



Issue 1 March 2013

limpingdevilpress.com

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Lookin' Good, Narcissus

Trevor Plate

I recently lost my job as a sale rep. at one of those fancy-ass clothing stores. The paycheck was nice of course, but what I really miss about working there is getting to wear a suit to work. I'd put that sexy thing on and I looked like freaking James Bond. Oh man, everyone thought I looked good, and I don't just mean girls. That suit was so classy, there was an air of understanding from all sides. And when I grew out that sweet goatee, I was watching these chicks steal looks at me all day! I'll admit I even grabbed a few quick glances myself as I passed a dark window on my way to Banana Republic, I just couldn't help it. I guess that sounds a little conceited. Well, if you think that's bad, one time I was walking down 4th street and I saw this dude straight up making out with a window of a restaurant. Apparently, he had glanced at his reflection and fallen madly in love with himself. The people eating at P.F. Chang's looked pretty pissed. He was getting all slobbery and climbing up on the window and the waiters were just staring at him, not sure what to do. I didn't stick around to see what happened to him but when I was walking back from work he wasn't there anymore. The cops probably carted him off. I feel for the guy, I mean he was wearing a tuxedo. If I had one of those I would look exactly like James Bond and then I don't know if I could resist my reflection either. I guess I don't really have to worry about that though. The suit disappeared with the job...and I haven't showered in a while anyway.

Bail

Clare Lilliston

Yes, I've been steady.
A watertight ghost

sparkling with salt.
A waterlogged promise.

I have finally lost my thirst.
I distrust every crust of land.

I follow only the tide,
bow to its drowned fist.

So go on. I'll show you parched.
The pale sting of my open hand.

Go on. Tell me again
how you would swim

your whole life
for a single cup of soil.

when the mountain is still there
behind the clouds
and you know it will explode
and you know it is shifting
and you cannot feel it
and you cannot see it
and there is no period or comma
and you must then gaze at the page
and you stare at the sky
and you stare at the window
and you want to only see the window
and you see so much more than the window
and you only wished to see the window
and you ask “what now?”

Tahoma break
for the sake of the platted punctuation
platted prayers' place on the map
for lack of consideration

of the shifting still mass
stolen streams under the guise of portico
for the sake of portico never seen by
the base of basalt

IV

And suddenly everyone was everywhere
bursting with themselves the unbearable
impact of conviction in a crude geometry
of rainshadow wet like memory the thought
of where they've been like a birth a crisis
something likely to remain
and when it hits them they'll climb the stairs
and
fall
like
rain

TWIN-IVORY PUMPS or (*more crudely*) Pounding Baudelaire

Maxx Brown

TWIN-IVORY PUMPS or (more crudely) POUNDING BAUDELAIRE

GIVE up,

James Newell Osterberg, JR.

Given rise, these sordid-streets raging with filth
Concieved a predawn well distorted before you woke.
I heard somewhere that the wind bent your first hair

Long before you died

Made your leathered chest a contraband sound
The Storm itself churning in the lips

Pursed before breath

Messiah-Jim

An electric organ himself

Slow coaxing Morgana's robes--

They say in song--to be laid upon the ground.

First breath was followed with first slumber
--A dream so overwhelmed by its own wandering
That in the act it slowed but refused to wake.

The nearest bar
was on Bleeker ST

A Palace where the rotgut raged a tumbling pour

The entire room slow-seized

Secluded in backbar booths

(god!) young bodies swell

When pressed against the the walls

Where photos of rank urban goddesses hung fell

Their arches shelled by twin-ivory pumps

Toes together fore-thrust into deviled-ends;

Velvet brushed on bare thighs

Had it not been night

Come haunting this den?

Say it!, say it, you ripe wild Dandy...

Long live rock and roll.

Each street a whirlpool Come

Prasing (god!) the nimbus cocked-crown

Fails, commanded and predictably drawn.

Here, in a city like this son,

There goes no aimless passer.

None.

Where the high-rise once promised,

Dropped the promise like an anvil-stone,

To Squalor-some promised a Queen...

LIKE some hot-wit police-beat drum co-collapsed WE begin:

Whereas the knees become week
The intoxicant-ferried stomach grinds;
 Come!, the face is pressed to the horizontal stone,
 Heretic fall; lit myriad born horn; a path to home

A man in his own vomit driven by one night's death to lie
Enters A woman in heels (god!) she walks gait-beckon by;
"Sir, those legs: some memory-mirrored, sly-cloven lie,
 There--not passing--rose
 The damned-ordained well versed in damning--

Where else in the modern-metro fever could you find
 Or might well you hear
 The full-pastured cattle-clop
 Swagger dared upon unevened-crete
 Ask the earth, can this you stand;
Brother, she's a bold-trick, (god!) a laugh-less guise,"--
 Her a metallic boat abreast--
 A "'hell if I might' then 'hell she might well too,'"
 Fine-bred
 Counter in weight
 The promised ocean
 Watered and away

Our eyes uneven:
Hers a heedless gaze.

OR, do we recall
Once beneath so-welcomed midday's vertices--Look
 Now, slow heaven's un-moxied clouds commanded still--
Embellished and ignored,
Consumed by a liquid pill,
Forgive age, to which this vice-KING doom-seeking drinks,
 And forgive savage consequence and stare!
Not the woman conceived of air, but still agape, rage, ring, stare!
 The jukebox chill

Come woman
For now I see only a shell.

The Banquet

Justin Dielmann

I love humility, but it is a well earned arrogance
that adorns your words; Dripping off of them like
tinsel on the tree in the back corner of the
living room just after the New Year ,Shining
plastic catches stray Branches that creep out like
fingers, and then it hangs Suspended in
the air attracting little glimmers of light that are
usually left sparkling on the floor ; Attention
this was all supposed to be boxed up
stored in the attic a week ago
in the space Between
opening presents – the afternoon family meal
yet somehow it still lingers in your voice, “ Man, we
have it good, I mean real good. Here right now
We are kings among men,” and I know that you
have the truth of it. It’s just that you’re lying to me,
I hate it when you use the truth to tell lies like the color
red put in the center of the painting you love,
I think the artist did that so you don’t notice:
the edges are disappearing,
it all blurs in to One, just focus
on the anger of the red , and
the Arrogance that is so well earned by

men still sitting in recliners a week after Christmas
talking about paintings
when there is work to be done.

All the Objects Come Together

Greta Jane Pedersen

There is a job to be done
there is a story
a story to be saved and protected
a mix tape is involved and a phone call

I am not the only one called to action
many objects are called and respond
many participate for the good of the story

there is a force
a hungry force that wants to eat it
there is a time limit
the music plays

we are in a place where magic happens
an open field
the ground is red and orange
the hungry force is headed to the stories

the stories hide inside a maze

a maze made of comic strips
doorways and special bits are hidden in the strips
that- the hungry force wants

a family of shopping bags
work to move the maze
over a crack in time
they flatten themselves flat over doorways

it works
they blend in
it works and time runs out
time runs out for the hungry force

all the objects come together
a giant shoe with a small mouse tail appears
a mouse from the object team takes his own tail
and knots it to the tail of the shoe

a gesture that says to the hungry force
we will work together
to integrate to accept
and to keep and eye on you

Contributor Biographies

Clare Lilliston currently writes in Olympia, Washington. She has performed her poems in Seattle and has been published in *Licton Springs*.

Greta Jane Pedersen is a singer and musician in Olympia, Washington where she also maps her dreams.

Justin Dielmann lives and writes poetry on an oil rig in Texas. He has performed his poetry in Chicago and Seattle.

Matt Turner is from the Seattle area. He currently writes poetry in Olympia, Washington.

Maxx Brown lives and writes poetry in Tacoma, Washinton.

Sean Lynch writes creative works in Olympia, Washington.

Trevor Plate relocated from Guam to study and write in Olympia, Washington.