

tinfoildresses
Spring 2021

Poetry

Jeffrey L. Carey Jr.

Radiation Bath

“Our cage is electric”

-- Deftones

The lost scroll through their newscasts,
Without agency, woke but not awake
To the trappings of the tech cult,
To the howl of predictive programming.

Mark Zuckerberg testifies before Congress
And a trillion lies spill from him, like
The perspiration of children in Chi-com sweat shops
Whose fingers manufacture iPhones.

BuzzFeeds facilitate M K Ultra mind control,
Propaganda from the plandemicists pulpit,
Their busy bots scrubbing internet content
While cucks de-platform and sensor the public.

Tiny worms come in RFR-waves now
To digest us from the inside out
Or from three vaccines meant to cull us,
To cure the earth of its infection.

The Ultimate Shadow

4-20-2021

“It's gonna be too dark to sleep again”

-- Soundgarden

The damned understand there is no salvation.
They work in this condition, as worms work,
Politics corrupting every aspect of their identity;
Darkness growing, like a dying star.

Particles from dead stars shower the earth;
Their dust covering us like a death shroud.
Someday our ghosts will all hang by the neck,
Deaf and dumb in a looming shadow.

Our eyes mint silver tears
Dredged from the same dark quarry
Where the skulls of Hafiz and Lorca
Welcome us with torches and a pick.

In a Detroit hotel, Chris Cornell's spirit
Still dangles from the bathroom door.
Handbook silence, white noise, a noise
That grows like the ultimate shadow.

Murder of an Uber Driver

In the day sky a dark moon swallows its tongue.
No words. Only two black tears in the vacuum of
space.
Lost, like comets rushing towards destruction.

In Washington, two girls taser Mohammad Anwar;
The Uber driver's body half-in half-out the door as
they floor-it;
The jackers tragically murdering him as they wreck
the car.

A trillion stars are forgotten in the light of day
While countless killings overshadow the earth,
Their memory devoured by the langoliers.

No cares or concerns were shown for the man they
killed.
Only one fuck given, "My phone," She said,
Stepping over his lifeless carcass, "I've forgotten my
phone."

Nabina Das

**'For Calling the Spirit Back from Wandering the Earth
in Its Human Feet '**

(Quoted from a poem by Joy Harjo)

Nights have a special place
in our awakening. It's from
the night that we came. Wandering.

Who's the Believer then? Shall we pray
in the dark watches of the night
when daylight shows only misery:
the practice of tahajjud, in the darkest night.

The day is all lime-sprinkled. Laundry
Soaking like our hearts in fear. Disinfectants
Wrapping us as we seeking barakaat.

Shab-e-Baraat, Shab-e-Baraat --
the Night of Forgiveness flowers
faster than flames.

Send us dua, night birds sing.
Send us the extracts from
your Lailat-ul Dua, the sap of your deeds,

say day flies stuck on human spoils.

Amid EMI flats and concrete rises
Burnt smell of broken hearths
Footfalls driven out of homes.
See how our past catches up with us.

Make this the night of records,
for every night. The day of gathering
bounties each day. Call the spirits back.

Today, my eyes like Christ's eyes
cannot find enough moist earth
to rest the wounds of my people.

Come eat my lotus heart

Beloved, I want you to be my lotus-heart
Step across, come see my lotus-heart.

Germination has deserted this firmament.
So only you can come free my lotus-heart.

The bazaar no longer has our footprints --
Don't now make me flee my lotus-heart.

TV sets blare inside homes. Can they hear
What birds speak in glee: "My lotus-heart!"

How to again kiss? We cannot even touch!
Did I lose, Navi, in this melee, my lotus-heart?

Heard Melodies: Lockdown 01

It's been more
than a month I'd seen
roads. Open roads. Wide
as my open thighs. How
the roads merge at the T
junction. And then comes
a spring dust storm. It
looks like a forest of hums
at the spot where I cross
my legs. Long ago I taught
you the notes. To string
the paths of a sweet oblivion.
Now we hear and then don't.
The roads lie open. Their music
still throbs.

Carla Dodd

Lake Cottages

The dream, really, is as big as you make it:
Sweeping brick mini-mansion, stained glass and window walls
Spiral staircases and chandeliers, or
Saltbox one-story with washed-out siding
Salvaged paneling and grandma's old quilts
Each Family Robinson running, in flip-flops and coconut oil
Soon barefoot on the beach in swim gear and shorts.
Mom shaded by floppy hat, lost in a book
Plastic pails and shovels and make-believe
Muscles and laughter and showing-off-throwing
now quietly settled to campfires and chocolate.

No thanks, really NO THANKS

I pour over downloads of phone numbers
and, android-like, cut and paste emails
“smiling phone voice,” endlessly on hold
Rolling out the speech is getting really old
Fine-tuned asking for money, fine-tuned hearing that “no”
Deep in my belly, I flinch with each turndown
The headache gets stronger with each coming takedown.
We don’t accept solicitors, we gave for the year
And how could you ask for money with an economy like this
Wasting MY precious time with your unwelcome pleas
Why, you should put down your phone and fall to your knees
That I bothered to answer, that I put you on hold
You have no sort of shame, you cannot dignify
And I never heard of your charity. Could it be that you lie?
Exhausted, I type answers and hang up the phone
And send the emails required for even a dime
That some person will let sit in their Inbox for ALL TIME
Because some slick snake-oil salesperson made them a pitch
She must have some nerve. She must be a bitch.
Yes, she must be pure evil in her stretched out pajamas
A bottle of coffee and a bottle of water
And a deep sigh every 20 minutes or so
In her unpainted office, scattered notes on the floor.
The progress reports that she’s called nearly 100
And still no one gives. “Did you call this one and that one?”
Did I pull miracles from my sphincter, tug the hem of St. Martin,
Patron of Lost Causes? I’ve already tried that one.
And just as I’m ready to shirk working for free,
The last Instant Message I wanted to see
After congratulating a young friend finishing rehab
A sentence so predictable, compassionless, prefab
“are you getting this text? R u there? Can you help me?”
Same song and verse, makes we want to run screaming
and here I’d applauded the graduation day
just hopelessly hoping I’d not have to pay
with a micron, an ounce, more corporeal pounds

suddenly I'm the naysayer, and I stand my ground
on the company policy on charitable giving
and how to say no, go make your own living
frustrated to tears and feeling alone
at least I can do one thing
and I hang up the phone.

Precious Seasoning

“What is a bay leaf?”

You asked, looking at me with those
Blue eyes like the sky just after the storm.

“What does it taste like? How do I know it’s there?”

I smiled and lifted a warm spoonful to your lips.

“I can’t describe it; it’s warm and gentle
And you might taste it, but you would know
If it was missing.’

Later, while I watched you sleeping,
The rise and fall of your chest,
Soft lips curled in a crooked bow,
A revelation: in the soup of our existence,
Love is the bay leaf.

Stirred into every breath,
A dash of laughter, a drop of tears
The taste of kisses of desire and forgiveness,
A lasting and lingering flavor.

Seasoned with faithfulness
Secure in its tenderness
Lasting in its closeness
Subtle but powerful
In its precious seasoning.

Jeff Grieneisen

Waiting Room

Old man
alone
Dr. shows him photos
of intestine,
a serpent mottled with a Cobra's marking.
They talk low.

Family
Hospital-defiant, loud teenage boy,
tries to change channel from golf
leaves. / Returns
settles,
peels a muffin
from concession.
Nervous-quiet now.
His mom has a cyst—or a tumor.

She's losing something he can't imagine.

My wife
exhales tiny pieces
of anesthetic, waking
back into a world
where she's still whole.

Young Father Remains

I.

His smile, a double parenthesis
from the corners of the nose
arced down
 ending
parallel to his mouth.
Maybe more like gills,
the sudden lost weight
leaving creases like
breathing apparatus
that cannot breathe air,
or the interlude,
an afterthought.

The GoFundMe
runs out,
medical bills
and insurance statements
tucked into a basket
on the countertop
to be gone over
 sometime later

Digital account
 remains
 active

as if he will post
a picture with his daughter
wading
into a stream
that looks cool on the page

maybe stopping for another coffee
selfie with barista
selfie of the coffee
heart in foam

His boy will not remember him
for he is too young
his mother will tell
the stories, and the photos
all digital, many posted already,
will tell their own story

II.

In this photo
a realization
no afterthought
eyes focused inward
no smile

He is away
from the children,
they on the left, he,

on the right side of this photo

he knows the experiment
will not work
and this will be
the last

Jumper

They found
not a ripple in the water
where she'd plunged
430 feet,
but her car consumed in flames
on that bridge
that the happy call Sunshine Skyway.

A 12-hour search for the body ended,
the remains turned over to the medical examiner,
something lost, like a dropped penny.

James Dickey romanticized a stewardess's fall
from an airplane—immortalized her in
verse
as if she'd somehow found salvation in that
plummeting.

I do not think Meg found solace
but fell at 32 feet per second each second
after she stopped her car at the height of that span
with such a beautiful name,
after setting the plan to make some statement
that no one knows.

Maybe it was an impromptu drive over the bridge,
a sunny 11 a.m. commute

matches and a quart of lighter fluid or gallon of
gasoline
conveniently on the passenger seat,

her last act a performance piece,
car engulfed in flames.

We might know if we could answer:
did she jump nervously, feet first, or dive?

The Wasps

This morning's sun broke
their cold sleep.

Their frozen lives began
again.

With silent wings they lift
from mud,

legs hanging
like landing gear.

They entomb larvae
in the secret spaces
of paper houses.

Heather Ann Shepard

Sorrow Song

“Who knows if birds are not a collection of all our sorrows” Colette Marin-Catherine

Last night I cried in my dreams because of stories
pasted together from small moments of my day
pain too deep to admit, rejection, fear

In the darkness of 5 am, birds sing
How do they know when it is the right time to begin?

Their compositions signal that they exist

And I hear their conversations but do not understand
But that is not why they are here.

I cannot internalize the world’s historical pain

How each story creates a whole

All I can do is listen to one person’s story

And imagine the sorrow

Allow the birds to collect my thoughts

Create a soundtrack for my reflection

And fly away

only to return the next day

With another story, a new song from the same notes.

Steven B. Smith

She lies sleeping in our broken chair
beneath once-plush blanket
body weary from work
responsibility, stress
maybe me
due my 27 years extra entropy
as I crumble toward compost
and posthumous fame

I know I make her life better
and worse
of curse
while she refines me and mine
sublime

The world's tooth and claw
flee and fight and fuck and feed
but within pus of need
and bleed
we heed occasional pockets of plus
the flowered field, the honey flow
the sun of warm and slow

Spirit to bone
bone to flesh
flesh to worm
worm to earth
earth round sun
sun around a long long time
the rest
but time and chance

No Beginning No Middle No End?

Is it the Big Bang?
The Big Bounce?
Some Conformal Cyclic Cosmography?
They cry cosmological inflation
graceful exits
and mirror worlds
but where are the sky splotches?
The space blobs?
The primitive gravitational waves?
Primordial black holes?
Right-handed neutrinos?
Why is that side of the sky
the same temp as this side?
Why no isolated photons?
Come on dudesses and dudes
give me something to work with here
besides the steady state universe
or eternal inflation
(sounds like my household expenses)
the long poemed multiverses
the sexually oscillating universes
with its Big Crunch
and "branes in bulk"
Is it a flat hologram projected onto the surface of a
sphere
or digital simulation on a vast computer?
What is this no time no place space
we rebound from

beyond this event horizon's
no beginning no end
of no place to be or have been?

Six Thoughts in Search of a Brain

It is what it is
you know how it goes
life

Walking dog
my pain versus his needs
constant compromise

Lotta levels
to unfolding disaster
from "Oh fuck" to "Holy fuck"

Is writing renga
by yourself
masturbation?

There's no
below below which
I will not go go

It's one of those days
best to get some sleep
start again

Artwork

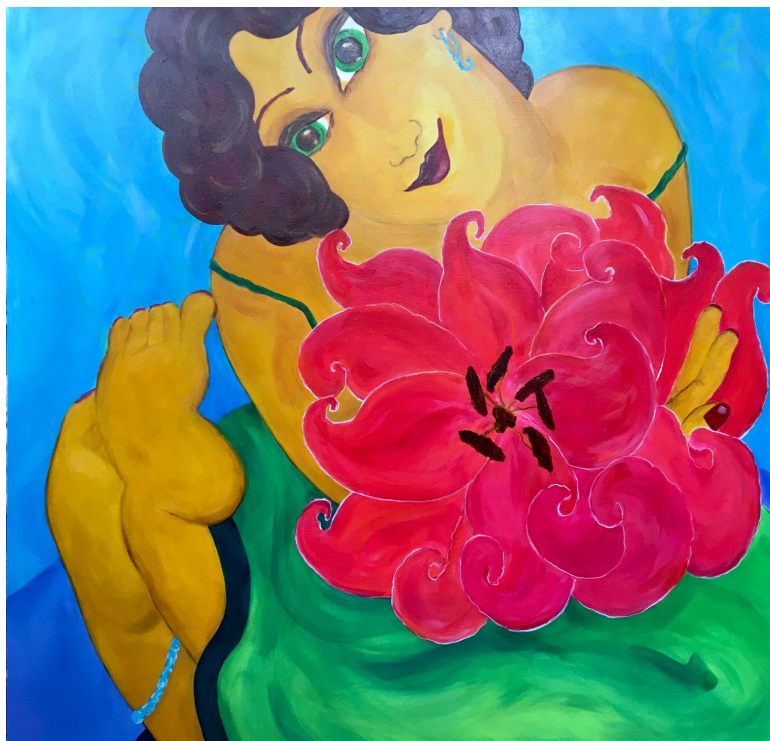
Carla Hayden



“As Above So Below Part 1”



“As Above So Below Part 2”



“Lilly Dreams of Laurette”



“Liam & the Octopus”

Translation

Heather Ann Shepard

Five am bird song
Holding my sorrows inside
Release to the sky

آواز پرنده پنج صبح
غمهایم را نجات بده
آنها را آزاد کنید

Translated from English to Persian

Contributors

In addition to his work at East Village Magazine, the artist **Jeffery L Carey Jr** is an author living in Michigan with his wife and three children. He has various stories and poems published in print and online journals. His books include, Turning Pages, poems; Callous, In Spring, Selected Poems: Repressions, poems; Songs of Epigenesis, poems; The Reflection of Elias Dumont, novel and Astilla, short fiction. His latest book, Estranged Union, was

sponsored for nomination to the 2020 Pulitzer Prize by the Greater Flint Creative Alliance. Carey is also an instructor of English and Art and holds an MFA in creative writing from National University in La Jolla, CA and a BA in English from the University of Michigan-Flint.

Nabina Das is a poet and writer based in Hyderabad, India. She has published three volumes of poetry, and two fiction books. Nabina teaches Creative Writing in classrooms and workshops.

Carla Dodd is a late blooming baby boomer who has found her way into poetry topics including body image, humor, aging decidedly ungracefully, personal social issues, and whatever falls out of her head and onto her keyboard and notebooks. A former newspaper editor and reporter, she has been involved in poetry online with Troubadour 21, First Reader, Erotique and several forum discussion groups, and moderates the Southeast Michigan Poetry Meetup.

Jeff Grieneisen is a professor of literature and creative writing at State College of Florida and author of a poetry collection, *Good Sumacs*. He has placed poetry in a number of journals and anthologies and has published criticism on Edgar Allan Poe and Ezra Pound, most recently hypertexting glosses of Pound's work for *The Cantos Project* (<http://thecantosproject.ed.ac.uk/index.php>). He lives in Bradenton, Florida but calls western Pennsylvania home.

Carla Hayden's work is about light, about color, rough, and garish forms. Storytelling using archetypes and animals to contemplate our underlying feelings. Look between the lines of language and the lines in the visual world. See the world as more than what is provoked at first glance. Embrace other possibilities, the possibilities of constant illumination. We explore and rewire the endless space within us using the healing energy of imagery, sound, light and luminous colors. Art has a healing power. Art brings enlightenment. Art transcends all boundaries. Painter / Poet & Lyricist for whitewolfsonicprincess / Performance Artist
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Heather Ann Shepard teaches poetry and writing at Lorain County Community College. Her most recent collection of poems *My Book of Magickal Flowers and Other Things* was released earlier this year by Cyberwit in India. She is the founder and editor in chief of *tinfoildresses* which was established in 2009.

Steven B. Smith aka Smith—Born in the Bitterroot Mountains, raised on Paradise Prairie, Smith is a fractal finding ambiance adjuster on the run from reality wandering the Earth having adventures with his beloved Lady. He published 21 issues of the art/poetry journal "Arterimes" from 1986-2006, and has been an underground presence in Cleveland's art poetry scene since moving into a downtown warehouse in 1981. His first one-person show was at Spaces in 1984. He & wife Lady spent 2006-9 living in ten countries on three continents recharging their

word wells. He blogs at walkingthinice.com; has art, poetry and friends on agentofchaos.com; and 110 free songs/recitations/experiments/abominations on reverbNation.com/mutantSmith.

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