

LOCUST THREE

ISSN 1529-0832 Vol 2 No 3 - October 2006

FOREWORD

p. 2

MIRRORED IN THE STEEL, A Poem by Lynn Strongin

p. 4

REVOLUTION, A Poem by Zoë Gabriel

p. 6

PASS THE PEANUTS, BABEEEE, A Poem by Tasha Klein

p. 8

THE DRIFTER, A Poem by Clifford K. Watkins Jr

p. 10

**ANALYSING SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES OF MIDDLE-CLASS NEUROSIS,
A Poetical Fragment by Patrick Gasperini**

p. 11

FOUR POEMS by Devin Davis

p. 13

MISSPENT, A Short Story by Gary Beck

p. 15

IN HOPES OF NOTHING, A Prose Piece by Wayne Wolfson

p. 16

TWO PROSE PIECES by Mark R. Drost

p. 17

Copyright Notice

p. 19

FOREWORD

Issue # 3 Vol 2 is online at long last. The yearly basis seems to have consolidated. Undoubtedly, that's not so good! On the web one year is such a long spell. But please, do bear with Locust in spite of its *irregular* life. Small press magazines, both in print and online, should always be excused, and praised, even if they don't behave well. Yes, this foreword is only written in praise of all of them!

Everybody dreams of having their work published by an important publishing house, because that usually means universal acclaim and profit. But is an important publishing house a guarantee of quality literature? Please never bet on that! And never trust the alluring rubbish printed on a "best seller's" cover. *The stunning new masterpiece of psychological suspense*, a Penguin paperback cover once read. If you needed some sleeping tablets, *that* was just the right novel for you! Predictable plot and dialogues, conventional characters—yes, a *stunning* masterpiece! So, is there any hope? The hope only lies in the world of the small presses and magazines. Now more than ever, because of the web. An online small press is just the opposite of an important publishing house. It is usually only interested in spreading quality literature instead of making money. And this means freedom! Isn't that enough?

If all small presses disappeared overnight, our dear old *Hank* Bukowski would be right!

Go to Tibet.

[...]

Circle the world in a paper canoe.

[...]

Brush your teeth with gasoline.

[...]

Do a belly dance before pink candles.

[...]

Break your head with a hatchet.

Plant tulips in the rain.

But don't write poetry.

A plan for the nearest future is to make Locust available as printable PDF files as well. In this way Locust will be accessible even to those people who prefer reading poetry and prose on paper. In due course the editor will contact all the authors already published in Locust volume 2 issues #1, #2, and #3, so they can give their permission to have their work printed in the PDF format.

October 2006

MIRRORED IN THE STEEL
~ A Poem by Lynn Strongin ~

When you took up the kettle after diagnosis, your hands shook
the whole prairie winter was mirrored in the steel:
a prairie is the heart of us
long & flat as Poland
as lonesome:
a prairie is androgynous:
in summer wheats bend like shadows.
In winter, they are frozen.
Stage 3 cancer:
the teapot began rattling
like teeth in freezing weather.

Not so much weather as
atmosphere:
A fog no plane could land in.

And I had fallen to the floor from my wheelchair:
lean close in to me I wanted to say
please give me the close attention you would a Persian carpet
and yet
we had had enough of it:
the geography of flat space the metaphysics of flatland:
it was like trying to pin a flying plane
a shadow.
I wanted you to like my new dust-colored sweater
but against prairie winter it was a perfect blend.

There was brandy standing in a little glass to burn a fire:

light from sun pouring thru like thru a stained glass window
you read in a blur
glasses about the neck hung, brushing collarbone
the words were
clear like the diagnosis:
glass which doubled the terror.

REVOLUTION
~ A Poem by Zoë Gabriel ~

My eyes rove from side to side
questing, never satisfied
I warm my hands on the gas rings
and hang my eyes out with the washing
(when I'm in a hurry, I dry them with my socks
in the oven)

In the fall of a leaf
and the arc of the sun there is symmetry
but there is none in the expanding universe
of my ribcage
where lunatic planets spin
along precisely calculable trajectories

There are wise scents and nostalgic scents
of coffeehouses and the greasy ink
in brand-new books
yellow smells and green smells
bile, crushed lemons and exhaust fumes

All this talk so as not to speak
of your skin and salt and milk
your residue in coffee cups and ashtrays
my sustenance

I really think that one day I will wake up
and I will be old and unloved
incapable of thinking up a reason

such as the first morning cup of coffee
or the bone satisfaction
of a day's mundane work accomplished

Revolutions are messy things
but at least one could believe in them
In an age when a tube of toothpaste
comes with instructions for two
alternative ways of opening it
the most we can manage is to come up
with a third way to do it

PASS THE PEANUTS, BABEEEE**~ A Poem by Tasha Klein ~**

just high
on fire
not botched
like the half-conscious state
& curling thicket of your latest
goodbye

love you squirrel
but I can't let my heart fly

Later:

soup & sprightly spooling

the slowest couple wake
sick & lively
to misplace perscriptions
and other general generic
farting around

don't drop your ashes in my hydroponic plant

ok
how about in this sea of dirty dishes

I can't even be bothered to throw this ashtray at your
head

I'd rather delete junk mail

why do you use that word
hydroponic

because I like the way it sounds.

THE DRIFTER
~ A Poem by Clifford K. Watkins Jr ~

The drifter carries a small shovel to dig his own grave
he stands eerily beside a gravel road
unable to measure his soul
having fled his humdrum life on the path to freedom that he never finds
he never escapes his mind
the labyrinth inside
dirt descends from his hourglass hands into a shallow hole
he knows everything
yet wants nothing
he displays his scars to remind himself that he was once alive
he impales himself with invisible knives
and hurls himself into a unmarked grave
as a random stranger oozes from his eyes

hello god
goodbye devil

today
I'm the drifter
ugly
unkempt
walking into the sun
ready to vanish like singing skulls rolling into oblivion
and tomorrow
no one remembers him

**ANALYSING SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES
OF MIDDLE-CLASS NEUROSIS**

**An Extract from
*EPICURUS***

~ A Poetical Fragment by Patrick Gasperini ~

First of all, are *inconsistency* and *bourgeois* synonyms?
A jellyfish attitude would certainly be excusable here,
For no one will ever apply them to
A 14th-century demoiselle methodically sitting in front of the fireplace,
Embroidering,
Figurative excrescence of a castle on a hill overlooking la Loire.

If everything—
Everything is such an impropriety of style,
Low-class generalization—
But if everything really depended on the silk variety of her visions
Or
Knickers,
Would you admit that she is a bourgeois icon in spite of the old-fashioned furniture
in her sitting-room?

Daddy has taken care of all the details,
And details are not elusive,
Especially if you are halfway between Odysseus getting back home from the
Cyclops Club,
And King Oedipus who has just realized he might have married the wrong woman.

Unpredictable rainy day in July,
A very unconventional moment to buy a plane ticket to New York,
Top-class flight,

Rose petals for breakfast,
Geisha in the bathroom...

Bon voyage!

Remember

A postcard to mummy...

...Sounds like some sort of archetypal song,
Or was it just a rusty catchphrase monotonously repeated by an old tart while she
was being shagged in the back seat of somebody's convertible after an ice
cream session,
Just a fiver a throw?

Whenever I have to define a woman—

Negatively, of course,

Meticulously running the risk of being labelled as a misogynous camel—

I am always embarrassed:

Dictionaries might be extremely helpful,

With stacks of terms ranging from the most classical ones,

To those with a delicate shade of professional austerity;

But I always pick out the one that's always reminded me of a picnic in the

Victorian countryside...

Slices of strawberry toast,

Goldfinch eggs in ivory eggcups,

Vintage sherry,

Moderate backtaste...

FOUR POEMS by Devin Davis

*

MOBILE

tuning
a mechanical universe:

black, **white**, red—easily
recognized by children
of the revolution...

evidently,
we've a better grasp
that what they see is their
—superiors and subordinates,

sooner.
she'd have

high contrast
trying to reach the dream
...and the ceiling.

*

GUIDANCE

i'm an airline exec; i said,
adultery will not be tolerated.

boeing
getting an unwanted promotion;

and jet is so close
to nocturnal emission...

ceo,
fired.

*

TRAINEE

hurrying,
she unzips
the sidewalk; &
gets her high
-heel
caught
in a crack.

*

HOPPERS

we ride
the dandelion

that became a lamb & then
as a catfish, swam, until it solidified
like wet cement in mckinley park;

this hard monster
afflicts our private parts.

MISSPENT
~ A Short Story by Gary Beck ~

John Richardson, a tall, weathered, handsome man, lost to passing time and stares of hungry curiosity, sat on a small wooden bench as the snow hurled taunting tastes of cold tears in the small garden, part of a posh building that he had carved himself apart to possess. He had sacrificed his integrity for the pomp and security of a fine address, the servile respect of doormen, elevator operators, and employees who had reason to visit his home. Yes he had hungered for the things bought with money, but he had allowed that hunger to mold him, had let desire give birth to ambition and more desire.

He softly said aloud. "I remember when I was nineteen years old, struggling through college, dreaming of fine restaurants, owning Picassos, a seasonal box at the opera, the pleasures and visions of the grand life, the beauties of man's creation. But also the lost dream of great things; God how I wanted to paint, show the world the beauty and torment that raged through me like a mad storm, howling and roaring, never letting me rest."

The overpowering façade of the giant luxury apartment house towered over the small surrounding garden, making the Homburged gentleman seem puny and futile. He sat, lost in a world of sorrow, as snow flew, covering his black coat and hat with white flakes. He was as intense as brooding sculpture, shoes buried by somnolent flakes, face blanched by cold and pain, silk scarf whiter than purity, shining between the black stretches of hat and coat.

The passing swarms of city dwellers rushing home from work, rushing home to shelter, rushing... Rushing... Rushing... Paused before the glass and steel elegance, sentried by a snow splattered lord of the city, sitting as still and forgotten as an ice age relic, and spent one brief curious moment wondering about the distinguished man, sitting alone in the snow on a garden bench, before forgetting him a moment later, as they continued on their way home.

IN HOPES OF NOTHING
~ A Prose Piece by Wayne Wolfson ~

The first time I saw her, she was at the bottom of a pyramid buying apples, biting her bottom lip to stop from crying.

Hands busy, softly squeezing the fruit, teeth, slowly chewing that little wedge of inhaled, quivering flesh.

Times passes, everything is remembered wrong.

The things we do not give back, why do we clutch at these left over bits of evidence?

It is smarter to hold the memory of that first kiss. We learn that too late too. It becomes obscure, buried beneath everything that comes afterwards, remembered wrong.

I would move now too.

In the kitchen, a drawer never used. Buried beneath a rusted can of lighter fluid and a wilted bouquet of mis-matched shoe laces, I find a picture.

In the bathing suit she only ever dare wear on vacation, she stands, rooftop garden, peering out over the city.

Sunglasses reflect the top of a drink being held out to her, its edges curving within the tortoise frame.

Her bathing suit could be a bright canary yellow, skin a soft mocha.

No one will ever know, it is black and white. It is better this way, the sharp monochrome contrasts adds a certain desolation that even she would approve of.

Almost everything is packed, I saved the stereo for last.

Pres plays.

That first kiss, I will never forget it.

Each time, remembered wrong.

TWO PROSE PIECES by Mark R. Drost

*

STRAITS

When they had chewed away his shins he fell, but then resumed the advance on knees, plowing through the brick layering. Right hand hooks over the rear of his scalp, fingers grab upper cuspids wrench up, up. The mouth itself enclosing the sides of its jawless gape, cuspids develop their own sickled multijoint growths and begin to sweep the chain links to airborne bits. He lets out a moment's release of whitecold air, finds himself cornered by a jam of stainless cleaves, pulling together into a curved ream, his throat is opened, head has nothing left to uphold, and lolls back. Then bobs back up, index finger impresses cutely against a sweetly tightened grin, lips part, incisives are erected and thorny, pinkish, dripping syrup, revealing lightning strikes of downcast veins. Then a richly leathered embrace encloses around his stabbed muscles; he closes his eyes, breathing softens—"so nice... to just simply... stop," his shoulders slouch, exhales

become deeper

*

EAT

His axeling jawbed tethers curled strung blackened beef, the standing column of his grounding veered and turned soundlessly, his resolute to keep the ascending vinerove inline in coursing for the rushing supportless henge he allowed his own envelopment to crust away and blow with the circling drafts to a place where the ground wouldn't allow his erecting, wouldn't let his breastcage unlock, the soundless unmindful effervescence he had only to lean into to fade himself away lathing the shallow slopes beside his ear. The examinations that would follow would tense and stretch the tactile endings of the rear of the neck, and the follicle nerves of the dome of the pate; he looked stern, and his trained eyes almost disappeared as the lines in his brow caved down, overtaking his face; when he overheard the clutches peeling themselves from out of the paneling seeking to

enclose the space about him his enrashed head was past boiling. The clutches that birthed, clamored from the planks, hooked over and down and plummeted into his breast were his own

LOCUST THREE
Volume 2
October 2006

All Works are Copyright © their Authors 2006.
All Rights Reserved Worldwide

Locust Magazine
<http://www.locustmagazine.com>
A Free E-Zine of Art & Literature, Edited by Patrick Gasperini
ISSN 1529-0832
Copyright © its Editor 2006

No portion of this magazine may be modified or altered in any way, nor may it be printed or distributed by any means, except for the purposes of personal use or review, without the prior consent of the appropriate copyright owner.

Locust Magazine PDF version
First Printed in October 2006
Reprinted in July 2016