

# issue 36

# streetcake



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seth crook

**Don't sing the blues**

sing the oranges,  
a finer, more expressive sound.  
It is

full of sun,  
and satisfying sweetness,  
even pips.

tatjana debeljacki

### **ON THE WAY TO JAPAN**

The muscles were tense to extremes but I never thought of giving up. With the strength of an animal, so typical of a desperado, I clutched the railing although I was not convinced that the Lord was with me. Drops of sweat were falling down my forehead, stinging my wide open eyes, and the vein on my neck, puffed up like a pipe, was pumping blood into my head. A transparent haze was spreading treacherously, and micro stars were twinkling in a cluster, whistling monotonously.

Everything was in colour.

Terrified, I realized that that my fingers were wet and that the railing was sliding from my helpless hands. I tried something but without success. The train went on quickly down the track while I was lying in the mud, defeated.

He was on it.

john grey

BULLFIGHT

From my seat  
way up in the Plaza,  
I see the bull,  
sweating, stamping weakly,  
dripping with knives,  
and the matador,  
with one grand flourish  
of sword and cape,  
plunging the blade into  
its weary heart.

Near a hundred degrees,  
deafening roar,  
a haze of dust over the toppling beast...  
and then the blood,  
a squirt, a spurt, a stream,  
everyone on their feet,  
including me.

I'm halfway between a retch and a faint.  
The bull was right to charge as it did.  
I want El Toro to win.  
I want mankind to be over.

matthew konkel

**YOU CAN'T AVOID THAT SWERVE IN THE ROAD**

The willow in the yard where I grew up is no longer there.  
And I am no longer there.  
My brothers are no longer there.  
The willow was tired of us leaving and got out before anyone else did.

There's an unopened package from a guy named Schrödinger.

That swerve in the road is there whether you continue to move or not.  
It's unavoidable— like the smell of new painted walls.

There's a comic strip character walking the streets.  
He doesn't know he's left his frames.

A child from China digs a hole in his yard trying to reach America.  
He's got one match in the rain.  
One chance to get it right.

The devil lurks somewhere in the dark sharpening his pencils.  
He's composing a complaint letter to the cereal company that sold him a stale box.

The phone rings, caller: unknown.

joan mcnerney

### **This Savage God**

Calamity hides under cover  
lurking in corners ready  
to rear its head.

It lies in neat lab reports  
charting white blood cells  
run wild.

*What is this savage God  
who pushes us down to comas?*

Sneaking along icy roads  
daylight ends while sea gulls  
circle steel grey skies.

Brake belts wheeze and whine  
snapping apart as we careen  
against the long cold night.

*What is this savage God  
who lunges us into storms?*

An official white envelope  
stuffed with subpoenas  
waits at the mailbox.

Memories of hot words  
like razor blades slash  
across our faces.

*What is this savage God  
who rips open the heart?*

So we stand on the edge  
breathing mean air  
smelling fear.

Fires leaping out of rooms  
where twisted wires  
blaze from walls.

*What is this savage God  
who stabs us with flames?*

mark staniforth

**Basic Dictionary Exercises**

abolish: to do **a w a y** with

repulse: 'We Repel'

Glorious:

charm : ma

peach : ch

**2** eagles

~~runs away or flees from something~~

an orbit is

gymnasts, acrobats

a mermaid:

a hotel for motorists

no, it is beyond normal hearing range

**1** rehearsal