

# *Breadcrumb Scabs: Issue 8*

August 2009, edited by Lena Judith Drake

## Contributors:

MATTHEW KABIK  
KAREN KELSAY  
JOSEPH M. GANT  
SERGIO ORTIZ  
SUZANNE DEL MAYO  
EMILY JEAN HABERMEHL  
J. BRADLEY  
NICELLE C. DAVIS  
JESSICA MCWHIRT

MONICA THOMAS  
YERMIYAHU AHRON TAUB  
JEFFREY QUALLS  
KRISTINA ENGLAND  
JENNIFER LEBLANC  
BRUCE COHEN  
PETER MAGLIOCCO  
ORTISEGBEMI JAKPA

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*Lena Judith Drake, editor-in-chief of Breadcrumb Scabs magazine, is currently a Creative Writing student at Grand Valley State University. She is Puerto Rican, a poet, a geek, and a feminist activist. Her own writing has been published or is forthcoming in magazines such as Clockwise Cat, Underground Voices, and Yellow Mama. She enjoys Chinese buffets, hot showers, and sleeping.*

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Welcome to the August 2009 edition of *Breadcrumb Scabs* magazine.

“Studies in Monogamy: Voles” by Nicelle C. Davis is my editor’s pick for favorite poem this month. It’s a bizarre discourse on sexuality intertwined with blunt, effective imagery. I’m thrilled about this prose-y bit of poetry.

On an equally exciting note, we’re always willing to promote the quality work of our contributors. One of our previous contributors, Psycho Kanev, has a new book, simply entitled *r*. I was given the opportunity to read a copy. It’s a poetry collection, and a collaboration with the poet Felino Soriano and the editor, Edward Wells.

The book is available through Amazon (through this awfully long link, or search for it-- it’s worth it): [http://www.amazon.com/r-Psycho-Kanev/dp/0979129494/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1245405775&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/r-Psycho-Kanev/dp/0979129494/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1245405775&sr=8-1)

And now, back to business. Which is now just this: I hope all readers enjoy the issue!

### **Edited for some sad news:**

One of this issue’s contributors, Jeffrey Qualls, passed away unexpectedly on July 11<sup>th</sup>, only a few months after three of his poems were accepted for publication. You will find these poems within the issue.

I am sincerely sorry for this loss to those who knew him well, and to readers of his poetry. His obituary can be found here, on the site of his long-time partner: <http://www.edqualls.com/JAQ-obituary.htm>

*Matthew Kabik studied the creative writing process at Pennsylvania State University, graduating with an English degree and an attachment to the written art. Editor of the university's creative arts magazine during that time, he helped students (as they also helped him) find a voice and technique that wasn't anything but their own. He now lives in Harrisburg, PA with a good woman, a handful of typewriters and a series of enjoyable vices.*

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## **The Entire Earth, a Peach Tree**

by Matthew Kabik

You'll find me to  
be a jagged warmth,  
something like a  
blanket with holes or  
the comfort of freezing  
to death.

I'm not meant to be  
held and loved.  
I'll be the listen in, the  
suggestion and reliable.  
I'll be the phone call away.

I am the easy to forget when  
you are pinned down by a  
man who doesn't even know  
how you look after  
confiding that you are  
scared of God.

He'll have you my  
gentle earth,  
and I'll hang by  
the peach tree  
and wait for you  
to swallow me up.

*Joseph M. Gant is a Scientific Glassblower by trade but a writer by passion. His poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in The Stray Branch, Lines Written w/ a Razor, Dark Gothic Resurrected and Sex and Murder. A long time student of traditional Tibetan religion and culture, he resides in the Delaware Valley where he sweats over words and plays with glass and fire. He sees the Compassion in Wrath, Renunciation in Irreverence, and Wisdom in Desire. He aims to write from these perspectives, making holiness perceptible in everything.*

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**Pressed**

by Joseph M. Gant

- *Yes Sir, how may I help you?*

- I'm moving and need to cancel my subscription to the Daily Wall.

- *We do deliver outside of our normal circulation for a small fee. Where are you moving to?*

- Do you deliver to Hell?

- *Yes, but only the editorial and the funnies on Sunday.*

... and though the shotgun blast rang straight down the phone line, was heard for blocks, and made a definite impression on the wall, there was no headline for him to read.

*Nicelle C. Davis lives in Lancaster, California with her husband James and their son J.J. She is currently an MFA candidate at the University of California Riverside. She teaches at Antelope Valley College.*

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## **Studies in Monogamy: Voles**

by Nicelle C. Davis

Voles do the big *it* for 24 hours. Continuously. Same pairs licking their round-bodied lover until dirty coats shine with want. Romantic love is said to resemble OCD. I throw three pennies on the floor. Heads: love. Tails: not.

The little portion of the brain that loves is also the spot that sparks with cocaine. So really mom left us for love, not powder. Love as a recipe: part contraction, part retention.

Directions: whip pain until it's the creamy constancy of pleasure and simmer to a piss.

The serum injected into test subjects has no effect. Our bodies made to take so little of the potion. Prairie Voles are seen as rats with human attributes. But in truth, they're better at it. Even as this poem is written, two voles are molding themselves into a unity of fuzz.

Our brain's three party system is made to hold spouse, infidel, and unrelated other. Simultaneously. Often, while having sex I envision Neanderthals pounding at each other's heads with rocks-- their need to know how it works enacted.

What is that rattle in the chest? What is that light in the eyes? *We were not built to be happy but to reproduce*, says Dr. Fisher. Even a Vole will chop through an artery and scratch out the beady spark before losing Vole.

What is Vole? That Vole?

Sound of a carrot being eaten-- the leaching of gardens-- my teeth at my wrists.

**When in Doubt, Ask Yourself, *What Would Jesus Do?***

by Nicelle C. Davis

Jesus said, *Damn the soul that depends on the flesh.*

At thirteen  
it was en vogue  
to strangle each  
other until *slip--*  
    our bodies lay  
    limp as clothes  
    on the floor. Self  
    striped to an act  
of singing--  
sine curve in  
oscillation.  
In blackout  
    a field of light  
    rolls like an ocean  
    of fire, euphoria,  
    before  
the automatic  
pull back to  
consciousness--  
another world.

Jesus said, *Damn the flesh that depends on the soul.*

I've never shot a gun.  
The man who meant to teach me  
the etiquette of buckshot  
took his head off with a .44 before  
we made it to the range.

Jesus and Jesus  
are wrangling  
over spare change.

Today this / Today that.

*Monica Thomas is a lucid dreamer who cherishes honesty above all else. She's a mother, a lover, and a hopeful romantic. Write to her at [fortunebaby@gmail.com](mailto:fortunebaby@gmail.com).*

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## **Bag It Up**

by Monica Thomas

I'd been thinking too much about the adoption,  
about how young she was, the mother,  
about how thirty years ago there would've been  
such scorn.

I dreamed that night of the shame and pain,  
her mother breathing down her neck and calling  
the shots: Lie like this. Do what I tell you to do -

As if it were nothing more than inconvenient,  
the labor progressed through the night until at last  
the baby crowned, sending the girl into unbearable  
agony. She was instructed then to hold it there for  
as long as she could.

Normally the reason women are instructed  
at this point not to push is so the birth attendant  
can suction out the baby's nose and mouth.  
In this case, it was because the girl's mother knew  
this was the most painful part of the delivery, and  
forced her daughter to hold the baby there so it  
would hurt her longer, and to perhaps deny the baby  
its first chance at breath.

So the teen lay screaming  
with the baby's head held tight  
between her legs. In the bedroom  
with the shades pulled down,  
this was her punishment for the sin of sex.

The baby had come early,  
ill-formed and miniature. Limp  
and silent, a cold blue form  
lost in a thin gray bag.

The girl curled up in fetal position after all the elements of the ordeal had been completely expelled. Her mother grabbed the fetus by the bony feet and mockingly spanked it, feigning an attempt at knocking out anything blocking air from its flat lungs.

She then threw it next to her daughter like a dead chicken being tossed onto a conveyor belt, scolding her for wasting milk.

## Teeth

by Monica Thomas

The dream was: First I lost my job, the product of someone else's greed and evil intent against me. That was all sub-plot, or maybe a coming attraction. Maybe. She came around again, like a fly on shit, it was hard to breathe, my neck was closing up. She offered suggestions, like how to use a food pantry and where I could work next. I didn't want it.

The next part was worse: My front right tooth fell out in pieces. I don't know what I did to cause it. There was a small piece left, embedded in my gums, wet and exposed, the sweet innards a corn kernel. Bits of chipped tooth like the crumbles left of a porcelain cup that's been smashed against the kitchen faucet by accident, at first white but then in my dream they turned into shards of broken beer bottle, thick brown glass I tried to force back into my swollen mouth.

I asked my Pop for help. It was after hours and he's a grouch. He got on the phone to call Dr. Tom, the last doctor on earth who I'd ever want to go to again. The one who took my tonsils, a human harvest. The one who put me on such strong antibiotics I itched for weeks, a million bees stinging my body from the inside. The one told my parents I was lying to them, I wasn't in pain, only too fat that I wanted an excuse to not wear gym shorts. He's not even a dentist, but Pop waved a finger at me and called him anyway. Dammit. If my gums weren't so swollen from the poking and prodding, maybe I could've forced that amber shard back in. Even if I could, would it take root?

## **Familiar**

by Monica Thomas

He says he gets a lot of nose bleeds,  
that he could be sitting on the shitter reading a book  
and all of a sudden there's blood dripping down from  
his nostril. He says this happens all the time. That I haven't  
seen it just reminds me that I don't get to see him often enough.

His feet get sore. Somehow the skin stays baby soft. Barely  
any sign of wear, not like some. The curve of his arch fits perfectly  
against the heel of my hand. My fingers take their place, weaving  
in between his toes. He apologizes for his inexcusably long toenails,  
self-conscious without reason.

I'm intrigued with his landscape. Having surveyed every patch  
of his varied terrain, I'd know him by sight or by feel,  
from the long soft pastures of his thighs to the rogue dancers  
circling his bonfire nipples and the flattened raisin birth mark  
opposite his heart. He's prone to my circumnavigation.  
I cherish every touch.

We live for each other. In tender moments-- not silent, but  
filled with the music of our bodies. Breaths, moans. The clearing  
of throats with a gentle cough. Sweet audible kisses, very close  
to the ear. Orchestral fluids. The cracking of joints, the burps  
and gurgles of our stomachs-- his, mine, and ours.

*Jennifer LeBlanc is currently pursuing a B.A. in English from Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts. Her book Coloring the Shadows (2009) won the Mary C. Bryan Women's Studies Award for 2009, and she represented Regis College at the 2009 Greater Boston Intercollegiate Poetry Festival. She is an editor of Regis College's literary journal, Hemetera, and her poetry has been published in Bolts of Silk, Oak Bend Review, and Up the Staircase, among others.*

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## **High School Debate**

by Jennifer LeBlanc

Most writers are men, he proclaimed and then scoffed,  
leaning back in his chair and running his hand through his hair,  
he was careful to be both adamant and casual in the debate,  
settling his gaze on my face, challenging me to protest.

I could have made rebuttal with evidence of letters,  
with citations of novels and journals hidden in drawers.  
I could have summoned a silenced tradition of scholarship,  
Chopin and Hurston, Cather and Wharton and Olds.

Instead, my eyes followed the spines on the bookshelves.  
William and Geoffrey, William, John and James and George.  
We were stuffed with stale words and could not purge,  
we could not oppose what we believed to be true.

*Suzanne del Mazo was born in Oakland, California to a Cuban immigrant father and an Irish Catholic, Jewish mother. She is an activist, artist and teacher in both of color and queer communities.*

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**a bump started it**

by Suzanne del Mazo

a bump and a new girlfriend  
who asked about everything  
i went alone  
to the gyno  
women like me try  
not to go  
with spiked hair & bound breasts

i say test for everything

she says well...  
*that bump is nothing*  
*don't worry it's hard*  
*to give men STIs*  
but then i tell her  
i don't sleep with men  
she says  
*drop your pants* and my ass is cold hanging  
over the padded edge my  
legs too short to reach  
the stirrups and I'm  
dangling prayers  
she looks surprised the  
smallest speculum is  
too small then  
peeks over my chocha  
for an explanation

*she says bumps can come from*  
*leather S&M*  
but i just want my pussy back  
retract my legs  
she leaves the room  
I rip the gown

shimmy into jeans  
was outta there so fast  
she ain't never see me leave  
she ain't ever see me back

*Bruce Cohen's work has appeared in AGNI Online, Georgia Review, Ploughshares, Poetry, Prairie Schooner, and TriQuarterly. New poems are forthcoming in The Cincinnati Review, Ecotone, and New York Quarterly. A recipient of an individual artist grant from the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, he has two collections of poems, Disloyal Yo-Yo (Dream Horse Press), which was awarded the 2007 Orphic Poetry Prize, and Swerve (forthcoming from Black Lawrence Press).*

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## **The Bug House**

by Bruce Cohen

There is a room, an empty room.  
Not really. It's absent of what you expect.

No chairs, bookcases, lamps, paintings.  
You cannot see the floor because

It is covered in white printer paper  
& each piece is outlined in an embryonic color.

Every few seconds from a random spot on the ceiling  
A virgin sheet falls gracefully, Icarus-like to the floor.

If children were allowed into the room  
They would kick their muddy feet & scatter

The paper & some pieces would undoubtedly rip.  
On the wall, across from the door,

There are no windows of course, or widows,  
As there is no death in the room,

There is an insect, one that cannot fly.  
Very few people name their children

Kafka. The bug was not placed there by the artist.  
In the next room there are roosters dyed midnight blue.

The walls are glass & some of the roosters are sporting  
Ballerina frilly ankle socks & one must consider Degas.

The roosters have no faces but masks glued to their beaks.

A few are wearing derbies rubber-banded to their heads.

Those are smashing their heads against the glass walls  
Trying to get them off. The new human order

With uncombed greasy hair is staring as though  
They are extracting meaning from self-abuse.

The piano in the den is filled with wet cement, drying.  
It is surrounded by bushels of negative inverted potatoes,

Some peeled, others mushy, some with food coloring  
With geometric designs carved into their faces.

You think of the original 1950's Mr. Potato Head,  
When our mothers gave us real potatoes

Before the genius of plastic fractured our notions  
Of natural, unequivocal, starchy beauty.

## Undercover

by Bruce Cohen

Since I don't want God to trace me  
I use cash.  
But when pulling out my most  
Private cork  
With my teeth  
I look up to heaven for guidance.  
The furniture from my clichéd  
Childhood living room  
Was protected  
With clear, thick plastic,  
The doorway a velvet rope barricade.  
The irony of the term living room  
Was never lost on me.  
The inside of my head  
Is still not baby-proof—  
The furniture is nothing  
But ominously sharpened corners.  
Here are the conditions  
Of my unconditional love:  
Any time a conversation  
Leaves a sweating glass ring  
On the freshly polished end table  
Allow me to be an optical illusion  
Like a spoon  
Lobotomized in a glass  
Of sparkling water.  
I never wear new shoes;  
I save them  
In their original box,  
Afraid of being trapped  
In a downpour without an umbrella  
While I am floating  
My name out there!  
Sometimes a song gets trapped in my head  
Until miraculously it plays on the radio.  
So many things have happened:  
Some good.  
So many things will never happen:  
Most bad.

I can't blame God;  
He's only human.  
Maybe he should have considered  
Covering some stuff with plastic.  
He was doing okay  
But had a beer  
Uncharacteristically in the afternoon  
& took an unscheduled nap  
During the creation  
Of the New World  
Which explains all the suffering,  
Meaninglessness & the vastly  
Unprotected,  
Six-year-olds with leukemia  
Pushing three-wheeled shopping carts.  
Originally nothing  
Was supposed to wear out.  
That impulse still riddles  
Our genes:  
People try hard to live  
Forever but are saddled  
With the humiliation  
Of walking over an overly  
Waxed kitchen floor,  
Running in from the rain.  
Every father is the architect  
& every son the anti-architect  
Who takes chain saws to childhood  
Homes before they are demolished  
With those giant  
Iron pendulum balls &  
Cuts beautiful holes so everyone  
Can see inside the rooms  
From unpredictable angles  
In ways that god could  
Not even imagine.  
Of course there are casualties:  
A splintered piano on the floor,  
Beautiful chords forever  
In limbo, skeletons of mice  
Rearranging into new creatures  
In a newer wind,

The ghosts of men sitting  
In front  
Of six simultaneous  
Televisions,  
All with different episodes.  
Reruns & cancelled  
Shows & test patterns.  
Pilots, long forgotten.

*Kristina England lives in Worcester, MA. Ms. England received an M.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts at Boston in 2005. Her poetry has appeared in Ballard Street Poetry Journal, Read This Magazine, The Dirty Napkin, and Weave Magazine.*

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**After the Accident**

by Kristina England

Groceries sit on the counter.  
She always unpacked. A  
week passes. Milk sours,  
curdles. You snap off the  
cover, chug to the bottom,  
your body refusing to react.

*Jessica McWhirt is a Colorado native. She snowboards in the winter and complains about the heat in the summer. She will still go out in that hot Colorado weather just to play a round of Frisbee Golf or slackline with her friends. If Jessica isn't reading, writing, working, at school, or doing homework, you'll find her at a show, usually a Ska show. She hums when there's a lull in the conversation. She sings in the shower and would eat cereal for breakfast, lunch and dinner if she could.*

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## **July Picnic**

by Jessica McWhirt

We collapsed into each other, as the waves crashed and the people fled, and the arrow burns as it flies into the apple sitting on the child's head, while they cooked the parts of the young and old on the barbecue they bought on sale at Wal-Mart because they did not care about the lives that survived, or barely survived off of fifty cents a day; and they devoured the souls with forks, knives, spoons and with an ear of corn they licked their hearts and tongued their eyes; while we bathed in the blood of the ones leftover

from the barbecue,  
I couldn't hear you  
because my ears were  
plugged with lies  
and deception when  
you proclaimed your  
love for me, and  
we collapsed into each  
other because we  
were faint from losing  
so much blood.

*Emily Jean Habermehl is a licensed social worker who currently resides in Austin, Texas. Originally from the Northeast, she has been writing poetry since she was 12 years old. She has been published in Empowerment4Women, Della Donna and was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. You can read more of her poetry by visiting her blog: <http://friscoshoes.blogspot.com>.*

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## **Justified**

by Emily Jean Habermehl

I know this warning (licked it with my tongue, oh  
How it had tasted on the tip)  
It's rung through a static ping pop omnipresence  
For longer than my eyes will adjust to  
Do not attempt with so much frayed wired  
Detach as safety demands (alert stung quills piercing  
Again  
Again)  
*Do not move forward lest there only be threadbare sheets,  
Tattered dresses, dog-eared books  
Silence layered on silence it will  
Consume you*

A sweaty fist gripped the lever  
Pulled down-- now  
Pitch, soot  
(lanterns need not apply)  
Circuits in retrograde, bleeding blackness  
As they retreat

Placing feet on that suspension bridge, crossing from  
Sandy shore to pink horizon isn't worth  
The potential freefall through merciless  
Openings in the slats to  
A watery grave below  
Hurt is so vile in this way  
Erasing decision, stealing choice  
(A hand over your mouth)

(negativity killed this cat)

Surely you must know by now  
(your brain was always copious in  
your being, envision it becoming gelatinous  
in my fingers-- *don't think that*)  
How hatred fills every pore (replacing  
Calcium) within my bones  
And weakness doesn't prevent my seething  
Venom for you and pretty girls don't wish  
Death  
On others  
And nice girls don't uppercut to chins of  
Boys that snake-fang heart ventricles, leave  
Blood and disappear for better  
Opportunities

Having neither, I spite (spit) freely  
Tangle every curl of your hair around  
My knuckle 'til it breaks, snaps but  
You're not released yet

*You made me this way  
He didn't love me, regretted the day  
I was pulled by forceps from mom's  
Belly and caught my first breath  
You mimic his cruelty, I lick the  
Mirror to see  
If it's real*

Her time in the web had been  
Marked with fragility  
Held in a spun cradle but  
The spiders had emerged from all  
Sides  
Like screams echoing in a forest

I don't have to be sorry  
I'm justified

*Karen Kelsay's poetry has appeared in many online magazines including: Mad Swirl, Sage Trail, Moondance, flutter, and Linnets Wings.*

---

### **Willie Handcart Company 1856**

by Karen Kelsay

Father pulled the handcart today  
while Clara and mother pushed.  
Resting near the fire, I twist

eight-year-old hands around my ankles.  
Our blankets were tossed  
on the trail last week;

I shiver beneath my pinafore.  
Taking out scissors, mother whispers  
about the shop on High Street

where she purchased them--  
Cloth, the color of wild peaches,  
and lace, the shade of hawthorn buds

filled the shelves. Mother curses  
Wyoming, and my shoes-- tells me not  
to look at my feet. Her eyes harden

like the rocks around Sweetwater River  
as she snips away my frostbitten toes,  
promising me a fine dress.

*Jeffrey Qualls, whose poems were accepted before his unexpected death, was thirty-four years old, openly gay, and a full-time student at The University of Texas at Dallas majoring in Creative Writing.*

---

**Natural Birth**

by Jeffrey Qualls

the red hairball  
down the warm drain  
coughed out  
by your casual cunt  
like used cotton

## **Hairy Legs**

by Jeffrey Qualls

He is the spider that crawls on me  
when I sleep.

His is the unpleasant odor  
on my sheets.

He comes in the dark  
I taste his drunken whispers.

He reaches into my practiced dreams  
with his rough fingers.

**Santa (*Amanita muscaria*)**

by Jeffrey Qualls

Midnight visitor,  
another unwelcome guest,  
leaving ash footprints  
on my meticulous beige carpet.

Stumbling in the dark  
around unseen legs.

Fondling my gifts  
with greasy sausage fingers.

Red and white  
magic mushroom suit,  
lubes your way down my flue,  
with your lumpy red sack.

You smell like a vagrant  
with sour milk beard  
and old cookie crumbs.

Staggering  
back to the place  
where my fire once burned.

Into the night  
back to the land of  
white and red,  
until you come again  
down my dirty hole.

*Oritsegbemi Emmanuel Jakpa lives in Ireland, and presently doing a research study at Waterford Institute of Technology in Creative Writing. His poetry has been published in a number of online and print journals including The African American Review, and Echoing Years: An Anthology of Poetry from Canada and Ireland. He is a Yeats' Pierce Loughran Scholar.*

---

### **The Blind Spot of an Eyelens**

by Oritsegbemi Emmanuel Jakpa

Henry says he pays €150 000  
for his new business.  
Then hurries towards his bag, fingers out

his marriage certificate signed in Benin.  
His mouth is a toaster of the sliced words  
he greased the €36 thousand he spent on his wedding.

"Benin girls are expensive", he tells me.  
He creams his skin on my praise sweet like candy.  
Then he shows me a bill he is going now to pay.

My eyes sneak into it: €200 and it is due next week.  
He will choke himself out trying to impress me,  
begrudge the many bills he pays weekly.

But not once does he ask me anything  
about myself, not even my name.

*Peter Magliocco writes from Las Vegas, Nevada, and has poetry at The Smoking Poet, The Beat, A Hudson View Poetry Journal, Heeltap, Opium Poetry and elsewhere. His new novel is The Burgher of Virtual Eden from Publish America (<http://www.publishamerica.com>). He was Pushcart nominated for poetry in 2008.*

---

**non-parable #16 (2000)**

by Peter Magliocco

Once I couldn't really remember  
if I'd slept with a certain woman or not.  
"Out of us comes the scribbling wind  
scrawl across dunes indented  
with the last paragraph of gods  
leaving their will in stone," I told her.  
My inept life was a maze  
of permanent memory black-outs  
enhanced by a boozing lifestyle  
making cop-outs permissible  
if not memorable: so when  
confronted by her  
I circled around the issue  
dropping hints, waving a Trojan,  
waiting to see if it all rang a bell --

& when it didn't,  
when I was certain we hadn't  
slept together  
thru the mnemonic travails  
of shared pleasure  
beyond words,

she didn't respond  
when I crassly  
propositioned  
her.

*Sergio Ortiz grew up in Chicago, studied English literature at Inter-American University, and philosophy at World University. He was an ESL teacher most of his life, but also worked as a Daily Living Skills Instructor for the El Paso Lighthouse for the Blind. His work has been published in: Salt River Review, Modern English Tanka, Yellow Medicine, The Battered Suitcase, Shipwright, Loch Raven Review, Rust and Moth, and over fifty other journals.*

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## **Somnus**

by Sergio Ortiz

Sleep is the devil  
feeling you up with his tail.  
Your mouth dries out

from skidding in his direction.  
He calls you into his office to archive  
an assorted amount of roofless

words, sentences, and paragraphs  
directed at your neighbor, boss,  
family, even yourself.

He doesn't care about what is real.  
He wants to drag you into the movies,  
tie you to the seat, and force feed you images.  
The truly frightening ones are colloquial and quaint.

## **Gray and Gay**

by Sergio Ortiz

I've thought about being dead,  
watched my bloated self in the mirror,  
waited for strangers  
to take care of the funeral.

I've thought about dinner parties,  
the theatre: things no longer  
in the budget. Sex. Doctors.

I've thought about cohesion,  
Clairol, Herbal Essence  
and Eyeliner. Friends.

I've thought about outreach groups,  
raisins, peaches, and kiwis.  
Still-life paintings in my city.

I've thought about American Idol,  
churches and meals on wheels.  
About competition,

and another twenty years of less,  
and less, and less of a line  
that does not disappear on its own.

I've thought about mangrove crabs  
living in mud holes, pushed  
back into the closet.

*J. Bradley is based out of Orlando, FL. His work recently appeared in decomp, November 3rd Club, Prick of the Spindle, and Poetry Midwest and will appear in Ozone Park, Welter, and Dash Literary Journal. Check out J. Bradley's official blog, Failure Loves Company, at <http://iheartfailure.wordpress.com>.*

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## **Agriculture**

by J. Bradley

The moon  
gardens crops of clitorises  
growing in your left ventricle.

One day,  
I will step up to you  
with the cheap labor  
of my mouth, lace  
empty Coke bottles  
with magnets and wait.

I will airdrop the harvest  
across countries in Africa  
where little girls dream  
of being whole again.

## **On The Day Of Our Wedding**

by J. Bradley

My eyes wore cracking dams.

The aisle wrote  
thank you letters  
to your heels.

Flash lamps swallowed  
our faces, the horizon.

You looked like  
the kind of princess  
who needed poisoning.

*Yermiyahu Ahron Taub is the author of two volumes of poetry, The Insatiable Psalm (Hershey, Pa.: Wind River Press, 2005) and What Stillness Illuminated/Vos shtilkayt hot baloykhtn (West Lafayette, Ind.: Parlor Press, 2008; Free Verse Editions series). Visit his web site at <http://www.yataub.net>.*

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## **Invocation**

by Yermiyahu Ahron Taub

Come back to me.

Come back to me when the underworld lights blink with irregularity,  
when the watering holes offer saccharine ale at a discount,  
when the pounding of the dance hall leaves you only faintly curious.

Come back to me.

Come back to me when the swell of alien buttock lightly distracts,  
when the return of subway gaze sets a spring in your step,  
when the waiter's wink leads merely to repartee and Sunday brunch chuckles.

Come back to me.

Come back to me when words, cautiously suggested, can ring on soapstone,  
when images screened in the dark lead to wonder, however measured, at dawn,  
when face upturned finds refuge, even if temporary, from nuclear rain.

I will be here still, here on the highest mountain top,  
here where wolves howl at the sun,  
here where birches glimmer a path for the wayward.  
A plate will be set, a candle ablaze, arms will be ajar.

Come back to me. Come back to me.

*Elisabeth Omdahl was born in 1960 and live in Norway. She works full time in her studio in Moss, a small town south of Oslo. Her main interest in art is working on paper, mostly in graphic techniques.*

*She thinks she has always been an experimental artist, so she likes to expand the graphic works beyond the frame. That means working with installations from time to time.*

*As to the contents of her work, she likes to work with the human figure/ animals relating to objects. Trying to make connections on a more symbolic level. She likes a direct approach, naive perhaps. Her language is metaphorical and spontaneous.*

*The picture she presents here on the magazine cover was made in 2004. It was part of an exhibition called "Memory of the Body". In that exhibition she worked with themes like the fragility of the body/ mind, aging and identity.*

*During a two year long process she tried to connect with texts from French author Marguerite Duras, and French linguist/philosopher Julia Kristeva. She never illustrate texts directly, but often uses literature as "traveling companions". That also includes text from music which sometimes end up as titles in her pictures.*

*You can find more of her art on this site: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/elisabethomdahl>  
She has a blog here: <http://omdahllart.blogspot.com>  
She also has a homepage: <http://elisabethomdahl.com>*

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COVER ART: "After Chaos" by Elisabeth Omdahl.

Call for submissions:

Confessional poetry. Love poetry with unflattering, pessimistic imagery. Poetry that makes us think politics with personal, tiny snapshots. Poems about fighting against oppression and repression. Poems about guilt. Poems that make us feel nauseous. Sentimentality distorted with grittiness. Anything with strange and interesting imagery. Get your hands dirty with real human emotion. Dark is okay here, as is political, or erotic, or absurd, or poems that can't seem to fit in anywhere else. We'll give them a try.

Since we know from personal experience the lack of spaces for voices of women and/or LGBT writers, those are especially encouraged, but anyone is welcome to submit. We don't care about your credentials, only the quality of the pieces you submit.

To submit, check out the website, peruse the guidelines, and send in your work.

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Questions? Comments? Email *[breadcrumbscabs@gmail.com](mailto:breadcrumbscabs@gmail.com)* today!