

# STREET CAKE

experimental writing magazine

## issue 72

### part 1



ransom note @ richard biddle

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## issue 72

### part 1

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## looking for silver linings in 1985

you're perpetually disappointed/the trains run late/so you arrive late/your favourite café has run out of hot chocolate (how is that possible?)/you sit down/wait/keep waiting/we all need validation but would be happier if we didn't/your friend doesn't show/this has happened before/with other friends/you give it an hour/get crushed on the return train with the other sardines/step in a puddle on the walk home/your bootsoles leak/standing on the doormat in wet tights you read a letter telling you that job application was unsuccessful/sincerely wishing you luck for future endeavours/you sigh/sink onto the sofa/close to tears/the video recorder failed to tape the final episode of your favourite series/so you'll never know if the vampire lovers lived happily ever after/realise you dropped your purse somewhere/must have/because it's no longer in your bag/you close your eyes/sink further into sofa/deeper/lower/you sink further/tell yourself all experiences good or bad are valid/time-limited/ changeable/look for the silver linings/what doesn't kill you makes you stronger/if it doesn't kill you first/if you can stop yourself sinking

# derek beaulieu: a 'pataphysics of imaginary solutions

*Poetry is the last refuge of the unimaginative.*

*Poetry has little to offer outside of poetry itself. Poets chose to  
be poets because they do not have the drive to become something  
better. / Please, no more poetry.*

*Please, No More Poetry—derek beaulieu (with nods to glosa'd Dworkin, Jones, Thesen, & Bernstein)*

*Poetry is the last refuge of the unimaginative.*

Novel deaths rotate in public / dime a dozen / on the axis

poetry should mine big gaps with art's hearsay praxis <sup>1</sup>

E E E E E E E E E E

*Poetry has little to offer outside of poetry itself. Poets chose to*

sit on the shelf,<sup>2</sup> spite their fece, pat their physic

bash heads with imaginary solutions, un-ripple every pond

<sup>1</sup> The three derek beaulieu concrete lines that follow are from *Kern* (p.87) & *Xerolage* (p.3)

<sup>2</sup> Peter Ackroyd, in one of his novels, makes passing reference to an annual 500 unread books of poetry collecting dust on the National Library's shelves. ( ♪ 500 miles, 500 miles ♪...)

dis guy can boilerplate Concrete to VisPo, ConceptPo, & beyond

*be poets because they do not have the drive to become something*

veered south, one arm steer-wheelers road testing the LangPo

yr duty (an era / any time / of year <sup>3</sup>) maintain plant, westward haut

g g g m d g g

*better. / Please, no more poetry.*

flat on its back... B B B d B m

*Raw is an aversion to the conservative dogmas of worry.*

*Rrose Sélavy is never having to say you're sorry.*

---

<sup>3</sup> Fiddling with Zukofsky, of course: "A"-22

## “Poems: Thoughts Formatted Funny”

Before anyone goes on Twitter and cancels me for being a homophobic asshole the story behind this piece is that I was crushing on one of the guys in this poem (who at the time said that I was too ginger for him) I thought that I had a chance with despite not being his physical type since according to his ginger ass he wasn't into other gingers but I seriously doubt that he still identifies as bi now since his goal achievement on TicToc is that he was banned from Grindr) and in my desperate stalking I “ran into” him and the guy he was casually fucking at the time (I knew this was the case even though neither of them told me outright- at some point it was assumed I knew everything which was mostly correct) so at this point I am emotionally torturing myself with these two awkward boys using each other physically who both got pasta (the guy about sausage assumed to be the bottom paid for the lunch of the guy who keeps insisting he's a top although) and of course the dude I was hitting on at the time got sausage on his pasta- I was embarrassed, wrote a few lines about the experience, and my friends who know all three of us find it funny

Ever run

Into two guys,

who've definitely

sucked each other

off,

who decide

to talk

to you

about sausage

?

## Hunting for the words, from seat 27B of Ryanair Flight FR2224

B N U H P T T W E T C N D C K B S L F M S E J A S U V K U S	ALONE
A M W M T Q C A R R Z V T N S A E C N I M N L U C H G S W D	ABROAD
S R A X C L Q S N E S A H H J S J V O T A C A V V E T A A D	DANCING
S M W O F C F K L J R E P Y L L D E R U T N E V D A M E C Q	LAUGHING
K U H S G W B F M F C S M P E B X U G K X S C I Z B H C Z Q	RUNNING
G S J V J Y Q R J H E U O N V T K Z K X L I G C K K D J L R	ESCAPADE
F X H M L Z A J T S J X M M O U Z V I K L C L T A O R S C S	ADVENTURE
R K P F I H I D C O R P M X N I S I H C B W R I X Q E J D U	UNTIL
Q Q S W S S Y A N B R W R D E T S I P A R B R M W Q L W Y M	TEQUILA
K H M D V G P G V O I C E G L Y I K L Z D D J F C J Q E X E	AFRAID
X E A J O A A U E T N Y I D L P E A K F D D A N C I N G G T	CONQUEST
X E L O D M Y M Z N H T W F E J E L V Q V G A Y J R L Q S U	CONQUEROR
X L O E M Q D L H J R W A J J A B W J S K A F I Y B A N W M	VOICE
A L E M X H W X C K H E C G O M A A S S V I R B W G F R G A	HEAD
O F O B F H Q T L U T K A N A J R Y S L G Q A A O G J B F S	MUTE
B L E J B T H K X E B U B O K Q C S Q T J L I N E L V N A E	LEVONELLE
Y U G T Q V B U F R U N N I N G N T R T T T D N Q M M P Q H	GUMCLINIC
X L H F D Y U C P N T R T U M W O E N G R V T O V J V S E A	PEP
Y M T Z X V V Q B E H W Z R N J D H T U H M T D N H S B M Q	NOT
J P M E J J K B Q Y Z G U K E T C A W S S K S U M I L U E U	VICTIM
N A O T I R B U V G U M C L I N I C M Y I G Z F A L W Q D Z	YOU
F Y F V X L I A X M I C E H L W O L U X X F L V I W X W R P	WILL
E I M S Y L Y M F A N R K C O N Q U E S T A A L Z E S S H N	ALWAYS
G E T F A L A F S B X X D G Q M E G P A S F U J I M F L N V	RAPIST
Z T H N D O F Y I R M S V U Z V Z C A T O R R A S W J Y U L	
P P I Y U J Z V B O G T E N O L A A C P T I K M H Z K B X Q	
Y E K O P C A M Z A U R K W S P D L P W X Z W R E D I X R N	
T H Y S H R Q D E D O A S Y I W E J O H O L U W K O R P V T	
V O V P I D M Y Q R K U J S G A B P L A U G H I N G S T H U	
N B N C A F Y E C O Q Z T O N Z D G K H U U O L U A N I C D	

## streetcake magazine

[illegible]



## How to Deceive

*Color*

It starts with paper; attractive; smooth;  
a number; a phone call; some words.

*Tendrils*

wind their way into my life.  
My mind is eager, driven, desperate.  
Thorns sink in; captivating with promises.

*Tongue*

tells stories; yarns about people I know  
You are benevolent; their hero  
in gilded armor, who gives second chances.

*Venom*

infects the wound.  
I start to drain it, and you plead.  
Shiny words come out;  
appreciation, love, admiration.  
But the spell breaks; time for you to go.

# Russian Bolshevik Revolutionary Committee, 1924, Group Portrait

I was deleted  
I was deleted  
I was deleted  
I was deleted  
I was deleted

I wonder if there aren't two stories here.

One is probably getting the sense that my wife, Grace, has no problems of her own and is the sole voice of reason in the house, but that's not necessarily true. For one, she is up for tenure. She's also struggling to read without glasses, grinds her teeth while sleeping, and has a fairly persistent and unaccounted for spasm in her pinky. I mention that she is *not* in a wheelchair because she has reoccurring dreams that she is. Her tooth enamel is famously failing.

I find her holistically foxy. It can be hard to compliment someone without objectifying them or criticizing others—everyone wants in on everything. I'll say, she would be on that gameshow if only our internet connection was faster, and she'd win. I'll take Grace in a bathrobe. I'll take Grace in the passing lane. I'll take her pedagogy and her good and bad tattoos.

This is a character sketch to keep in mind when I describe what I'm going to do next.

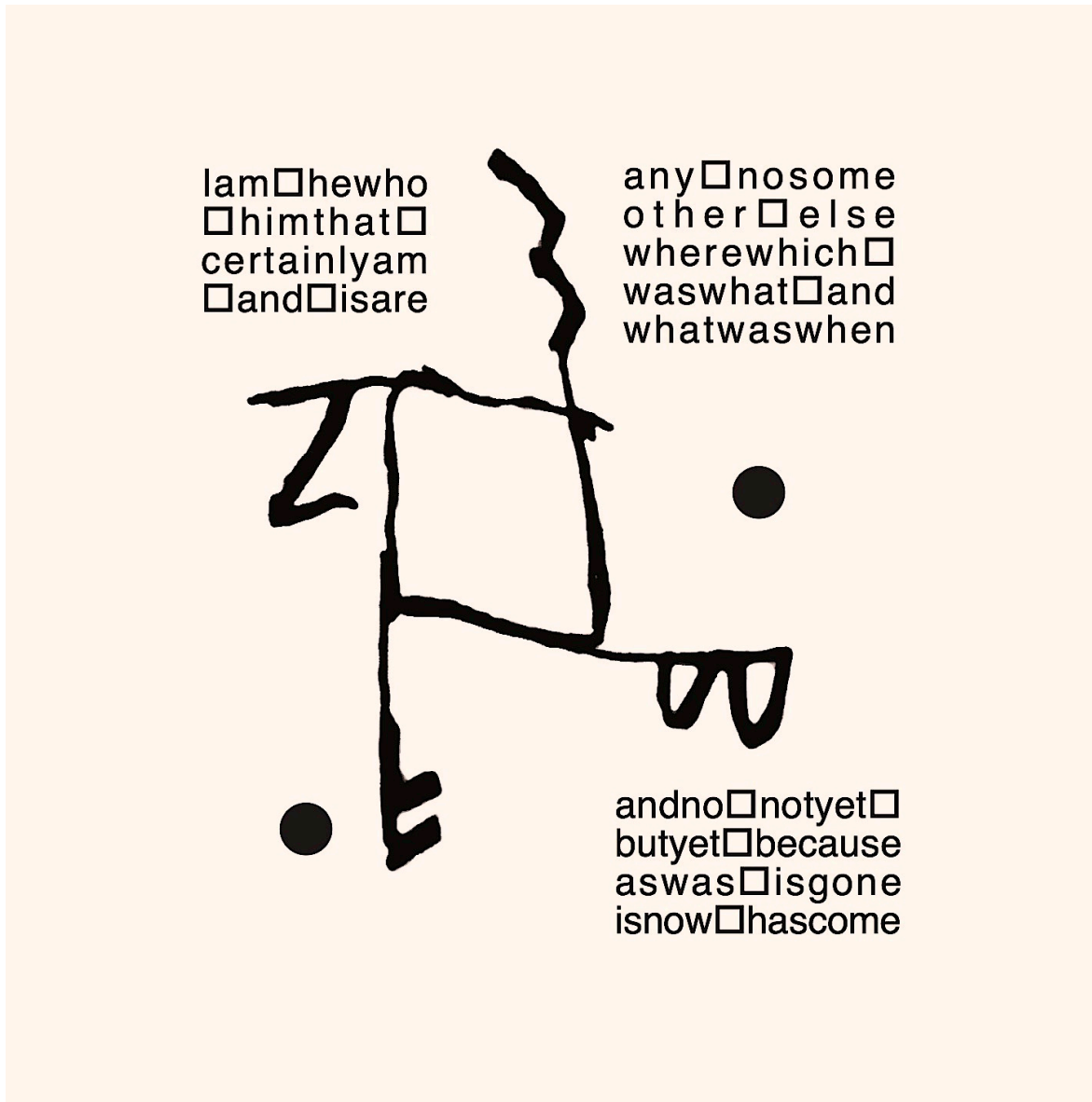
## FOXY, BUT WRONG

I have some evidence that I'm sensitive: I can feel an email coming five seconds before it dings into my inbox, and a whole graveyard once told me to "Move along." As such, I have not undertaken lightly the decision to allow my son, Gabe, to use the Ouija board with me.

Can't follow Grace's judgement here—and Gabe begs and begs. My only concern is this: I read a warning that said, please don't use the board if you are sick or debilitated, and of course Gabe's spleen was bruised in the car accident. At Christmas, I find it difficult not to get Gabe everything he asks for. In fact, most days.

I feel Googled. Grace knows my intentions, but can't police every minute. She has just forgiven me for the last time I betrayed her better judgement. She hates the music I listen to, thinks I use too much salt. But I dress in the clothes she bought me.

The purported danger of using the ouija board while "debilitated" is demonic possession. But Gabe is thirteen and curious about his future. He's old enough to keep his soul safe and his mouth shut.



at home/ at work

...It's like the binary code is failing...heh ;)..  
The rd worms are uot in force

*This is a polite reminder to send your numbers by 5.*  
...Hlp - me formula  
sht2sht #####

☑☑ left hanging

*You didn't join the video call.*  
**You have 105 unread messages**  
17 tasks left today ☹

...M8 you dnt know the 1/2 :P

The binary code is failing  
*The video call has now ended.*  
...bn snowed geez >:\ =/ :S

Android system

l e a k i n g  
:( :-c :< :-[ :{ :@:(  
f  
i  
n  
g c  
e o  
r r  
s \*  
u  
p  
d t  
-  
l  
g  
-  
t

:-0 8-0 D=

:-& :#

X-0 01101000 01101111 01101101  
01100101 00100000 s 01100001 01101110  
01100100 00100000 01110111 01101111  
01110010 01101011 00100000 01101000 01100001  
01110110 01100101 00100000 01100011 01101111 01101100  
01101100 01100001 01110000 01110011  
01100101 01100100 00100000 01101001 01101110  
01110100 01101111 00100000 01101111  
01101110 0110010

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---. "You Don't Have to Stay with the First Guy You Slept with Just Because You Feel Obligated To."

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Fuller, Marcel. "Look at the Way That One Guy Stretches at the Adult Kickball League and How Flexible He Is Before You Ask Him to Get a Beer After."

---. "When He's Good at Cooking and Good at Fucking, You Can Fuck in the Kitchen."

---. "He Says Donna is Just a Friend (She Isn't)."

Gambier, Thomas. "That Nice Boy from College."

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---. "When You're Nervous About Finally Meeting in Person So She Suggests Having the Sex First to Get It Out of the Way."

---. "Binge Watching Netflix and Heterosexual Coupling: A Case Study."

Macan, Zachary. "Big Dick Energy."

Sona 2 Cruise by Lelo. "Thank You for All the Terrible Men You Kept Me from Dating by Not Lowering My Standards."

Tomassi, Francis Jr. (Frank). "Married Consultant Is Separated from His Wife So He Has His Own Apartment, But You Never Speak to Each Other Again Once the Six-Month Project Is Over."

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Zelinsky, Beck. "Is He Waiting A Respectful Length of Time or Is He Not Interested?"

---. "That Little Table You Throw Your Mail on in the Hallway Was *Always* Flimsy Even Before the Time He Bent You Over It and It Broke."

---. "Yes, We DO Have to Have Sex Every Day on the Week I'm Ovulating If We Want to Get This Over With."

---. "When the Mind Is Willing but the Flesh Is Weak: A Study of Postpartum Sex Patterns."

---. "Is He Mad or Was It Just a Long Week? (You Can Try Again Tomorrow)."

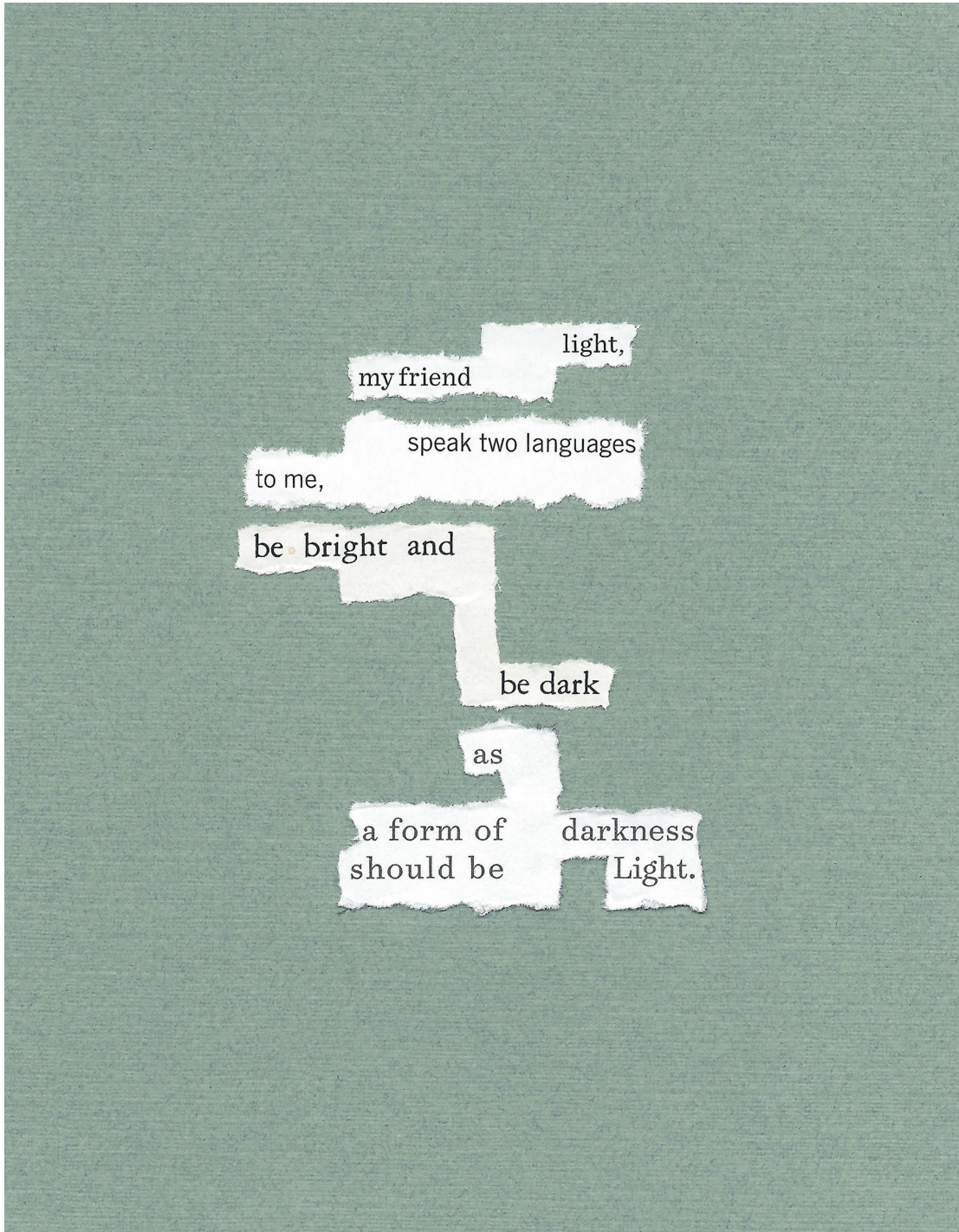
---. "Let's Laugh Together at that Gravity-Defying Sex Scene in that Movie Everyone's Talking About."

---. "That Hot Barista Guy Flirted with You Again & You Work Out Your Sexual Tension at Home (When Your Husband Asks, 'What's Gotten into You?')"

---. "Taking Bets on How Long This Destination Wedding Will Last Before They Get Divorced, but Putting It Down Like a Porn Star in the Hotel Full-Length Mirror Because the Kids Are Home with Grandma."

---. "That Commercial for Stiffy Drugs with the Two Old Folks in Separate Bathtubs: That's Going to Be Us in the Nursing Home, Still in Love."





light



### **Nobody Dies in This One**

We didn't watch as the current carried you away.

We skimmed your ashes from the water and poured them into the urn, then we closed the bag and screwed on the lid and walked backwards to the car. We reversed down the street and the sand disappeared, the sky got smaller and smaller as buildings sprang up around us, as we turned corners, changed lanes, passed traffic lights.

At the crematorium we handed the urn with your ashes to a woman, who took them to a back room, and we left for a while as you were not burning, as you were lying in the hospital, as you were coming alive.