STREET CAKE

experimental writing magazine

issue 72 part 2



standstill @maría josé maddox

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Do you see me? How many better bodies have you housed in your frame? Do you see me? When did these and that and those arrive? Do you see me? Why am I this? Do you see me? Maybe it's the **lighting?** Do you see me? Maybe if I do this? Do you see me? Do you see? Do you see me? Do you see me? Do you see me? Do you see me? Do you see? Does everyone feel the same as me? I'm looking. I see you. I'm looking. You all look the same to me. I'm looking. I don't see what you see. I'm looking. You are what you are. I'm looking. Your eyes play tricks. I'm looking. You're wasting your own time. I'm looking. I see. You are all perfectly fine.

Salvation

Cento from "Desperately Seeking" by Danielle DeTiberus & Possession by A. S. Byatt

I hope we meet again.

Enough. A heap of papers sighed sideways and fanned out on the floor. I wanted to be a Poet and a Poem, and now am neither. The letters again.

Write to me, I love to see the hop and skip and sudden starts of your ink. I am in your hands. Friendship is rarer, more idiosyncratic, more individual and in every way more durable than this Love. When I see you, you look alive and everything else - fades.

Something of that desperate longing will always remain. And turn a kind of pain to a kind of interest, a kind of curiosity, which is to be my salvation.

It is possible for a writer to make, or remake. It is never too late.

The Vaults

It is later now / the last of the light dripping / scattered / from the vaults

I wonder if / sincerely / you existed as flesh / blood / stones on the tree in our edwardian / meadowlands

I have never owned / a delusion / to know of with holes to see through / a ghost / I make from white paper

in cracks / sometimes / I glimpse billowing / shadows / rifts of deep night the ocean after twilight / evoked

pieces of you / love / fear knowing when / to sleep / this umbilical talisman / I clutch in my palm

a husk of pale coral / arcadian you found / as a child to be afraid / to let go

of things you said / I / we / imploding what we have become / slithered cold misspoken words / dreams with intent

closing my eyes / the tide rushes in I want to hold you / with mercy the way I can never do / for / myself

IGNORANCE IS BLISS

Ignorance is bliss. Ignorance¹ is bliss. Ignorance is² bliss. Ignorance is bliss. Ignorance is ³ bliss. Ignorance bliss. Ignorance is⁵ bliss. Ignorance is bliss.

Responsibility¹⁴

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my mind and spirit: a blessed felicity.

¹ An absence of knowledge.

² It exists in the world of fact; it is happening.

³ I'm glad and enjoying myself again:

⁴† 'an ignorances' was offensive.

⁵ You have a place in the universe, you exist, you live.

A feeling in my body that at length passes into

⁷ A wanting of knowledge.

⁸ I have a presence and a place here.

¹⁰ † it was a sin.

¹¹ I am in a certain condition.

A cause of happiness, joy, or delight?

¹³ Complete halt, a point of final paralysis. I am static.

¹⁴ My moral obligation to behave correctly towards or in respect of every soul...

'Is it a poem? Is it academe? Is it garbage? Honestly I have no clue. It started as a rant about academese, and then the behavioral disorder kicked in. A couple of decades of tinkering with it once in a while, and I ended up with the attached. I look forward to your rejection.'

Obfuscatory Exegesis

The instances in which particular segments of academe resort to ineloquent affectations of unnecessarily obfuscatory verbiage and etymologically arcane esoterica, thereby rendering the presentation of any suppositions virtually impossible to disambiguate, correlate significantly with the instances in which said academics, typically rife with insecurity at having encountered the artificially imposed expectations of publication so common to academe, find themselves unfortunately and counterproductively bereft of any adequate contribution to the rarified conversations in which the ostensibly relevant career-determining committees tacitly expect them to participate. The additional and self-congratulatory tendency of instructional faculty to compel academic neophytes to peruse such texts, with the implied assumption that any failure to glean the superfluously obfuscatory exegeses contained therein reflects upon the existential ignorance of the reader rather than the unwarranted opacity of the dialectic itself, engenders an atmosphere of alienating disparity which significantly insults the self-actuating curiosity that should ideally motivate said neophytes toward their own advancement and, by extension, toward the ultimate survival of the intellectual milieu which is ostensibly the very raison d'être of the academic institution.

March 6th

Opened the window so I could hear people.

I've written everything down on a piece of French stationery. I really have. But now I can't find it.

Looked at him across the table at lunch, but all I saw was Kafka standing on the Charles Bridge holding a stack of papers.

Yesterday there were birds in the bathtub and no one knows where they came from.

Just the feel of it. Just this once.

We were standing in the doorway. Both of us silent. And then we weren't.

Orange is a slow color. Although not as slow as black.

He stepped off of the bridge and fell into the Vltava. The papers flew up into the air like flames.

We must have been lonely people to have done this to each other.

I'll tell you again. It's true. There is a small animal lodged up inside of me.

After his shower, he wrote something on the bathroom mirror. Now I know I'm going to have to beg for it.

The sheets of this bed. They have me figured out.

Make sure you open my mouth and look all the way down before you leave. You won't believe what you see.

This is not going to get any easier with the lights off.

Quarto for the Animorphs

with a line paraphrased from K. A. Applegate

so many stories so many voices different and the same you never doubted making meaning the endless story of fights an unseen enemy the most dangerous alien and cruel

you remember names
can list them
in your sleep the
greatest lesson waiting
till the end war
leaves you hollow
if you fight you can
win be brave be
strong be good
you matter

to tell you of
different battles
that is a thing
I have dreamed of
ones I fought
won and lost
the things you can't see
emblazoned like stars
across this body

medications spill
off your tongue
learning is the
hardest part left
unavoidable and it
leaves you no choice
control things you can
anything love yourself
and remember always
you can do this

ense s'hother "To rything I was reading divays had to happen we could have our own fiends and perver there, he saws. chin us in the Badiands, (behind the grain and, between the hoodoos, and torder the blanker of a Li ... re social conservatism." u; The lie seen alludes to be the the ph sical and emotional landsom. In this dy on the selection of the line in the interest of the interest o Shrudtoc the Red Deer Valley, supposedly the G 10 Wt.: between the world of monsters and Wa are di, imman experionce." he assens. thad drift "C a is the place where the beg and the Ac rcrational coest and lead their daily lives, where stom le tiver outs down through the " " ands into the .nc of the longly and wears away the pain bo ! she Ta

Unretrieved Device Fragments

shiny blade slices through soft pink skin used abandoned lost left unretrieved nestling deep within growing rusty glowing silver in the X-ray beam gnawing bone and sinew blood and flesh fistula festering inside of me...

item inadvertently left behind

mistakes and consequences

injury, repeated surgery, excess monetary cost, loss of hospital credibility, death of patient

250–300 surgical tools are used

needles, knife blades, safety pins, scalpels, clamps, scissors, sponges, towels...

most common left behind object is a sponge

...tweezers, forceps, suction tips and tubes, scopes, ultrasound tissue disruptors, asepto bulbs, cryotomes and cutting laser guides, measuring devices...

1500 tools stitched into patients each year

can be subtle and may not be discovered

not required to be reported

range from harmless to life-threatening

gossypiboma

a mass in the body

a passage between organs

fistula

calcification of the cavity wall

vital organs and blood vessels

fester inside a body

growing increasingly dangerous over time

most likely to make mistakes

fragments of medical devices left behind

adverse events reported include:

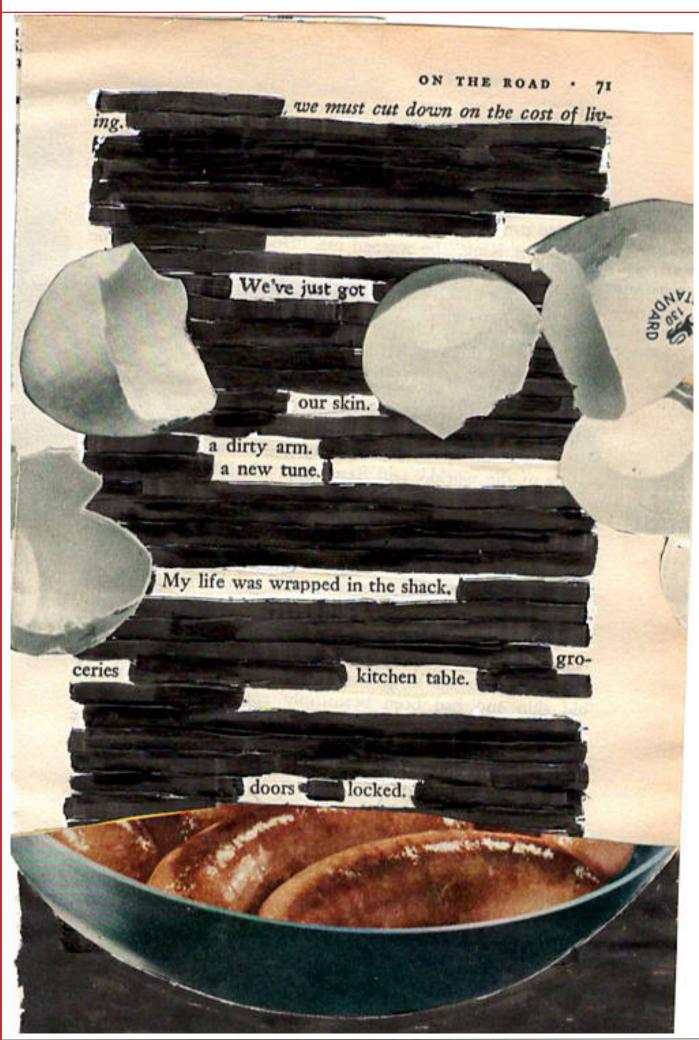
...local tissue reaction, infection, perforation and obstruction of blood vessels, and death...

may cause metallic fragments to migrate

reduce the number of accidents

counting carries its own risks

(Found material from Wikipedia entry on Retained surgical instruments: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retained surgical instruments)



Let's Pretend This Is Untitled

Beat my head against

The Wall

The one with the closet And a Pollock print

"Untitled"

Picasso insisted he never Titled a piece. Untraditional For commissioned-then-stationed

Pieces

Search the closet

For something of mine

To make my own

On the canvas you call

The Wall

Between them

To you

I want red, still off-white

The Wall

Unchanged

Before exhibitionist personalities Curators labeled, text covered

Paint, infused new Pigments, textures,

Layers, seized interpretation

From the interpreter,

Now a voyeur

You beat my head against

The Wall

"Imposter" "incoherent

And formless"

The Wall

Still am

Let's pretend

The Wall

Between two poems exists

Let's pretend

I'd named this piece

Three Poems

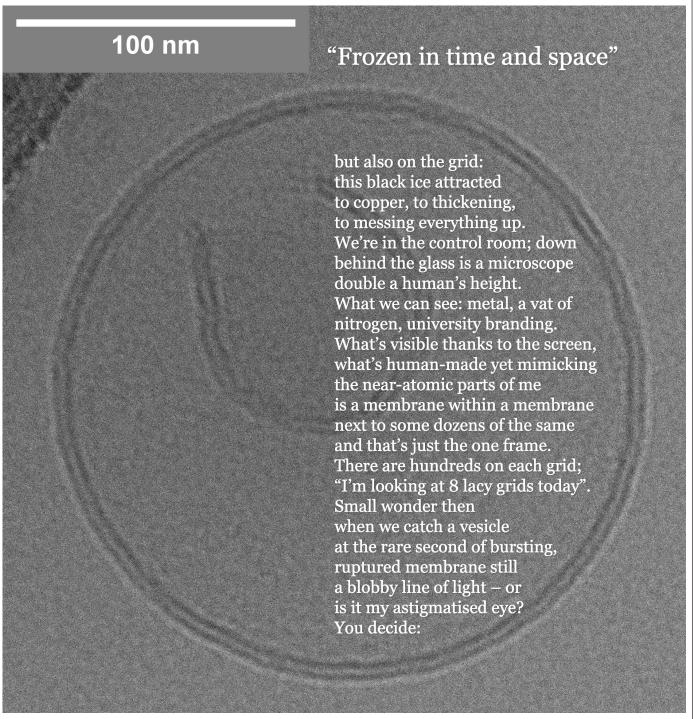
Or Fourth Wall

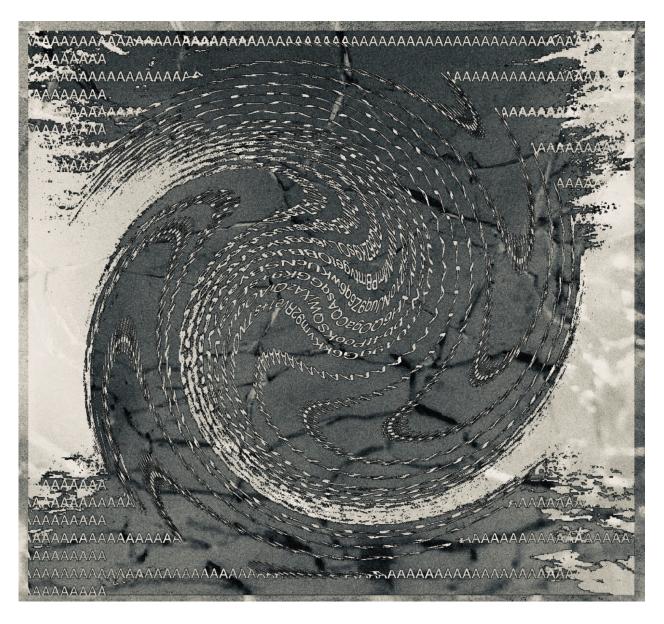






ladyyyy_s #white beam in four gray walls #late and early #her head on a bed #a curse is on her night or day #she lives in the web #she sees girls long-hair'd crimson clad #delights #magic sights #two young lovers shot between dazzling yellow field and blue unclouded weather #thick-jewell'd #glow #she saw she saw #she crack'd #cried #pale #broad #heavy #she clasp'd a chain #and she wound till her eyes were darken'd wholly #and her face pale pale floated high #read her name on the web #fear





Glitch 2