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diverging threads originating from a common point
By Lee Clark Zumpe

five in the morning

she quits her bed,
she fingers the remote,
she rests her head against the door,
washes her face,
blows her nose,
squeezes keys between numb fingers,
flushes the toilet;
checks her voicemail;
breakfast on the table –
dog whimpering for food …
neighbor’s television too loud;
eggs toast cereal juice.
whisky bottle hits the wall.
high heels under the coffee table,
ham sandwich lunch;
shadows mocking her;
acquaint her shoulder
she spits on his picture
she dreams of that long drive
gently
spitefully
despondently
his smile like the dawn.
sick of window-gazing.
remembering the headlights.
headlights on the pavement,
headlights through the blinds:
reaching the clinic early,
dropping him at school.
one more late night meeting.
trying to beat the protestors,
she kisses his forehead –
she ignores his shrewd inventions,
thankful for every moment
declaring her independence
trying to keep their resolve…
trying to do the right thing.
scattered fragments of a lost discourse found in the bottom crimson tides wash away the mistakes which guided the razors onto such perfect skin torn away from reality and shown the in depth world where all is lost founded by guided razors torn onto such perfect flesh....

BeAuTy

Ravished By times contempt Rupturing The feelings For the dead Princess, Covered in Scars... Layed down On the shattered Heart... How can I Resolve When the Problem is Still under My feet? Need to bring It above me And kill the mistake Make it All go Away And let the night Carry her To me... With or Without life... I still can Taste her Beauty... 

Commercial suicide

Taking off to nowhere No exact destination Just a payment in full No exaggeration Going into it whole Making sure to die You said it would be yours And you never told a lie Now we are confused Wishing it was a dream But you replayed it With every last scream Now that you have made Thousands of tears fall You shocked the hearts And the souls of all As the rubble of life Lays knee deep in here The world watches in terror As we watch in fear Flying toward your end And concluding your plan You made your mark in history And left us all dried with tears in the sand Forever your mystery unfolds And never a weighed anguish The fact that it never happened Was everyones last wish Now crimson and concrete Fall from the sky above But you cannot defeat us This nation built on love... 

AnGeLiStlc

Time stands still For a single Lonely Diseased maggot-Making every Bone and Fragment Disappear Underneath a cry Of lost hope And decayed triumph Thrown into chaos Of disaster brought By the choice word Of reality Behold the pillar Of your broken self The one who flies On wings of red... 

Slumber

...vvarcning It all go away Into a swirl Of nothing. But a vague relapse Sinning inside Wishing for a bitter Desire to soothe My hunger and my rage Hoping to pass Onto the next plane Playing off What it was that I held inside to myself Biting the skin of time And letting it all flow out... 

Hoping for a last Embrace in dream, Where only I can rule, No watchers to limit me Just eternal night and A scent of crimson... 

Biding my time Inside this hollow Shell, praying For a taste of sin, A fragrence of darkness... 

Clenching and tearing, Foaming and seething, Crying and hoping, For one last ray of the moon To light my darkened face... 

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HUNGRY AND JOBLESS

"Our members," said John Turchiano, "have never been in this position before."

"Mr. Turchiano is a spokesman for the Hotel and Restaurant Workers union in New York City. On Monday four tractor-trailer trucks from the group fed the children pulled up outside the union's health center in Elmhurst, Queens. Nearly 500 union members and their families lined up for canned goods, baby food, toothpaste and other items that might be helpful for families suddenly thrown into an economic crisis. Worried expressions were the norm. Some of the union members wept.

"Even as they boldly confront each daunting new day with whatever reserves of toughness and cockiness remain, New Yorkers are struggling with two particularly debilitating kinds of fear. The first is the continuing terror associated with the attack on the World Trade Center and the anthrax attacks that have followed....

"The second type of fear is linked to the growing economic insecurity that is spreading in hideous waves across the entire city. New Yorkers by the hundreds of thousands are either out of work or are saddled with the realistic expectation that they will soon be out of work.

Mr. Turchiano said nearly 4,500 members of his union had been laid off, and 1,000 others are working reduced hours. He said nearly all the layoffs were directly or indirectly related to the trade center attack.

"We are only beginning to glimpse the economic toll. An enormous number of low-wage workers, many without health or unemployment benefits, have been caught in the downdraft. In the worst cases, families that until recently were enthusiastic, if not highly paid, participants in a remarkably high-flying economy are finding themselves confronted by the horrifying paralyzing hunger and imminent eviction from their homes.

"I think an awful lot of people are underestimating the extent of the disaster in New York City. All income groups are affected, but in the days and weeks and years to come the impact on the working classes and the poor is likely to be horrific.

"There are no guidebooks available on the best way to bring a city back from the combination of emotional and economic devastation."


During welfare reform lawmakers cut $2.5 billion from the federal food stamp program, six billion of which has now been restored. Today more than 23 million people rely on food pantries and soup kitchens for their survival.

NY Times, Nov. 18, 2001

A time for home, people, critters, weather, sweet peace, and new beginnings. Avoid the malls. Don't shop. Don't spend your wages. Just be together. The gift is the self.

submitted by
CAROLYN CHUTE

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Cathlin Baker and Paul Chapman, Co-Directors

VOL. 7, NO. 9; NOV / DEC, 2001
The queering of sexes
The querrying of innocents
The quibbling of facts
The quintupling of births
The quitting of scenes
The quoting of doom

"Q" from "The Last Acts of Saint Fuckyou," by Bern Porter
Collage by Sheila Holtz
Pennies in the Hat

KATHA POLLITT

With Christian fundamentalist churches on \textit{jihad} against reproductive freedom for women, don’t forget The National Network of Abortion Funds (c/o CLPP, Hampshire College, Amherst MA 01002 www.nnaf.org), an umbrella organization of state and local funds that finance abortions for poor women. Help from the NNAF can mean the difference between sickness and health, unemployment and college, staying in an abusive relationship or starting a new life—or even life and death.

And remember Patricia Hussey and Barbara Feraro, the two Sisters of Notre Dame who resigned from their order after the Vatican came down hard on them for signing an ad in 1984 affirming that Catholics had many different positions on abortion? They’re alive and well and living in Charleston, West Virginia, where they’ve been running the ecumenically based Covenant House (1109 Quarry Street, Charleston, WV 25301 www.wvcovenanthouse.org), which helps people with AIDS, the homeless and the poor and works for public school reform and other progressive campaigns in Appalachia.

With the economy officially in recession, joblessness up and tens of thousands of welfare recipients about to hit their five-year lifetime limit on benefits, there’s no time like the present to support poor people’s activism. The National Campaign for Jobs and Income Support is the coalition of grassroots groups that is leading the fight around the reauthorization of welfare reform coming up in 2002 (1000 Wisconsin Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20007 www.nationalcampaign.org).

Finally, the World Trade Center tragedy has fallen particularly hard on the service workers and undocumented immigrants who toiled in the towers: They or their survivors have gotten little out of the millions collected by the World Trade Center Relief Fund and the Red Cross. Thanks to welfare reform, which bars even legal immigrants from most federal safety-net programs, non-citizen mothers now suddenly sole heads of families find themselves ineligible for many essential benefits. To help now-jobless workers from Windows on the World restaurant and the families of those who perished there, you can make a tax-deductible donation to the HERE NY Assistance Fund (Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Square South, New York, NY 10012 www.helprestaurantworkers.org).

Checkbook running on empty? If you have e-mail, you can sign yourself and friends up with ProgressiveSecretary.org and finally keep that New Year’s resolution to stay in touch with your Congressperson. Founder Jim Harris and crew research and produce dozens of e-mails each month on issues from Arctic drilling to racial profiling. If you approve the contents, they’ll send them to the appropriate authority in your name. There is no easier way to make your opinion known—one cynic of my acquaintance compared it to spinning a prayer wheel. Hey, right-wingers out e-mail progressives many times over, and look at the way the country’s going—maybe they’re on to something.

It was a terrible year, but it’s almost over. Reason’s greetings!
The Fishermen In Their Bones - The Philippines

From a stone bridge I watch old men fish
the river from rowboats as gray as the mist.
Hunched with work and age,
the lean arms of the fishermen are slow as if
bone and muscle might otherwise turn to ash.

Yesterday the bloated body of a boy surfaced,
where women wash clothes along the shore,
downstream from where little girls urinate in the murky water.

Two policemen dragged the boy out with tattered fishing nets.
He lay on the ink-black mud for hours,
a death stare fixed on passing clouds.
The fishermen pay him little heed.
They have seen it all, they say.

They have been here forever,
The fishermen in their bones,
like ghosts of the river mist.

For those who still believe that the world is flat,
I now know why.
The river is as ancient as it was five hundred years ago.
It will still be as ancient five hundred years from now.

By afternoon the rowboats float by the boy,
one after another,
fishing lines taut in the water.
A fisherman pulled in a line only to unhook a shoe.
With barely a glance he noted the boy was barefoot.
So he tossed the shoe beside his body.
Then drifted on down the river.

- John Christopher Weil

As per your request, my most recent credits include Mind In Motion, The Black Hammock Review, Poetry Forum & Short Stories, Pablo Lennis, Ceterus Paribus, Green’s Magazine, California State Poetry Quarterly, San Diego Poet’s Press, twice in Sunflower Dreams and twice in Computer Edge. I am currently working on a novel and have the interest of an agent.

I am relatively new to the fiction and poetry market, however I have been publishing editorials,
political essays (critical as you can get) and other works for a decade.

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places
to plan in and pray in, where Nature may heal and
cheer and give strength to body and soul alike."

- John Muir
whatever happened in new york
By Lee Clark Zumpe

august pounced on us like a stalking panther
lean and insatiate
narcotic eyes teasing us into confidence
until

sure, there were moments rustling through our past
like rats in the attic
little earthquakes
minor storms

before you got off the plane
I knew it was over
you strained to keep the illusion sovereign
for a few difficult days
until

whatever happened in new york
festered in your belly
grievances and sour gripes
you were ready for a new menu

it slipped out in the form of a whisper
laced with suitable tears

you always feigned emotion

by october you were gone.

I began writing poetry and prose in high school. Presently, I am pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in English at the University of South Florida in Tampa. To date, my work has appeared in dozens of publications in the United States, Canada, and Australia.

my most recent publications include the following poems:

“Candlemas” in Penny Dreadful.
“Wavering” in Little Brown Poetry
“Luna” in The Florida Villager
“Making Love” Ibbetson St. Press

I also have work set to appear this year in Alembic, Möbius, Nerve Cowboy and Nomad’s Choir.

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