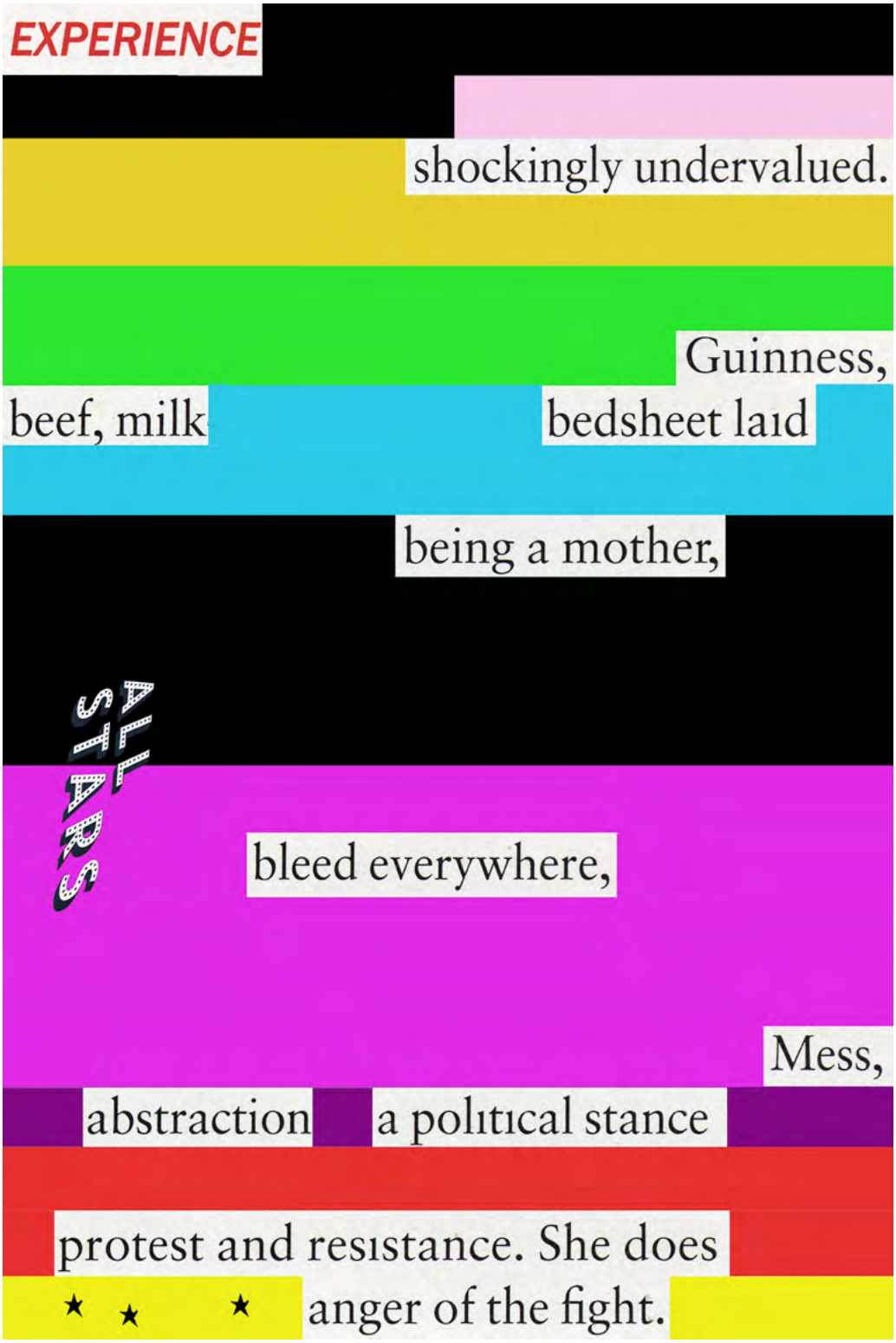
STREET CAKE

experimental writing magazine

issue 98



@ mike callaghan

contents
issue 98

The life insurance conversation

I fear that there will be a time
I won't get to have anymore arguments with you.

That I will be forced to remember
all the screams we exchanged,

The months long silent treatment,
That would always break by you

Asking me to lift up one of your suitcases
Or pass you your glasses from the glass center table.

I'm not ready to accept that now
That I am starting to see the lines on your face,

Was when you started to tell me how much you
Loved me and how proud you were of me.

I don't want to imagine the day
Where I'll have to hold your hand

And keep repeating "you did everything right"
So you can finally go to sleep

Without the thought of thinking
Because we never got to

Do a road trip to Milwaukee
That you failed me.

The Wild, Wild Berry/The Demoiselles de Rochefort

I have eaten the cinnamon bear claw of eternity in the cafe of curtailed hope, I have never read the great American novel, oh mother dear let my bed be made, once I saw a pigeon with no feet, once I saw a lorry leaking paint into the street, I have written in more places than you've had hot flushes, sometimes I am pink, sometimes yellow, for I feel the gripe of the woody nightshade, I have never written the great American novel, my sound is the fat tame mercury sound, my arse has eroded dry pools in this cafe bench, sometimes I am Françoise Dorléac, sometimes Catherine Deneuve, so come all you young men that do eat full well and they that sup right merry, the paint on the street was yellow, the paint on the street was pink, I have worn a dress covered in cinnamon-spiced sugar, I have leapt and lapped in the painted street, the footless pigeon bathing its breast at my feet, 'tis far better I entreat to have toads for your meat than to eat of the wild wild berry, the waters of Biscay have turned me pink, have turned me yellow, the waters of Biscay may have written the great American novel, sometimes I am a banjo, sometimes a trumpet, this young man he died eft soon, I am a pair of twins, a pair of ragged pigeons' feet, I don't believe in spring, licked by tongues of paint, by the light of the hunter's moon, my feet have rotted in the Bay of Biscay, in the old weird Biscay, its pink and yellow waters tasting of cinnamon, there is a murderer in the town, splashing in the paint, this lord's false love they hanged her high, once I saw a punk kick a pigeon to death, frolicking in the mercury, I have eaten the great American novel

don't panic
the number of people i've killed has been greatly exaggerated

come on through to the kitchen
yes i know that's where the knives are

i mean i am aware of it
not that the two things are related

take a seat in the living room then
no
not ironic
living
ha ha
i have a sense of humour about it
see

but it’s all just a silly misunderstanding
in a sense

the bathroom is upstairs
next to the bedroom

no
i wasn’t looking for an excuse to bring the bedroom up

although

no
sorry
no

just use the bathroom
please

and when you are done
i will be out here in the hallway
waiting

safely waiting

with no thoughts of adding to my tally

Bad memory

the words keep in my head, crush on the lips like suicidal ants trying to reach the centre of a spiral. a story; it's not always for the word that is stuck in the creases of the . Sometimes, I do remember words that are maybe precipitous, but then forget the red. I would like to the switch , but not that. I talk to my mother, and we are the same . Forgetting, things, words. The words don't should. am jealous of your words that like a train that never derails? So, what can I do to avoid this? Well, I keep on , despite the colleagues who want an efficient . I guess that is the reason why I prefer times to write an email, or to lift 20 kilos squatting. let the body do the talking. I asked St. Antonio from Padua to bring me back the case I have lost when I moved. I am sure it has disappeared long ago, he did not give . help me! alone, no one behind me I have one less about. Come on brain, I need all , I like to write how bad can it be the dream to write. I need thoughts, not a decanter, nor a disappearance. would like words to be like violets between pavement . Ugh, that word, it does not come, rather complain of not being able to remember, but memory, not problem.

[redacted]

[redacted] on disappearing

Don't ask me to recount memory, sometimes it's the brain

less common like precipitous, but then forget the word blame from English to Italian and back it's doing things the but words seem to come when they come

living laughs of communication a thousand whiles I

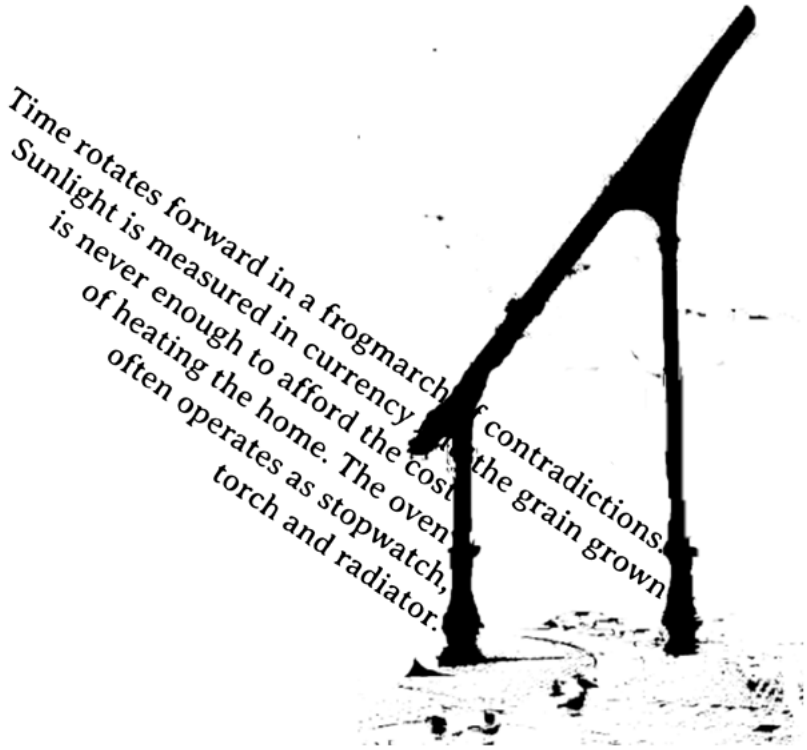
pencil

and yet, it me anything Hey, Sometimes, I prefer sitting in the corner of a room, with

the words poems, can it be the dream to write. I the flow of

I my tiles I

my she's the



EVERY . DAY . BRINGS . LIFE . NEARER.

* from sundial mottoes


welcome
20

Planethood

for Pluto

You are an icy thing all sides tinseling through the dark your debris flyby your orbit wayward fugue inventing itself yoke of your rhyming one still note more still some planets colored light bulbs in classrooms others just moons in our mouths crusty conundrums advertise sky place matters shape shudders tectonic plates of recognition we need a holy litany planets as saints you demoted and dwarfed inside footnotes words against words you needing more space than space*I yam what I yam* should be enough so keep that conversation with yourself limelight for naked eyes for ears chiffon night you appear by disappearing and we're only manosphere with braggadocio not smart enough to name you

Sake

I dreamt of Japan again last night
Wooden trays for sake set
Shoes

Our neighbour thinks I am Japanese
Others think of me as Spanish
I am neither

It is true that we use chopsticks
But that was my husband's idea
And he is not Japanese

We have invited her for dinner
She bows to me upon entering
I bow back

All through dinner she throws furtive glances at me
Have you ever been to Japan? I ask her
Biting my lips afterwards

Remotely mapping your moves

after you left I slept in the daytime
roamed the dark hours mourning
the empty spaces of you

I obsessed over the ordinary
and took to Google maps
just to see your road your house

zooming in and out and around
as though I might see
into your windows and find you there

so I fixed you in those snaps
fixated on the roving camera
journeying around your town

searching its main street of shoppers
and cars blurred out yet held
ever stuck motionless

I was struck by the act of movement
freeze-framed zooming
in on faces none were yours

I aerialed over roads
And the office block where you sat daily
did you hide purposely

wanting to avoid me even here?
I searched your nighttime haunts
the pubs parks the open spaces

of course it was madness
but that's the way you left me
between the spaces….haunted.

Regency Romance

[indistinct chattering]
[door opens]
[all murmur]
[both laugh]
[speaking inaudibly]
[giggles]
[all laugh]
[tea pouring]
[both chuckle]
[door shuts]
[sighs]

[Constructed from movie sound effect captions.]