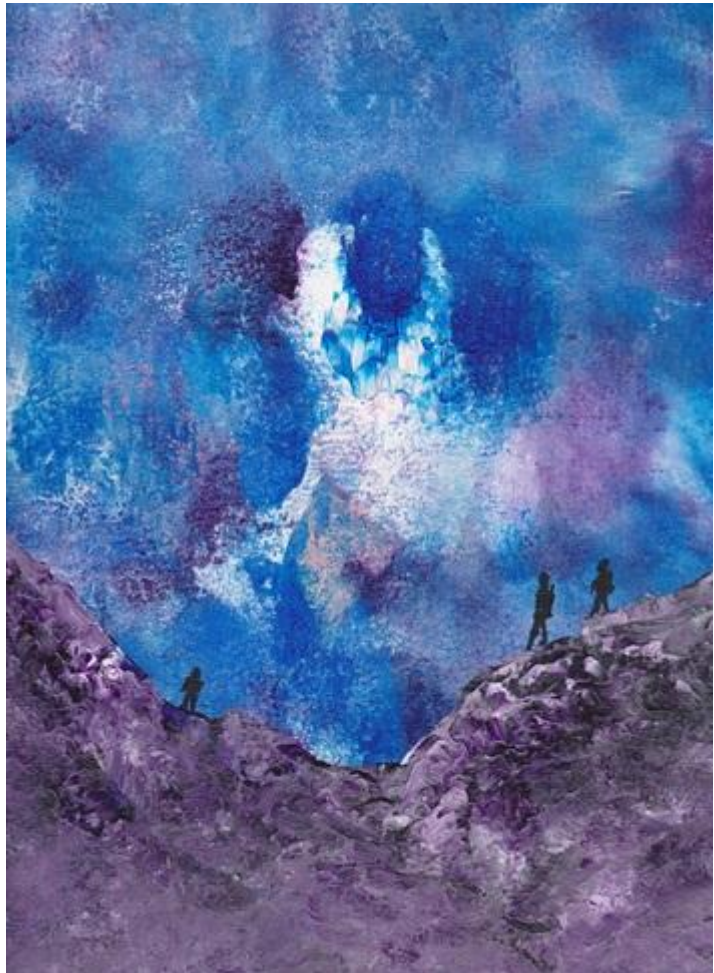
Kyle Sparrow is found hanging by the A-string of his guitar from the door of his dressing room. The words “Forgive Me” are also smeared in blood on his dressing table mirror. A murder probe is launched, not due to strong suspicions of misdeed, but because the blood is identified as that of known recidivist Graham Condie. The authorities drop the case when CCTV footage of Graham is found. These tapes show him sitting in the bar of a highland town at the time of Kyle's death, moments before a storm. An audio recording of the suicide, smuggled out of the venue by Kyle's press agent, later appears as a secret track on Kyle's posthumous Greatest Hits album *Sparrow in Flight*.

Daniel Martin jumps from a plane without a parachute.

Nik Chaster, world renowned landscape photographer, goes missing. A manhunt takes place, but no trace of him is ever found. At his memorial service, the minister tells the congregation that Nik's absence will be felt keenly through the ubiquity of his work; Nik's presence felt in every picture. To stare at any of the landscapes captured is to watch the landscape stare right back. And there, always just out of shot, is Nik. Afterwards, his friends and family dig a hole in a corner of his favourite park and fill it with his photographs.

Graham Condie falls into the River Ythan on a stormy December night. His body, arcing through the waves, is snapped by a birdwatcher trying to catch a fleeting glimpse of a rare Scottish Crossbill.

Hiking across the Highlands of Scotland, Elaine Pardue wanders the sunken paths between towns, sleeps in abandoned bothies, eats berries from the bushes, and takes photographs of the birds. When she wakes, no matter where she stays, she destroys the interior of the place she has called home. Cupboards are thrown on their sides, drawers smashed into kindling, bedsheets ripped into strips with a knife. One evening, she ambles into Braemar in the Cairngorms. With her remaining money, she rents a room in a hostel. Night descends. In the room she shares with one other woman, she scrubs her finger against a crack in the outer wall until she can put her hand through, continues to erode the plaster until she can fit sideways through the gap. The other woman wakes to watch Elaine step through the hole, never to be seen again.



The Joy of Finding a Beautiful Place, painting by W. Jack Savage

Betty Devine would like to tell you about an exclusive scheme to make money. She was made redundant at 39 and for four years was unable to find work. That is until she discovered a way to earn thousands of pounds from home with just a few clicks of a button. Now she earns £30,000 every eight weeks without leaving the house. Betty's friend Harriet worries about her, though. She finds Betty gaunt and listless. Betty is disintegrating into ones and zeroes. It's too late for me, Betty says over and over again, but it could be worse. A six figure income is nothing to be scoffed at. She points her finger at her monitor and says: [Click on this link to find out more.](#)

Harriet Jarret is a guide on "The Most Unusual Ghost Tour in Edinburgh." The tour takes people through the urban housing schemes and tower blocks on the west side of the city. Someone asks a question. Harriet says nothing. They ask again, others chipping in. There is a collective shiver as Harriet passes through the wall.

Billy Tremain is an assembly line worker at an automated car manufacturing plant. Billy has three main fears: 1) being devoured by fire ants; 2) having a heart attack before he's fifty; 3) his mother's engagement ring, kept on a pendant around his neck, being stolen by his stepfather. When the plant burns to the ground, Billy's body is identified, but the ring is missing.

One afternoon Larry Miller climbs inside a mechanical arm when it breaks. An experienced engineer, he nonetheless makes a basic human error: his hand slips against a live wire. He is electrocuted. As he burns, the electrical current aligns with the cognitive neural pathways in his brain. Larry Miller the human becomes Larry Miller the machine. The mechanical arm restarts. It works again. His colleague Billy finds his body. They do not find his soul.

Rafael Klein soars through the air, launched from a trebuchet of his own making. Of all the ways for his last moments to be captured, he is caught on a speed camera positioned on the clifftop along the coast. For thirty-five seconds he is majestic, a comet in flight. These are the last moments of his life. He has done many heinous things. He smiles.

Detective Constable Marianne Gilbert spends every waking moment trying to catch the man who murdered her husband. Ever since his death, she has been unable to solve a case. And there have been many. After five years of failure, the department has to let her go. She hands in her badge, then drives home to her house by the sea. While jogging along the beach the next morning, she discovers a man's cadaver. As she waits for the police to arrive, she checks the corpse's pockets for identification. Instead she finds a letter in which the man confesses to the murder of eight people, including her husband. He writes not of guilt or regret but of chaos and delight. Marianne's breathing becomes short and strangled as she runs from the body in a panic, the letter clasped in her hand. She runs from the beach onto the road where she collides with the police car sent to find her. The murder of all eight people are posthumously attributed to Marianne.

Marianne, of course, is unaware that she is a fictional character created by an aspiring crime writer. Liz Murphy finishes the first draft of her novel, *Lampshade Dagger* only to feel a deep dissatisfaction. There are too many unresolved questions. She's not quite sure what she is trying to say. In a fit of anger, she grabs the manuscript and rushes out to the barbecue pit in her garden, and as she is glazing the paper with lighter fluid she is startled by a thin purple dart falling from the sky in the corner of her eye. It is there and then it is gone. The silence breaks, the song of martins in flight, but she dismisses it and turns back to her manuscript. She strikes a match but does not spot the translucent fluid which she has spilled on her arms and down her legs. Her book burns and so does she.

# Three Sisters

Meggie Royer

One came back as a willow and swallowed the rain  
like the tongues of bells.

One came back as a harpoon  
singing in the throat of a whale.

The last sister came back as her grandmother,  
so she could feel her grandfather's mouth  
upon her own again  
but have it be right this time.

# The Eight-Day Week

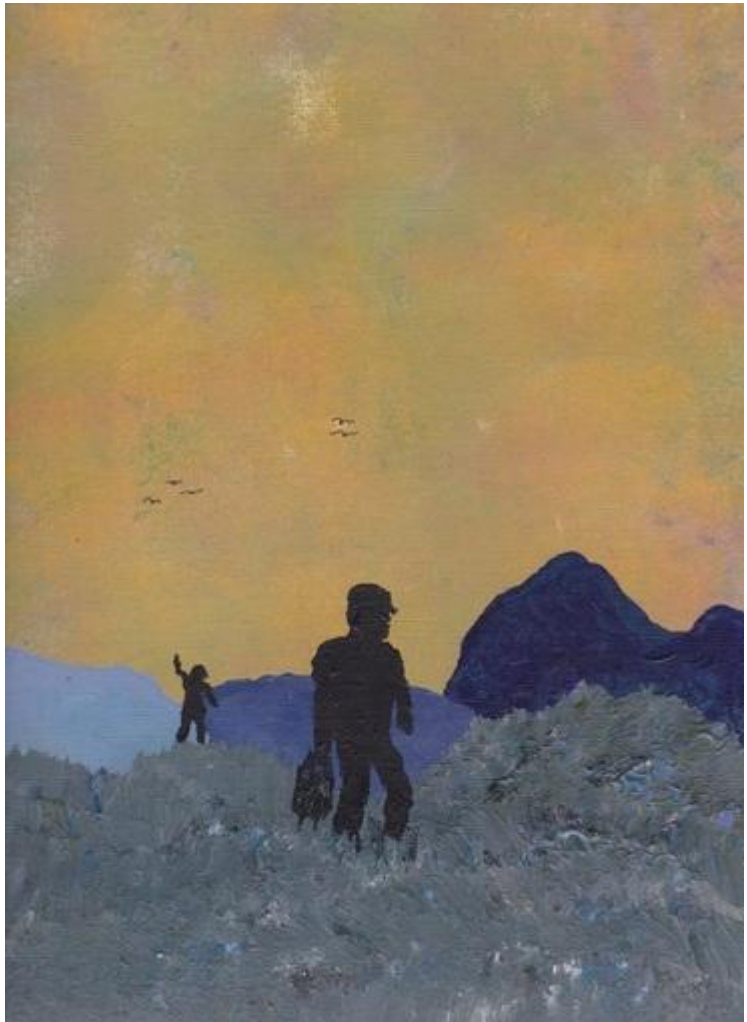
Zoe Gonzales

Day One: Proud Member of the League of Professional Service Workers. You come into work like a cheetah races after the one antelope it believes to be the best; you are focused, cunning, and bright. You smile most of the time and pout none of the time. How much better could you be? You take personal responsibility for the mistakes of the Back of House, such as cold food, tough meat, and crusty desserts. You smile when customers snap their fingers, crying out “miss” like their life depends on it, and you say hi to every snot-coddling child that waddles through the front door. You are the epitome of service personalities. You are the embodiment of servant idealism. You are a walking golden slave.

You get a paltry tip, you say whatever. The cook at the front of the line snarks all night, you laugh uncondescendingly at his drama. You ruin your favorite black shirt with bleach, and you promise you’ll buy yourself a new one on your next day off. Ha! What a fantasy. You are pumping through, pure and untouchable. What else could go wrong? Everything, and you can fix it without a hitch. Tell me again, are you even human?

Day Two: Veteran Status Achieved, This Job Might Be Too Easy For Me. You are a professional at what you do, and you are a tad tired of it. Who said doing the same thing over and over again would be fulfilling, enriching? Some dumb bastards, that’s who. You are halfway into day two and you’d love to shoot a customer who for some inexplicable reason wants every dish to be made without a single gram of carbohydrate. It’s not possible, you explain, but they do not hear you. So you fight with the kitchen, then plead with the customer, then fight with the kitchen, then end up giving the person half their food for free because it doesn’t align with the standards of the South Beach Diet Bible. Want to know the real clincher? They left a five percent tip. You now feel justified in your hatred of all mankind. Do you need any more evidence? Nope, you do not.

Day Three: Tired, Hungry, and Overly Sensitive. You would have killed yourself if there hadn’t been a goddamn customer in the restroom every second for the past four hours and if you were brave enough to slit your throat right there in the dining room as customers drank the burgundy red reduction blood of cows that died too young. You have reached your third day in a row on the job and you feel as most people who work a five-day week must feel. You’ve given up on adulthood and all forms of Western



Their Parting Was Contentious, painting by W. Jack Savage

capitalism and have decided that living in the rainforest under a giant leaf might be where you really belong. Then you remind yourself that you are in fact a big fan of running water and have failed to save enough cash for a plane ticket anyway, so American money-grubbing for you it is. Most of your tables are more concerned with their discussions of the threat of terrorism or the increasing cost of chemical hair dyes, so you just do your job like a soldier goes into battle, stoic and strong. You have no jokes for these people.

Day Three is more than just the third day in a sequence of eight. Day Three is the beginning of the end. As you roll the silverware whose fate it is to be unsheathed, dirtied, and tarnished, you think to yourself, “I suppose this is what life is all about.” You ponder as you roll; it is one and a half hours past closing and customers are still in the restaurant, discussing God only knows what. God is falling asleep at the table, their conversation is so dull. You think as your hands perform the same motions over and over; maybe the silverware has a mind of its own, maybe the forks have dreams of traveling to faraway places and finding themselves. Maybe this spoon is tired of performing its role as a cheap vestibule for soup, forever serving unsatisfied, exacerbated humans, sitting in buckets of slimy grease water, and going through the endless rigmarole that is the dishwasher’s routine. Maybe this little utensil has always dreamed of riding upstream and living out the rest of its brilliant, shiny days in Canada or Upstate New York. Cognitively-activated tableware. It’s a pretty abstract concept—perhaps too abstract. Perhaps crazy. This, as you can see, is the fate of Day Three.

Days Four Through Six: Zombie Service Apocalypse. The Industry has turned you into something you don’t even recognize anymore. Yes, you are now a something, not a someone. How do you feel about that? Oh wait, you can’t feel. That’s right! You take in orders just as the restaurant’s crappy CD player loads discs from twenty years ago. “What would you like?” you say mechanically, a machine rotating on its head. The people answer, yes, the lucky people! They are still people, by God! And they know what they want!

Your movements mimic those of a robot. You’re pretty sure you *are* a robot. The last sliver of human left inside you is pretty sure you’ve all but announced your passage over to the steel side. Still, there’s a bit of a person left in you. A sad, disappointed, and desperate person. That person only makes up five percent of your form, so you know, she’s not that important. All that matters is that table five gets their vegan grilled cheese, also known as toast. The customer is nearly always wrong. Still, you trudge forward, blunted and weary.

Day Seven: Release of Pain. Today you are free of all pain. You have flown the trenches of its dismal darkness; you escaped the endless abyss. Neither the long hours nor the wear and tear on your body can bring you down, for you have seen the bottom and you have dwelled there. Now you can discern the light, you can see through the other end of the tunnel. How have you accomplished this task? What has caused this sudden clarity? Was it the hope of a fresh opportunity? An immediate, fearless connection with a stranger? A simple pleasure, perhaps a scoop of caramel ice cream with a generous dollop of chocolate sauce on top? Nope, it was none of these things, nothing at all. Before all other things, first came the comfort. The reasoning won you over. You’ve succeeded in convincing yourself that you actually are less important than other people, you are truly just a servant nouveau, a piece of capital essential to the business, but just as equally replaceable. A pawn, a puzzle piece, a chip, a hole; a part of the whole but not all that important. Nothing else matters, because the very reason you are here is so that you can live, and there’s nothing much to do about that, besides maybe to stop living. You’re past that point now. Suicidal thoughts belong to an earlier time (Day Five, for instance). No, Day Seven is an anomaly in the eight day sequence. Day Seven is spectacularly positive and hopeful. You’re surprised it even exists. Day Seven is when you get to breathe, so you take a great big inhalation. Then, on the exhale, you shrink a couple inches. You fall into yourself. You fetch things for other people. To them, you lack significance. You might as well be invisible. And what they think is everything. If that is so, then what are you?

Nothing at all. Just a mere whisper in the breeze, unheard and unseen.

Day Eight: Animal on the Floor. On the eighth day you arrive to work earlier than usual. You've become less aware of time, after all, it's just a man-made concept like deadlines and to-do lists. You begin the work mechanically, like a wind-up doll ready to run circles for hours and hours. You smile and greet guests. You welcome all the people into your place. That's right it is your place now that you've scrubbed it from window to floorboard. You've stuffed complaints in every crack, slid wishes under every gaping floorboard. There's not a thing you do not know about this place. You could be the owner, but you're not the owner. You could step right out, walk two feet from the door and realize you don't know a smidgen about the world outside your world—you only know table numbers, flavors of dishes, spices in sauces, and the hues of a particular set of red wines—what else could you know? What else could you see? Do you even wonder anymore, or is it just a dream? The lights are dimming now and you're supposed to go home. The bar is warm and welcoming, just how it's supposed to feel.

Down the highway, there's nothing but road, no direction to go but forward. Trees hang out on either side, their branches slung over one another like the cool kids. Streetlights at your back, you cling tight to the tender cord that drags you home. You cry when it snaps, but you're okay. Mother Nature is no warm and fuzzy maternal figure. She pushes you before you're ready, when you're still purple and premature, out into the world. Calloused from eight straight days of service and slowly disintegrating, you lay in bed and wait for sleep to come. You don't want to die anymore. Who has the energy for that? Staring at the ceiling above, you only live for each generously granted breath. Now your labor's over, you close your eyes, smile and wish for a quick, effortless escape.



Residue, acrylic on paper by Shloka Shankar

## Henry VIII Works Overtime

Meggie Royer

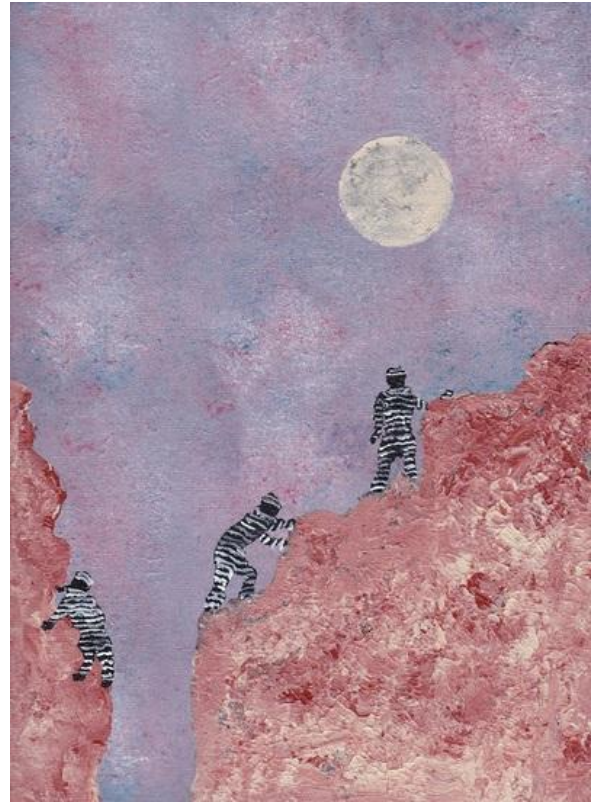
Inside one jar, a head with a tongue encrusted in violets.  
Inside another, head of many eyes.  
Head of flaking paint,  
head of eyelids sewed shut with onionskin.  
Later, in his backyard, the woman rises from the drained pool,  
just another body of blue bone,  
climbing in through the window  
he left open for the summer.  
Most of them are just miscarriages.  
A few, whatever leftovers we keep from ghosts.  
Their pearls, their typed letters,  
the worst words we'd take back if we could.  
She leaves her ring in the bathroom basin  
next to the one he'll never wear again.  
Rests her head on the tub's porcelain edge  
and waits for the breath of knife  
he always brandishes after returning home.

# Crimes of Compassion

Trish Hopkinson

A created construct.  
A chronic condition.  
A culture of convicts.  
Compassion is a crook  
campaigning for crisis,  
circulating cemetery condolences.  
Centuries of condemned  
closed in and covered comatose.  
The cycle.  
The chain, like a cancer comeback  
crashing and cussing,  
circling and crisscrossing.  
Cumbersome as chemotherapy,  
but cheap, like camping or casseroles.  
We cozy-up to coincidence, conform to Change--  
the cornerstone of circumstances,  
the constant.  
Clearly the course  
for a credible conflict.  
The crowd craves criticism.  
The collective comes in and cuts the cake,  
colors the canvas, chooses constraints--  
cleanliness, chastity, control--  
covenants of Compassion.

--found in *The Salt Lake Tribune* 5 April 2014: e-edition.



Escape from Lurigancho, painting by W. Jack Savage

# **Last Rites**

Meggie Royer

My mother on a train filled with bodies. My mother  
sitting between all her previous lovers,  
dress uncurling like cinnamon peel from a spool.  
My mother as goddess among men.  
One with cigarette still lit, ash blooming  
across the sunken bowl of his left cheek.  
My mother has mascara for this.  
Afternoon sky swimming past the windows,  
its bloodlines, its cirrus clouds.  
The driver announces the station.  
Like paper dolls, she pulls them in a thread  
from the seats and down the aisle,  
heads bobbing as abacus.  
To their ends they arrive--  
their burials in pools, backyards,  
their ashes in our sink.

# Survivors

Trish Hopkinson

I	I	I	1
us	we	go	of
she	met	too	new
felt	skin	talk	burn
found	graft	hopes	scars
ironic	bodies	taking	turned
showing	covered	thought	scalding
physical	suffered	accepted	injuries
something	something	beautiful	screaming
contagious	survivors	undergoing	insecurity
considering	experience	third-degree	temperature
competitions	participated	applications	life-changing

# From *Ahab*

*Martín Amada*

Trans. Shira Rubenstein

All there is  
between us and heaven are the cranes  
their ladders and steel beaks

this is no longer the land where they tamed horses  
by harp, where villages came together  
to see the wind smooth out churches

never before did dust belong so much to dust

Standing in the kitchen and like the monks  
who wanted to copy with perfection the perfect letters  
of a perfect book, in silence  
I make your tea,  
I toast your bread

like those who believe in a harsh god  
I am not shaken, devout follower  
I preserve the false memories of joyful days.

*Lo único que hay  
entre nosotros y el cielo son de las grúas  
sus escaleras y picos*

*esta no es más la tierra en que caballos  
se amansaban con arpa, pueblos donde se juntaban  
a ver el viento alisar iglesias*

*el polvo nunca antes perteneció tanto al polvo*

*Parado en la cocina y como los monjes  
que querían copiar con perfección las letras perfectas  
de un libro perfecto, en silencio  
preparo tu te,  
tuestro tu pan*

*como los que creen en un dios severo  
no me quiebro, firme devoto  
conservo los recuerdos falsos de los días felices*

Originally published in *Ahab*, Ediciones Vox, Bahía Blanca, 2011

# The Carpenter

Meggie Royer

I robbed God of his stories, his powers,  
the way he only allowed women to be born  
with all the eggs they'd ever have.  
I gave them back mountains and mountains of yolk,  
each white shell hardened into Jupiter's moons.  
You ask me what it is I am doing here  
but we all know I am trying hard not to be a monster.  
I'd undo what happened to me if I could.  
End this requiem to his hands as they touched me  
in all the places that were either not allowed  
or not yet understood.  
The trouble with deciphering is, I can't tell which is true.  
I'd make these women houses again.  
Build and build, by salt and doorframe, by floorboard  
and willow and birth,  
build them back into the homes  
they've been taken from for far too long.

## Neighbor

Avital Dayanim



Off Brand Gas Station, Photograph by William Crawford

I wonder if the universe next door  
might take the remnants of us in like a stray cat.  
Years and days from now, when we've boiled the ground and  
fit every breath into a test tube  
cut our hair and our skin into paper snowflakes (because)  
we're prettier that way, and prodded the moon until  
it wobbled and rolled out of orbit  
all of the spacemen will cry tears  
of hilarity while sweeping these remnants into a dust pan  
Because no lab coat or business suit brimming with domesticity  
could keep us from sinking  
our fangs into the hand from which  
we dined



Graffiti, acrylic on shaving foam transferred onto paper by Shloka Shankar

## **Aubade for the Last Morning**

Donald C. Welch III

One day the sun will explode, this is nothing  
new. But when it does, I hope I'm waking  
up next to you. Blind hands finding the alarm,  
groggy eyes admiring your bed-head  
like every other morning. Light and fire  
expanding exponentially as I make coffee  
and fuck around with the toaster, again,  
before heading back in to wake you up.  
Maybe we won't notice it, maybe we will:  
an unusual brightness in a New York winter,  
a heat our landlords would never allow for,  
then it's over. This is how I wish we go,  
not the slow pain of hospitals or loneliness,  
not aging until I forget who you ever were,  
just this blur, this gaseous inferno, capturing  
your face, briefly, with a light so radiant  
the shadows underneath your eyes vanish.

## Akhenaten Sonnet

Zachary Bond

It's not the humidity, it's the heat:  
smoky Akhenaten sky, all the sun's hands  
overripening our rinds—Cancer holds  
his sides & laughs—all Furies & no Fate.

Down in the neon trenches, we're spleen to spleen,  
burying Sirius behind the skyline.  
My stolen Dostoyevsky—a good story--  
still pages sweat, letters wipe their eyes.

I'm doing what I can to ensure that you'll abhor me.  
Enslave the old religions, write my own.  
Doing my best tending to our alien family  
but the stele all came out wrong--  
just more desert visions—white sky  
a full mirage obscured by broken crowns.



That Far From Home Feeling, painting by W. Jack Savage

# From *Ahab*

*Martín Amada*

Trans. Shira Rubenstein

I.

We can go walking  
when it's warmed and dried

toss the chicken bones to the ground  
to see how this will end.

In the boiled bone I find your face,  
the right moon at the right time.

II.

A man with a pipe watching the city behind the waves;  
flitting at his core, a faith that heartens him.

A woman who ties with rags the sticks of her house.

We can go walking  
when it's warmed and dried  
and talk of things that matter.

*I.*

*Podemos ir a caminar  
cuando esté templado y seco*

*tirar la carcasa de pollo a tierra  
para saber cómo será el final de esto.*

*En el hueso hervido está tu cara,  
una luna justa en el momento justo.*

*II.*

*Un hombre con pipa mirando la ciudad detrás de las olas,  
mientras en el fondo coletea una fe que lo anima.*

*Una mujer que ata con trapos los palos de su casa.*

*Podemos ir a caminar  
cuando esté templado y seco  
y hablar de las cosas importantes.*

Originally published in *Ahab*, Ediciones Vox, Bahía Blanca, 2011

# From *Ahab*

*Martín Amada*

Trans. Shira Rubenstein

For a non card-carrier,  
it's fair they watch me with suspicion  
copying the distance a horse  
takes from a plague-ridden dog.

The light coming through the room's window  
makes me think:

*Stalingrad.*

With no particular motion,  
with no spark worth calling contemplation.

The light passing is weak  
and it's cold here and certain the cold can survive  
in the body of a man long enough to render it  
a drawing of saliva.

Yesterday I heard someone say the word "heart"  
so while I wait for the radiator to heat  
I think at the same time of songs on the radio

and the uncomplicated way some have of saying  
that loyalty is a baptism,  
that betrayal is a scar you can smell.

*Por compañero de ruta  
es justo que algunos me miren con recelo,  
copiando la distancia que un caballo  
toma de un perro apestado.*

*La luz que entra por la ventana de la pieza  
me hace pensar:*

*Stalingrado.*

*Sin ninguna moción particular,  
sin chispa que valga ser llamada reflexión.*

*La luz pasa y es floja  
y acá hace frío y es cierto que el frío sobrevive  
en un cuerpo macho hasta volverlo un dibujo de saliva.*

*Ayer escuché a alguien diciendo la palabra "corazón"  
por eso mientras espero que la estufa caliente  
pienso al mismo tiempo en canciones de radio*

*y en la forma simple que algunos tienen de decir  
que la lealtad es un bautismo,  
que la traición es un cicatriz que se huele.*

Originally published in *Ahab*, Ediciones Vox, Bahía Blanca, 2011

## Poppyseeds in Bucharest

Sara Adams

The Romanian *mac*  
has almost replaced my own, native-tongue word  
for poppy seed

It's efficient, stealthy, like  
Bucharest commuters who have taken great care  
to diminish visual evidence of any kind of relaxation or enjoyment  
which may have occurred the previous night

In regards to relaxation and enjoyment,  
the train station is both  
pre- and post-,  
a tunnel missing the good parts

The only form of lightness, of peace,  
is pretzels  
(a pretzel with *mac*, thirty cents at the entrance and  
carried forth through the tunnels like a torch)

Or, ten pretzels.  
For three dollars, in Bucharest,  
you could have a commuter train pretzel  
hanging from each of your fingers, or maybe even  
spinning, *mac* flying all over your fellow commuters

If you were good enough,  
If you could actually spin all ten pretzels at the same time,  
you probably wouldn't have to get on the train at all



Trees Attempt at Obsfucation,  
painting by W. Jack Savage

# From *Ahab*

*Martín Amada*

Trans. Shira Rubenstein

I.

Because with copper they paid  
for my sentimental studies I honor  
my father and my mother,

my father's house with the dog,  
my mother's house  
with the view of a church.

II.

For father and mother the spirit  
lifts above what is concrete  
and if it is like vapor  
it is the kind that rises from things,

father and mother in the scent of burning bread  
see the field of wheat catch flame.

*I.*

*Porque pagaron con cobre  
mis estudios sentimentales honro  
a mi padre y a mi madre,*

*la casa con perro de mi padre,  
la casa de madre  
desde la que se ve una iglesia.*

*II.*

*Para padre y madre el espíritu  
se levanta sobre lo concreto  
y si es como un vapor  
es el que sube de las cosas,*

*padre y madre en el olor de pan que se quema  
ven prenderse fuego un campo de trigo.*

Originally published in *Ahab*, Ediciones Vox, Bahía Blanca, 2011

# *The House of Fog*

*Elena Anníbal*

Trans. Shira Rubenstein

**I**

lord, you gave my brother a red ford falcon  
to take to the house of fog

and then what

did you tell him?  
did you explain the road was cut off?  
that the engine was busted?  
that everything was busted?  
that there was no way back?

what did you do, how  
did you convince him?  
to give you his hand  
to sit on the false seat  
to let the dark host of your name  
come to his mouth

or did you place in him a stone?  
or a coin, a hook  
a note

where did you leave him mute, make him  
forget  
forget us

what signals did you make that instead of coming home  
he cut the falcon's engine  
slipped from the perfect silken leather  
from the music of the radio  
from the car's sensuous growl  
and left with you  
to go where

to hunt birds?  
to see the golden fields burn out behind the winter's fire?  
to break the crystal of the water for the cubs to drink?

or perhaps it was summer  
and you gave him the perilous water of your heaven

enchanted, that drink, yes  
clear, the water, good  
but beyond of course such water leads to more thirst

**I**

*señor, vos le diste a mi hermano un ford falcon rojo  
para llegar a la casa de la niebla*

*y después qué*

*le dijiste?  
le explicaste que el camino estaba cortado?  
¿que el motor estaba roto?  
¿que todo estaba roto?  
¿que no había vuelta?*

*¿qué hiciste, cómo  
para convencerlo?*

*para que te diera la mano  
se sentara en la sillita de mentira  
dejara que la oscura hostia de tu nombre  
le llegara a la boca*

*¿o le metiste una piedra?  
o una moneda, un gancho,  
un papelito*

*de dónde lo enmudeciste, lo hiciste  
olvidar  
olvidarnos*

*qué señas le habrás hecho para que en vez de volver a casa  
apagara el motor del falcon  
se escurriera de la sedosa perfección del cuero  
de la música en la radio  
del ronroneo cachondo del auto  
y se bajara con vos  
para ir adónde*

*¿a cazar pajaritos?  
¿a ver el dorado pasto extinguirse tras el fuego del invierno?  
¿a romper el cristal del agua para que beban las crías?*

*o era verano, quizá por entonces  
y le diste el agua peligrosa de tu cielo*

*entradora, el agüita, sí  
clarita, el agua, bueno  
pero detrás de eso vos sabés que un agua así da más sed*

you dig deeper in the pit  
and deeper  
fling the dirt to your own back

and not even the powerful and ever-present angel of the  
windmills  
can save you  
no

did you know my brother would say yes?  
when you saw the dust the red falcon stirred on the road  
did you ever think to let him go?

be it as it may, lord, for he was all beauty  
at that age,  
all joy  
all  
reason to be

## II

we planted a tree in the house of fog

the sunflowers turned gold in the sun  
died another day  
another night

the tree grew, rooted  
in shadow

its stature modeled with bone

every bird that tasted its fruits  
fell in somnolence  
in absence of life

in the radical blindness of the dead

## III

Epumer the copper-haired, the glorious,  
lent you the shotgun, and the hound  
unafraid to sink into the water

in the lake the moon glinted, still

you didn't know how to kill, until then  
and you killed  
that morning  
you killed

two or three kingbirds, in mid-flight

*uno se entierra más en el pozo  
y más  
hasta echarse tierra en el lomo*

*y ni el ángel constante y poderoso de los molinos de viento  
puede salvarte  
no*

*¿sabías que mi hermano iba a decir sí?  
cuando viste el polvito que levantaba el falcon rojo en el cam  
no pensaste dejarlo ir?*

*aunque sea, señor, porque él era toda belleza  
a esa edad,  
toda alegría  
toda  
razón de ser*

## II

*plantamos un árbol en la casa de la niebla*

*se doraban al sol los girasoles  
moría otro día  
otra noche*

*el árbol creció, arraigó  
en la penumbra*

*modelaba con hueso su estatura*

*cada pájaro que probó los frutos  
caía en somnolencia  
en ausencia de vida*

*en la radical ceguera de los muertos*

## III

*Epumer el cobrizo, el glorioso,  
te prestó la escopeta, y el galgo  
que no temía hundirse en el agua*

*en la laguna espejeaba, todavía, la luna*

*no sabías matar, hasta entonces,  
y mataste  
esa mañana  
mataste*

*dos o tres sirirís, en pleno vuelo*

you didn't know the glorious arc of practiced sex  
didn't travel beyond that countryside and colony  
didn't see the devil's grimace  
and golden tooth

but you learned that death enters every  
small  
vast flesh

that the blaze in the cane fields would touch you  
would block the exits  
would wither paradise and its flower

#### IV

i have seen that man painting  
the house of the virgin

i traveled  
worn through  
by the High Shadow

can i stretch out my hand and touch your  
garment,  
Lady?

can you be my mother  
in the house of fog?

would you close the dead in their box  
would you season this flesh  
would you lift my heart from slumber  
from fever

and what of that love?  
where?

#### V

no, my house did not crumble  
the panes didn't rattle  
nor fell the spider from hell's poppy blossom

everything came to us, began within:  
swallowed an eye

we were or are  
the corruptible bread

for every bone there was a mouth  
a tooth  
a different hunger

*no conociste el arco glorioso del sexo practicado  
no viajaste más allá de ese campo y la colonia  
no le viste la mueca al diablo  
y su diente de oro*

*pero aprendiste que la muerte entra en cada  
pequeña  
grande carne*

*que el incendio del cañaveral te tocaría  
taparía las entradas  
mustiaría el paraíso y su flor*

#### IV

*he visto a ese hombre pintando  
la casa de la virgen*

*yo viajaba  
mordida en toda mí  
por la Alta Sombra*

*¿puedo estirar la mano y tocarte  
el vestidito,  
Señora?*

*¿podés ser mi mamá  
en la casa de la niebla?*

*encerrarías en su cajón a los muertos  
sazonarías esta carne  
levantarías mi corazón del sueño  
de la fiebre*

*¿y qué de todo ese amor?  
¿dónde?*

#### V

*no, mi casa no se derrumbó  
no temblaron los vidrios  
ni la araña cayó de la amapola del infierno*

*todo vino, empezó adentro:  
nos tragaba un ojo*

*éramos o somos  
el pan corruptible*

*por cada hueso hubo una boca  
un diente  
un hambre distinto*

fierce, the eye chose  
the indispensable  
the Sweetness  
the one who keeps singing

we are so sad without him  
sometimes there's nothing to talk about, you know?  
no strength to speak life's happenings

but the rain comes, sometimes,  
it's harmless and plays music in the gutters  
the rain comes from the east to anoint the wound  
to make large the flowers of the flesh

of angels places the patio

behind the privet, the Sweetness reborn  
tells me: place, little sister, your hand  
on my heart

it makes the same noise as horses  
you see?  
is it not a miracle?

## VI

we were often poor  
there was no money for clothing or music, but  
god's magnificent drill  
fell against the morning

the pigeons scattered  
as if they'd seen  
the weasel or the falcon

a piece of me went to bitterness  
as in the well of the water mill  
where the serpent infected  
the drinking water

i was only a few years old and already was  
rigorously aged

i knew the one most high could crush my head  
sicken our sheep  
take our summer, the scant happiness

but still i always looked up  
and quietly said  
yes, lord, come to me the destruction  
whatever must come  
i am the furrow in your field, lord,

*feroz, el ojo eligió  
al imprescindible  
al Dulce  
al que sigue cantando*

*somos tan tristes sin él  
a veces no hay de qué hablar, ¿sabe?  
no hay fuerza para decir las cosas de la vida*

*pero llega la lluvia, a veces,  
que es mansa y hace música en las canaletas  
llega la lluvia por el este para ungir la herida  
para hacer grandes las flores de carne*

*de ángel se pone el patio*

*detrás del ligustro, el Dulce renace  
me dice: poné, hermanita, tu mano  
en mi corazón*

*hace el mismo ruido que los caballos  
¿viste?  
¿no es un milagro?*

## VI

*muchas veces fuimos pobres  
no había dinero para ropa o música, pero  
el taladro magnífico de dios  
caía contra la mañana*

*las palomas se desbandaban  
como si vieran  
la comadreja o el halcón*

*un pedazo de mí entraba en la amargura  
como en el pozo del molino  
donde la serpiente infectaba  
el agua de beber*

*yo tenía pocos años y ya era  
rigurosamente anciana*

*sabía que el altísimo podía aplastarme la cabeza  
enfermar nuestras ovejas  
quitarnos el verano, la poca dicha*

*pero igual miraba siempre para arriba  
y bajito decía  
que sí, señor, venga a mí la destrucción  
lo que deba venir  
soy tu surco, señor,*

i am your trench

## VII

like lazarus, the one from bethany, i was or am  
sleeping  
dead

in this cave of shadows i cultivate the wild orchid  
and in the damp wall, the word that counts  
the days that remain  
those that have passed

he ought to come: perhaps the announcement will be  
his eager touch against the stone  
or his voice, the stigma

i've so long awaited

this village is far: there are  
dunes to the north  
fog to the south  
blind horses on the plain  
bitter fields of wheat

it could be they've lost the way  
or that the way was an illusion

maybe the word was already pronounced  
and i didn't hear it, was different  
from the one i expected  
or corrupted on the path  
from life to death

there was no miracle, or it's already come about  
and is this soft penumbra  
this formidable paradise

*soy tu surco*

## VII

*como lázaro, el de betania, estuve o estoy  
dormida  
muerta*

*en esta cueva umbría cultivo la orquídea salvaje  
y en la húmeda pared, la palabra que cuenta  
los días que faltan  
los que han pasado*

*él debe venir: quizá me lo anuncie  
su tacto robusto tocando la piedra  
o la voz, el estigma*

*hace mucho que espero*

*este pueblo es lejos: hay  
médanos al norte  
niebla al sur  
caballos ciegos en la llanura  
trigos amargos*

*puede que hayan perdido el camino  
o que el camino haya sido una ilusión*

*quizá la palabra ya fue pronunciada  
pero no la escuché, era distinta  
a la esperada  
o fue corrompida en el camino  
de la vida hacia la muerte*

*no hubo milagro, o ya se produjo  
y es esta suave penumbra  
este tremendo paraíso*

Originally published in *La casa de la niebla*, Ediciones del Dock, Buenos Aires, 2015

# From *Ahab*

*Martín Amada*

Trans. Shira Rubenstein

The raven comes from the stones and the stones  
are the shadow of the raven.

The island, like a white whale,  
is a pile of earth on the choppy sea,

dreamed by fishermen bound to a simple faith.

Nothing quite explains why  
we speak with no function but to backbone the day,  
nor when this hate between us was born.

To the stones the raven returns,  
beneath the raven the stones return,  
the shadow returns to the coal's hard core.

*El cuervo viene de las piedras y las piedras  
son la sombra del cuervo.*

*La isla, como ballena blanca,  
es una pila de tierra en el mar picado,*

*soñada por pescadores atados a una fe simple.*

*Nada alcanza para explicar por qué  
hablamos sin más función que vertebrar el día,  
ni cuándo nació este odio entre nosotros.*

*A las piedras vuelve el cuervo,  
vuelven debajo del cuervo las piedras,  
la sombra vuelve al corazón duro del carbón.*

Originally published in *Ahab*, Ediciones Vox, Bahía Blanca, 2011

## Contributors

**Shloka Shankar** is a freelance writer from India. She loves experimenting with Japanese short-forms such as haiku and haibun, as well as found/remixed poetry from time to time. Her work has most recently appeared in Silver Birch Press, Otoliths, shufPoetry, Sein und Werden, One Sentence Poems, and so on. She is also the founding editor of the literary & arts journal, Sonic Boom.

**Sara Adams** is a Montessori teacher in Portland, Oregon. She has work in lit mags such as DIAGRAM (forthcoming), tNY Press's Electronic Encyclopedia of Experimental Literature, and Shampoo Poetry. Her first micro-chapbook, Poems for Ivan, is forthcoming from Porkbelly Press. More info and links at [www.kartoshkaaaaa.com](http://www.kartoshkaaaaa.com).

**Jonathan Rotsztain** is a writer, graphic designer and cartoonist living in Toronto, Canada. He's been a partner in graphic design duo ALL CAPS Design since November 2011. In May 2015, he earned his MFA in Cartooning from the Centre for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction, Vermont. Rotsztain's comics deal in personal narratives and surreal tales. In his autobiographical pieces, he explores identity, memory and representation around self-esteem, class and sexuality. His other stream of comics work harnesses the power of drawing to conjure the fantastic, while maintaining themes of political rights and personal value. His comics have appeared in The Dominion Magazine, Seven Days and Maple Key Comics. Rotsztain has produced a one page journal comic, Dreary Diary, daily since December 20, 2013. You can view the complete run of dailies online at DrearyDiary.com. See Jonathan's work and learn more at [www.Rotsztain.com](http://www.Rotsztain.com).

**Ross McCleary** is a writer from Edinburgh. His work has recently appeared in Bleak Bleak Bleak, Far Away Places, and Cease Cows. He is an editor for the spoken word podcast Lies, Dreaming, and he has a small book coming out in the summer on Maudlin House Press called Portrait of the Artist as a Viable Alternative to Death. He would also like you to know he was born 9 months after Jorge Luis Borges passed away because he feels this is important and relevant.

**W. Jack Savage** is a retired broadcaster and educator. He is the author of seven books including Imagination: The Art of W. Jack Savage ([wjacksavage.com](http://wjacksavage.com)). To date, more than fifty of Jack's short stories and over six-hundred of his paintings and drawings have been published worldwide. Jack and his wife Kathy live in Monrovia, California.

**Meggie Royer** is a writer and photographer from the Midwest who is currently majoring in Psychology at Macalester College. Her poems have previously appeared in Words Dance Magazine, The Harpoon Review, Melancholy Hyperbole, and more. She has won national medals for her poetry and a writing portfolio in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, and was the Macalester Honorable Mention recipient of the 2015 Academy of American Poets Student Poetry Prize.

**Zoe Gonzales** started writing at the age of nine, when it was of utmost importance that poems be painted on the floor, carved in sand or otherwise imprinted on the earth. Since, she has amassed filled journals that match her body weight and size, as well as contributed to magazines, weeklies, and online publications, even launching a feminist blog back in her wild, extremist days. These days, she writes poems and fiction from a small attic in Brooklyn, where she sleeps on stacks of paperbacks. <https://zoegonzales.wordpress.com/>

**Trish Hopkinson** has always loved words—in fact, her mother tells everyone she was born with a pen in her hand. She has two chapbooks, *Emissions* and *Pieced Into Treetops*, and has been published in several anthologies and literary magazines, including *The Found Poetry Review*, *Chagrin River Review*, and *The Fem*. Trish is co-founder of a local poetry group, *Rock Canyon Poets*. She is a product director by profession and resides in Utah with her handsome husband and their two outstanding children. You can follow her poetry adventures at <http://trishhopkinson.com/>.

**Shira Rubenstein** is a native of upstate New York with a B.A. in Creative Writing from Brandeis University. She currently lives, writes, and translates in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**Martín Armada** was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1979. He has published the poetry collections *El estero* (Gog & Magog, 2006), *Ahab* (VOX, 2011), and *Hombre sentado ahí* (Determinado Rumor, 2015).

**Avital Dayanim** is a senior at Gann Academy in Waltham, Massachusetts. She was awarded the Silver Key Award from Scholastic in 2015 for a composite of original poetry, and was a semi-finalist in the Smith College H.S. Poetry for her poem, “Vincent”. When she isn’t writing poetry, short stories or college applications, she is painting or singing showtunes, loudly.

**William Crawford** is a writer & photographer living in Winston-Salem, NC. He was a combat photojournalist in Vietnam. He later enjoyed a long career in social work. Crawdaddy also taught at UNC Chapel Hill. He photographs the trite, trivial, and the mundane. Crawford developed the forensic foraging technique of photography with his colleague, Sydney lensman, Jim Provencher.

**Donald C. Welch III** is a teaching assistant at the Rebecca School for Autism. His current project @SocialLit (<https://twitter.com/SocialLit>) explores new forms of poetry and collaborative writing derived from Social Media. His work has appeared in *PASSAGES NORTH*; *SOUTH85 JOURNAL*; *GRAVEL*; *WAR, LITERATURE & THE ARTS*; *INKY NEEDLES*; *THE EMERSON REVIEW*; and elsewhere. His collection of children’s poetry *WHO GAVE THESE FLAMINGOS THOSE TUXEDOS?* was published by Emerson College’s Wilde Press in 2013.

The cinematographer on an award-winning short documentary, *The Seer of Poughkeepsie*, **Zachary Bond** was also the recipient of the Beatrice Daw Brown Prize for Poetry in 2014. His writing has appeared both in print and online, most recently in *Repurposed Mag*. He is an MFA candidate at UMass-Boston.

**Elena Anníbali** was born in Córdoba, Argentina in 1978. She holds a degree in Letras Modernas from the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. She has published the poetry collections *Las madres remotas* (2007), *Tabaco mariposa* (2009), and *La casa de la niebla* (2015), as well as the short story *El tigre* (2010). She works as a teacher and a researcher.

## Editor's Corner | Winter 2016

Dear Internet,

After all this time, we are happy to release an expansive issue for our one year anniversary!

This installment features poetry that plays with traditional forms, a variety of artwork, and fiction that blurs the lines of reality. We are also excited to include (for the first time!) found poetry and original translations of Argentinean poets by a returning contributor. Enjoy the unexpected ekphrasis formed as art pieces converse with literary works on the pages they share.

Here, we explore themes of destruction and undoing. And like discounted post-Valentine's candy, the issue unwraps to reveal delightful surprises. As one season melts into the next, these pieces demonstrate an artful unraveling: in the space of absence springs something new. So let's cast aside expectations, and allow beauty, fear, determination, and wonder to take their place.

When things fall apart, what will you do?  
Keep calm and read Window Cat Press.

The Editors  
Kim, Elana, Emily

P.S. We're interested in growing, still! If you'd like to get involved in WCP behind the scenes, email us at: [windowcatpress@gmail.com](mailto:windowcatpress@gmail.com)

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### The Editors

**Kim Dela Cruz** is a pun-loving poet, freelance editor & tinkerer. Her latest work can be found in Broad! and Eunoia Review. She is now writing a collection of pieces that explores transformative potential through intimacy, identity, and the body, among other things.

**Elana Friedland** is a Boston-based poet and theatre practitioner. Her poems have won a scholarship from Grub Street and a fellowship from Summer Literary Seminars. She is originally from the Midwest and currently resides in Brighton, where she discovered the original Window Cat while on her way to work.

**Emily Jaeger** is a poet, returned peace corps volunteer, and MFA student at UMASS Boston. After living for two years as an agricultural extensionist in rural Paraguay, she returned to the Boston-area and is currently re-discovering the joys of public libraries and the internet. Her chapbook *The Evolution of Parasites* is forthcoming from Sibling Rivalry Press in 2016



Back Cover Art: Diffusion, acrylic on paper by Shloka Shankar