

Breadcrumb Scabs: Issue 27

March 2011, edited by Lena Judith Drake

Contributors:

JOSEPH M. GANT
ROXANNE BRODA-BLAKE
MISTI RAINWATER-LITES
CHRISTOPHER LINFORTH
PETER MARRA
AMY SCHREIBMAN WALTER
ROBERT JOHN MILLER

LIBBY RASMUSSEN
PETER WELTNER
GARRETT CROWE
AUBREY NESBITT
SARAH TREADWELL
RYAN QUINN FLANAGAN
JOANNA CARPENTIER

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Editor-in-chief: Lena Judith Drake
Graphic design: Corey M. Cooper
Copy editor: Hazel Foster

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*Lena Judith Drake, editor-in-chief of Breadcrumb Scabs magazine, is currently a Creative Writing and Women & Gender Studies student at Grand Valley State University. For more biographical information, or to investigate her published writing, please check out her personal website:
<http://lenajudithdrake.com>*

March is late, but March is here! Welcome to the 27th issue of *Breadcrumb Scabs*!

My editor's choice is "The Lymph Nymphs" by Roxanne Broda-Blake (p. 10). To put it plainly, it's really freaking gross. And we all know, time and again, that I love poems like that, full of visceral, poetic language like "They are the sweetest sinus". Did you know that lymph is named after Lympha, the Roman goddess of fresh water? Now you know. Now read the poem.

As always, but more desperately than usual, we're looking for some new submissions. Although we still have a backlog on art (until 2013), accepted submissions will enter next month's issue. Read our guidelines, peruse our issues (as you seem to be doing already), and submit some of your best and most unusual.

Go ahead, keep on reading.

Check out our website:
<http://www.breadcrumbscabs.com>

Find us on Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/breadcrumbscabs>

Joseph M. Gant is a scientific glassblower by trade but a writer by passion. His work has appeared widely in the independent, academic, and commercial press. Joseph lives in the Philadelphia area where he edits poetry for Sex and Murder magazine and writes reviews for Outsider Writers Collective. His first full-length collection of poetry, Zero Division, is forthcoming with Rebel Satori Press.

Daydream

by Joseph M. Gant

the meat to dirt
ratio
has gotten out of hand.

marionettes lay slackened
on the stage.
cadavers coat the floor;

carpet filler masks
of heaven--

tapestries belie the sun,

fall down
fall down;

there's nothing
left
to do

JoAnna Carpentier is a Boston transplant who spends her days working toward a degree in Music Business, making lattes, writing poetry, learning aerial silks, and digging for courage.

For Sam

by JoAnna Carpentier

When you met me I was an unexpected rainstorm on the hottest day of July.

Everything settles.

No traffic.

Barefoot, puddle jumping.

Cold splash.

Grey sky.

City lights like watercolor.

You had prayed for me.

You moved in me like I had saved you.

And I rattled like I had never been so alive.

You cannot keep me.

Or rather, if I stay too long, you'll forget why you thought that I was beautiful.

You will resent me.

Lightning crashes. I want you to remember the way you smiled the first time I fell into your eyelashes.

Salty lips.

Drenched hair.

How my beads would trace your outlines.

We were in this storm together.

The problem with storms is that they pass.

I didn't know I'd leave you weathered.

That all I'd have to show for our love was mud.

Dead trees. Broken branches sprawled out like your back.

I didn't know that when I left, the streets would stop glistening.

That someone else's noises would sing you to sleep.

Move to Seattle with me so that I won't have to leave you.

Use an umbrella when we argue so that you don't have to see me
stirring.
Write me a love letter in sidewalk chalk on damp pavement
and let it tell me that you still remember.

Roxanne Broda-Blake is a twenty-year-old human anatomy enthusiast, studying biological anthropology in central New York. She likes to stitch together science and art in the leaky basement of her brain.

What I Think When I Look at Your Hands

by Roxanne Broda-Blake

I am going to cut off your hands
and take them on vacation.
Do they tolerate fruity drinks
and wet sarongs?
Tell them
that the sand gets everywhere.
I whisper slither in your
napping ears--
if you were a rabbit,
you might stay my machete.
Your sleep is hardly paranoid enough.
I picked up
the most darling leather satchel
for them to snooze in on the plane.
It has a
brass clasp.
I sprayed it with blood-retardant mist,
I won't let any secretion interfere
with my me-time.
My me-and-your-hands time.
I do love you--
almost the last word--
but sometimes I only love your hands.

The Lymph Nymphs
by Roxanne Broda-Blake

The lymph nymphs
seduce the cobblestones with their tiny feet,
and slosh sticky juice from their hands.
They make the old streets whine and writhe,
the two-legged, at the poles of conception and decay,
slip n' slide
down the hill shattered by yellow homes
not yet used to their "changing bodies."
Lymph nymphs have
nine legs.
This gives ample balance for them to twist their torsos.
They are the sweetest sinus,
and if you happen to walk that way today,
lick the ground and slurp your share.

Baby-Cakery

by Roxanne Broda-Blake

We have such a rich cake together.
Spongy children spring from
my Every-Flavor-Womb.
A new taste sensation
at every conception.
You lean against the ceramic kitchen sink
in a grey t-shirt. Your elbows are
horny cricket legs cocked. You watch me
push.
My thighs spit a strawberry-pistachio newborn into your waiting
mouth
and you chew appraisingly.
Your eyebrows shudder like when you type or read.
I sit sprawled in the splintering kitchen chair, electrocuted
every few seconds.
I see a shrug through my exhausted eyelids.
Sometimes offspring do not stimulate you.
You gentle-up your shoulders
cradle my hairy head soaked in sweat,
kiss and whisper,
"It's not your fault.
We'll get it eventually."
I cannot help but cry confectioner's tears,
anticipating nine more desperate months
of strawberries.

Amy Schreibman Walter is presently a student at the Faber and Faber Poetry Academy. She has had poems published in several online and in-print literary magazines and is working on a first pamphlet of poems.

Swamp

by Amy Schreibman Walter

I remember red
ants spread out between
my seven year old thighs.
Cries for mommy, morose
Florida

Chameleons overlooked
strawberry bikinis, girls
almost drowning in the pool.

Reptilia atop pink painted concrete,
lizards climbing the walls
strode across damaged citrus.

I remember a kind of
tropical autumn,
if it exists
falling leaves on turquoise chlorine
awaiting excavation.

Garrett Crowe is a graduate student for the Master of Arts: Creative Writing program at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He enjoys stoner metal and kissing his two American "Pet Bull" Terriers, Sailor Ripley and Roxanne.

Here and There and Coyote

by Garrett Crowe

Before I saw the coyote in the alleyway to my apartment,
my stomach was a tombstone, full of tex-mex.
Horny and dreading the empty space. Wondering when the hell I
could leave my
minimum wage job that was supposed to get me from here to there.
Where the hell was there? I had never seen it.

Here didn't hear my misery as I came home every night.
Feet burning from concrete floors of the gas station. I knew
that when my shoes came off, my feet would smell
like sour cream and onion Lays, and the traps gone. And I would try
to sleep, but only dream about the next day of here, where the drawer
would be off or
my manager would ask me to kill another shift. Another day zipped
forever.

And then I saw the coyote. At first, I thought it was the world's
largest raccoon.
His legs, Dali-elephant-like skinny. His body no bigger than a lab's.
But I remember his gray the most. His mane pieced
together like a quilt of different silver, outshining my headlights,
laying light
on the doors of the apartment, and turning the night into a candle. He
bounced
towards the Buick, and I eyed his trot as he passed, moving along the
alleyway,
leaving my here to continue for his there, and the
light never coming back.

Small Town Emergency: A Backhoe Operation

by Garrett Crowe

I imagine the day, black and white,
like the family's flyers seen around town.
Walking to E.W. James grocery,
"Debbie has been missing since
December 12th" and her photograph.
Goofy glasses and a slow smile and
gone.

She had to enter the world again.
The waterhole. He said
he put her there after their
sex.

Small town emergency.
Step dad came home.
"You can't believe what
they had me do today."
Workshirt sweat stiffened.
Blue jean white knees.
He had worn gloves all day
no grit.

The best backhoe operator
in the county, the chosen one.
Dipped his digger into the waterhole
to make the vanished
visible once again. The
mechanical fist dripping
with pondwater
after each pull. He
anticipated bones for this to be
all over.

Her family on the outskirts
of the plot. A man behind
steel. Me at a school desk.
My stepfather in a cage surrounded
by black and white officer
nurses. All chancing to
see a newborn
dead.

Sarah Treadwell writes poetry that has been informed by pop culture and media influences. She lives and works in Prescott, Arizona where she teaches toddlers and experiments with vegan home cuisine. She has been writing poetry for just over two years and is excited to experience the future through art and language.

The Salt Lick

by Sarah Treadwell

Your salt pricks my mouth like the dinner we ate
the first time we mixed up with lust and love. Black
hair roots above your belt like grass
and although we're wrapped in courses of sweat, skin
and fingernails, I walk in the trees behind my father's house.

The bridge at the edge of the field clicks and clicks
beneath my shoes. Rock pathways stop me
from wandering where I plan to go
like your hand under my cotton blouse
when even my bones feel thin.
Your fingers sift through me and I swell
with the taste of your evening bike ride,
my afternoon run,
our spiced midnight dinner.

Beyond barb wire and before the mountain,
hiding in the farm's foundation reminds me of the end
like the square of granite memories organizing the wild.

But I am so easily distracted

and when I see the salt lick, block of temptation,

my mouth is on it like Eve the morning
she bit too deep. My feet float without effort to the edge
as my tongue nudges forward, meeting the hardness,
drinking the ocean. Forgetting foundation,
memory, mountains and all.

Leaves seem to click. My ears stand on end and that salt
sears in my mouth.
I hold my breath and catch you kneeling
in the tree post, silent, with gun in your hand.

Family Conflict

by Sarah Treadwell

1.

At the table we're elbows sewn to elbows.
Fragments of an image
draped around the chairs.
Mom would not approve but says nothing
to us, her adult children.

On the stove haddock fries and
while kicking his legs
my brother yells, *dick, dick, dick*.
Prisoner of dichotomy,
I fear slant in composition
and say it:

vagina,

vagina,

vagina. Stop

Fish is burning and together
we ruin everything.

2.

At twelve I strung that brother
upside-down by strings and legs.
His fixture mirrored Mom's
Parisian chandelier.

A young and reckless sculptor,
I bit my lip, brought hand to chin
and squinted to examine the job
of *Boy Inverted*.

Head below a wriggling body.

Face contorted.

Screaming.

I awed my genius until

glass shattered on a blue rug.
Sprawling appendages etched the floor.
He lay still. And then

Aubrey Nesbitt has worked as a military journalist for the past two years. Ze is 21 yr old. Ze reads a lot, and writes a lot.

chills

by Aubrey Nesbitt

The leaves crackling underneath our feet
in the park on our way
occasionally your body presses on me
the traffic is silent and the breeze cold
if only this were a snow globe
i could shake and rattle till
the cars and the people
fell from the sky
each like an individual new years eve ball
descending slow and dramatic
while we passed through
each distant thud more climatic the the last

Christopher Linforth is an MFA fellow at Virginia Tech.

October-November

by Christopher Linforth

I remember
when you slept in my bed,
wearing a pale slip, hands around my
waist.

when you ate Animal Crackers,
and tried to focus on what I was saying.
“Is this an elephant?” you asked.

when you taught me to read music,
guiding my fingers on the scale, starting me
on nursery rhymes.

when we walked to the lake,
and found the swings, and talked for hours
about the future.

when we parted, confused at the airport,
unsure when we’d next see each other.
I remember
thinking you’d come home with me.

Peter Marra lives in Williamsburg Brooklyn. He has been published in many online publications. Among his influences are Tristan Tzara, Paul Eluard, Edgar Allan Poe, Russ Meyer, and Roger Corman. His goal is to create poems that will make the theatre in the reader's head explode and explode again. He is currently constructing his first collection of poems.

the soft highway

by Peter Marra

running down the
soft highway
red rain puddles
stain our feet.

the child walks backwards
toddles then falls.
Hear the asphalt crack and
shiny scarlet noises.

they caress my friend's
lips and she halts.
moist and frightened they grab
our feet, with hooks and claws for now.

lying down in gasoline dreams and oil pain,
licking dust and blood,
laugh at the black sky
and gasp when the sun appears.

black-seam sweat

by Peter Marra

as a child i sat
at the kitchen table and
visited the porno theater far away.

red hair
nylon
black-seamed sweat

cassette players
scratchy tapes
fast forward rewind

she knelt down and
watched me as i
cried

taking me down the
alley she gave me things and
then

all the while she is laughing.
i'm speaking to you
from on

top of the chain link fence now
can't move.
her white hair whips my face (nails grab me)

and we hide in the peepshow
where patrons watch
our slow painful dance.

and
we
are safe.

end tape

Libby Rasmussen has an undergraduate degree from Prescott College and is currently pursuing her MFA in Creative Writing from Hamline University.

Ex-boyfriend

by Libby Rasmussen

Didn't

like

it

when

I

wrote

poems

about

how

we

fucked

in

public

places

Portraits of Crazy Men

by Libby Rasmussen

I remember on that valentine's day there was a heavy snow fall
he made me beef stroganoff, first he had to thaw the meat
he ran the hot water for some time, he clinked around that small
kitchen

and I watched people come and go into the library across the street
as writers we appreciated how lovely it was to be close to so many
books at once

Later we played poetry games and he almost kissed me

He wrote me letters while I was away at college

Wanting to move to Norseland and work on an oil rig or fishing boat
to me didn't seem all that different than living in Bemidji, Minnesota
but to him, it was this idea of living on the surface of a culture buried
deep in ours

At the end of the page strange drawings of frogs and men in suit
coats

I kept them by my bed and reread them as a boy who loved to tame
fire slept

There are people who touch you in ways others possibly can not
you will feel the closeness of a far distance
that is what knowing someone in defining moments can do

You should have seen him read aloud--

Maybe he was high

Maybe I was

We almost kissed that one time

He showed me how to smoke a bowl

And I showed him the only magic trick I knew

He kept saying, that is not magic, show me again

I am jealous of the weird shit that always happens to him;

his friend who has a phone sex hotline, or that lady that came into the
diner where he worked and bit off that guy's ear

I think of that time we went into the park at night, the one where
homeless people live and gay men go to fuck strangers

We walked on the path and he kept saying, I am not afraid of
anything,

except being knifed

The Waters We Learned From

by Libby Rasmussen

We used to catch turtles with nets down at the pond when we were so little

Now you stand before me naked
With your giant cock hanging between your legs

It is the end of the afternoon
and light streams in through the windowpanes
It is winter
and all the waters
in this Midwest that we learned from are frozen deep

We are so familiar to one another
This new bareness, this view
that furnishes like words we hadn't thought to mention
So much more full than those we crouched down beside
looking into our refectory for something to crack the surface

You have memorized so many poems by now

You put your hand on your chest and move your thumb ever so slightly on your skin
I am slow as I unroll the leggings from my thighs and bring my sweater over my head

This is a new game
One we invented
in another life
when our names were different

we still knew what to call one another
we still knew what we sounded like in each other's mouths

Misti Rainwater-Lites has books available from lulu.com, Propaganda Press, Coatlim Press, Grievous Jones Press and a few other places. Misti maintains a blog at <http://yallversusyall.blogspot.com>. Her favorite ice cream is Ben & Jerry's Coffee Heath Bar Crunch.

Ribald

by Misti Rainwater-Lites

Pee on me cum on me sex in ass sex in mouth sex in cunt stuck sex fuck sex muck sex sex sex on the brain sex down the drain with long black hairs and coconut body wash bubbles.

Fuck poem clit poem wet drench soak stain god you make me cum so hard god you god you fuck you fuck you fuck me fuck we deep fuck sleep fuck read it and weep fuck. The science of fuck. The poetry of cum. Cum on feel the noise in your marrow goddamn it this is not a Fisher Price play date! Skating on sex ice. Fall through crack and drown. This is like a Currier & Ives xmas card but less sentimental.

Tits those tits those fucking TITS. So. Fucking. Hot. Nipples and everything. Natural. FUCK. Those tits make my cock twitch. Twitching cock. Put a sock on that cock and get onstage. That has been done before but NOT by YOUR cock. Your fucking sock monkey cock so mischievous so banana bulge! Whee! Swing from tree to shining tree with wild simian abandon. Hot. Humid. Wet t-shirt contest. Who would win? So many choices but just one cock. True but this cock can rise to any occasion at least six times a day, bigger and more durable each time. Stoic pioneer across the Rockies with only one horse cock.

By the light of xmas moon now you see it now you don't. Cat burglar in night cock. Cum to steal cherry pie cooling on sill. Like Eddie Money can't keep still cock. You're my thrill cock. Smoking cigars in Caesar's Palace penthouse jacuzzi after six sweaty hours of robot cock. I mean tiger cock. That is... wolf cock. No clocks. Just cocks. Until the breaking of the goddamn shit ass sloppy mouth bitch whore dawn.

Primordial Beef Stew
by Misti Rainwater-Lites

my mouth is still working
on meat maggoty
rotten too bloody & thick
to swallow

somebody forgot
to take
out the
bones

maternal grandmother
hands me
an heirloom spoon
silver in spots
I can
almost see
myself
but I have grown bigger
too big
despite this
malnutrition

juice drips
from my chin
& the secret
is out

long gone daddy
appears at
the table
with a
yellow napkin
cleans me up
like I am
three
hands me
a glass
of milk
having no
idea that
I am
allergic

Robert John Miller lives in Chicago and can dance like a robot so well that people often mistake him for an actual, in-the-flesh robot. More can be found at: <http://bobsoldout.com>

Love and Possibilities

by Robert John Miller

i.

He couldn't sleep. He woke his wife up. "I can't sleep," he said. "Well," she said. "Now I can't sleep either." She said, "Sometimes you can be such a jackass."

ii.

He couldn't sleep. He woke his wife up. "I can't sleep," he said. "Well," she said. "Now I can't sleep either." He said, "I'm sorry."

iii.

He couldn't sleep. He woke his wife up. "I can't sleep," he said. "Well," she said. "We'll stay up together." She said, "It might be fun."

iv.

He couldn't sleep. He woke his wife up. "I can't sleep," he said. "Well," she said. "Now I can't sleep either." He said, "Let's play Aggravation."

v.

He couldn't sleep. He woke his wife up. "I can't sleep," he said. "Well," she said. "Now I can't sleep either." She said, "I think the Olympics are on."

vi.

He couldn't sleep. He woke his wife up. "I can't sleep," he said. "Well," she said. "Now I can't sleep either." He said, "Fuck you."

Peter Weltner has published five books of fiction, three poetry chapbooks, and one full length collection of poems. His work has appeared in dozens of literary magazines and journals, online and in print. He lives in San Francisco's outerlands.

The One-Winged Body

by Peter Weltner

1. After Pan

Ronnie discovered it, half hidden by brambles, brush, and weeds in a hill on the edge of old Ed Snyder's corn field, a slit of a mouth in the earth, the cave long before the plague dug or eroded from red clay. We were just wandering, two boys free, as we did every summer day, not looking for a place to hide from an afternoon's thunderstorm, inside stripping bare naked, the glistening walls so hot they sweat. Today, I received a photograph, shot in a Cretan cave, of a young man with mane-like wavy black hair, his thinly carved body boasting an erection so fine it could have been aroused only by a god's call, lightning, storm, fallen city walls, men in an ecstasy crying for more love.

2. In Lissos

In Botticelli, wind blown, Aphrodite steps ashore out of Ouranos' shell. She cups her right hand modestly over her right breast. Her left hand, a swath of unshorn golden hair conceal her vulva. Dressed in a gown dotted with cornflowers, a nymph holds a daisy-sown mantle to robe her nakedness. But this is Lissos, 'Ninety-Six. The cloak Galen's Christopher wears is a radiant cloud dissolving into mist, a white light from which he is being born, an archaic wild beauty, a naked bearded kouros, stepping onto rock, ancient marble strewn ground. At night, they sleep under a sky said to reveal to Plato, Men die because Time cannot love them as it loves itself.

3. Pan: Hania

Sixteen, I jackknife off a board, hit my skull
on a rock in mud. The last thing I see's the sun,
the lake I'm drowning in translucent as air.
Water man shadow dream. Wiping a mirror clean
of steam after a shower, dripping, erect, Bob
drops his towel. A full moon rains onto our bed.
In Crete, in an underwater room, a young
man plays his flute while just over his head
crests break, the surface rippling in lunar
light. The music he makes pleases his cock.
Fire, water. His desire's a torch that blazes
whitest when submerged, however dark the sea.
Dive to him. Water is freedom. Water is peace.
In the deep, gold gleams. Best of all things is water.

4. Rockface and Stream

He's retreated to wilderness, jagged rockface,
sparse trees, twig tangled dark pointillist leaves,
a stream, a sunlit cliff on the other side—an obscure
cool spot where a prophet might rest from heat.
He wears his clothes like a holy man's, waist
cinched, shoulder draped, lifts an arm to grieve.
Twelve, I discover, hidden deep in a forest,
in a rhododendron thicket on a honeysuckle
sweetened slope below Hanging Rock, a cascade
and a naked man bathing in its pounding waters.
He's turned his face away. There's only his black
hair to see, his back, the curve of butt and thigh.
Flesh of his flesh, no words, no book to follow.
What will become of me when he turns to look?

5. Temple Mask

Not wisdom through suffering but awe, men
ruined at the whim of gods they're better than.
Bad weather. Sicily's more dark than light—
unsettled, ashen skies over the coast.
Hera's temple's ink black ruins on a field
of sooty grass, weed, faded like charcoal.
The scene's grainy like a still from a surreal
silent film or a daguerrotype. A storm's coming.

A boy stands torso bare, his sheet-like skirt billowing. The mask he wears shines faceless as a crescent moon, hides what his chest boldly exposes, a beauty to envy, disguised as a pose, defiant, daring tragedy to live again, rise, its wave-maddened horses, lascivious winds.

6. King Selinus

If we should peer beyond what is ours to see, with deeds and mouth utter blasphemies, never fear the gods, trespass sacred places, profane the sea, sky, olive groves, grape vines, pine, spirit of the fruit of ivy, wild selino, if we defy justice, stain the good with folly, fail the feast days, lay hands on tainted things, how can we dance or holily grieve? The gods are long gone, their temples ruins for millennia. Yet look how he turns his torso, its tragic form, how—no ode to sing, no flute to follow—he alone’s left of the chorus, how his hands grip his head, hair, how his muscles are taut with sensual despair, reverent of the rites.

7. Torso: Dionysos

This day, you need neither ivy, wine, panther, pard, frenzied women nor earthquake to be free, just the primitive tricks of the prick: quick as that beloved becomes lover, your godhead revealed. Close by’s an olive grove, weathered rock old as the island. The sun’s high, delights in your torso. But your face is hidden, my lord, though you’ve stripped off the royal loincloth draped round your waist to show the black locks below, your blood filled cock, ecstasy’s promise. For the seed you’ll spill on his sweating flesh is sharp as snake’s teeth, hot as a lion’s breath, white as goat’s milk fresh from the tit, pungent with earth: pine, stone, lichens, moss, loam

8. On Crete, in Athens

Why wear your spectral, gauzy cloth when you can strip it off? On Crete, you're a Cretan boy reborn, ready for bull leaping, a Minoan stone vase or figurine, found whole, no shard. Sacred, these groves, mountains, rocks, laurel, streams, where you walk. Dawn's burning through olive, pine, rain's battering a boat, a hut, a temple's fluted marble, winds, white water far out to sea, divine footprints mysteriously imprinted on the shore left to explore like driftwood or debris, the sun adoring naked skin proof enough then the gods were real. Myth is free, history ghost pale. Remember wrestling that last day in the gymnasium, Kritias, Phaedus wanting you?

9. A Pool, a Lake

Though he's better looking, Robert and I, when lovers, often were mistaken for brothers, an illusion, a trick of the light, a blurry vision. He's taller, his hair's far fairer than mine, his eyes blue, mine pale green. Not doubles at all. Yet we both could see what people saw, as if each was a mirror of the other we dived into like a glassy pool deep in dark woods. Water or light. You choose, Christopher. Pool, lake, where your body is reflected. Suppose Narcissus saw in that shimmering mirror not himself but his lover who rose out of water like Venus after her father had spilled his seed in the sea. Your body's what shines back to you.

10. A Graveyard in Savannah

Traveler, you who pass by and wonder why, know I lie where all my life I feared to be. Fast as I fled from death, he chose to run toward me. Let a boy's supple muscles, back, shoulders, arms rhyme with my tomb cover's curve. Beauty's never enough to save us, won't serve to see us through. Even if he seems a god's equal, time's arc's always the same.

The dead can't love nor oblivion feel.
Fear of the end made Frankenstein try to
resurrect a corpse like mine. I'd be his monster
if I could. I'm anonymous, no lasting fame
despite my name. Read it, traveler, and smile
while your eyes ravish that beautiful boy.

11. Cumberland

Winged Hermes, winged Nike, the sun in his chariot,
Love's sudden flights to earth, even the phallos,
stony hard, is winged, and temple marble, heavy
as the mountains from which it's quarried, soars.
Art's a trick. Click. A bolt of wind-blown cloth's
a wing he holds with hand and arm, like a bit
of bird's bone, weightless as that, his body sky-
bound, eager to rise on no more than one wing.
Cumberland's five thousand miles from Greece.
His hair's grown-up shorn. Heaven's unsettled, fields
of dark cloud, but save for earth's ring the sky's all
his world, his ass beneath the feathery cloth fine
as any boy's or man's who would be borne up
on air like a bird, stunned by the sun he'd fly to.

12. Pan III

A music that calls you by name, variations on
a monodic theme that enthralls, that entices you
to dance, to chant not hymns but carnal tunes
you sing as if they were you, the cave dark
yet lit by a lamp in that dream you still dream:
the song of flesh, of sex, the joy it proclaims,
its lyric games, the freedom to play, make Be
from Seem, the ever changing always the same.
Or the Pan that calls you by name. Real,
the ring on his finger, the flute in his hands—
his torso, his arms, his thighs, his cock daring
you to abandon dreams, the flame he brings not
a flickering back in a shadowy cave, but a flare
that leads you out to sunlight and freedom.

13. Prophet

Out of wilderness, he stands alone on the shore,
a place for departure and return. The rock's
black as his beard, the sand coarse, the water
dark, grand storm clouds an electric backdrop.
His robe's austere. He crooks his right arm,
unfolds his hand, and preaches to the sea.
Say paradise. A long ago day reborn from
dust, ash, and clay, impossible but necessary,
the beach packed again, the sea full of swimmers.
The ancient bay is clearest blue. And handsome
men stand on the sand, alive once more. Say
paradise. Say may this vision stay true, a mercy
to the world, no fantasy but the dead playing
sunning dancing loving. Pray. Say paradise.

Ryan Quinn Flanagan is literate. Now he has proof.

Banking on the Humanist

by Ryan Quinn Flanagan

I give you each back rub
in good faith.

Hoping the suggestive compassion
comes back
in spades.

Eventually,
I'll be that senile old man on the street
taking off his diaper
in passing traffic
and beating kids with a stick,

and you'll have to explain away my latest
indiscretion
and convince the white unmarked van
to leave

so I can talk to the showerhead
and piss on the couch
for another week

in peace.

Ira Joel Haber was born and lives in Brooklyn, New York. He is a sculptor, painter, book dealer, and teacher. His work has been seen in numerous group shows both in USA and Europe, and he has had nine one-man shows, including several retrospectives of his sculpture. His work is in the collections of The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York University, The Guggenheim Museum, The Hirshhorn Museum, & The Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

His paintings, drawings, and collages have been published in many online and print magazines including Rock Heals, Otoliths, Winamop, Melancholia's Tremulous Dreadlocks, Barfing Frog, The Raving Dove, Foliate Oak, Siren, Prose Toad, Triplopia, Thieves Jargon, Opium, Dirt, The Centrifugal Eye, The DMQ Review, Broadsided, Hotmetalpress, Double Dare Press, Events Quarterly, Unlikely Stories, Coupemine, Cerebration, Chick, Flicks, Softblow, Eclectica Magazine, Backwards City Review, Right Hand Pointing, Ascent Aspirations Magazine, Brew City Magazine, Fiction Attic, Mastodon Dentist, Blue Print Review, Ellipsis, The Indelible Kitchen, Cricket, Entelechy, So To Speak, Taj Mahal Review, The Fifteen Project, The Externalist, Why Vandalism, Mungbeing Magazine, Lamination Colony, Paradigm, Lily, Literary Fever, Glassfire Magazine, The Houston Literary Review, Lilies and Cannonballs, Wheelhouse Magazine, Terra Incognita, Qarrtsiluni, The Tusculum Review, Multidimensional, 34th Parallel, Wood Coin, Sacramento Poetry, Art & Music, Anti-Poetry, Divine Dirt Quarterly, The Mom Egg, Disenthralled, etcetera, & sea stories.

Over the years he has received three National Endowments For The Arts fellowships, two Pollock-Krasner grants, and most recently in 2004 received The Adolph Gottlieb Foundation grant. Currently he teaches art at the United Federation of Teachers Retiree Program in Brooklyn.

COVER ART: "Teenage Raven" by Ira Joel Haber.

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Confessional poetry. Love poetry with unflattering, pessimistic imagery. Politics with personal, tiny snapshots. Fighting against oppression and repression. Guilt. Poetry that makes us feel nauseous. Sentimentality distorted with grittiness. Anything with strange and interesting imagery. Get your hands dirty with real human emotion. Dark is okay here, as is political, erotic, absurd, disturbing, experimental, or poems that can't seem to fit in anywhere else. We'll give them a try.

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