

AFTER THE PAUSE

A LITERARY MAGAZINE WITH A DINO ON THE COVER

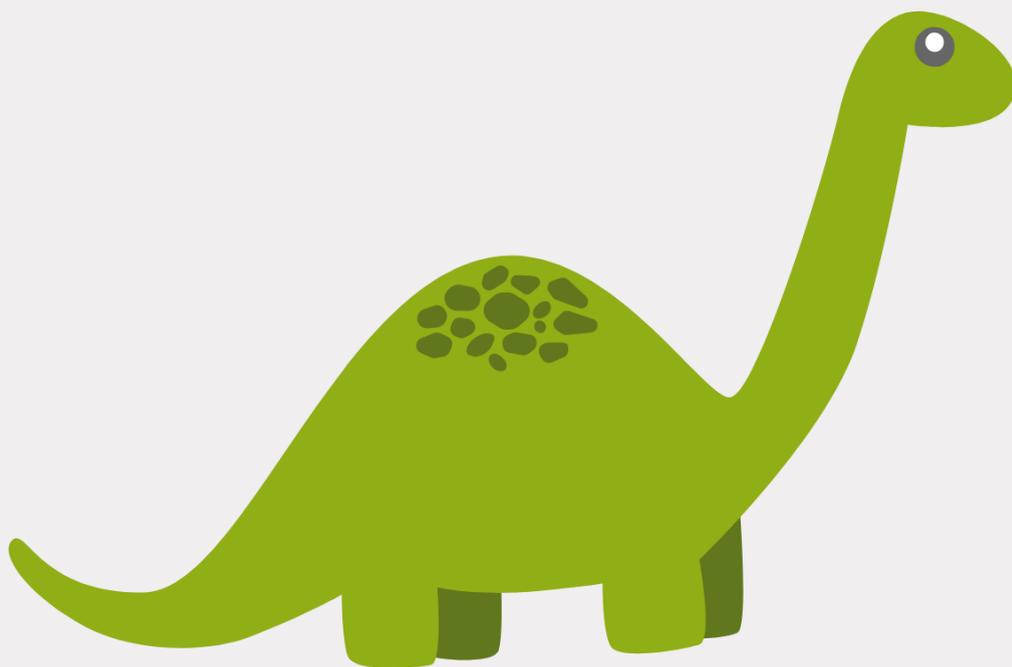
NAME: SPRING 2020

DATE: MARCH 1, 2020

VOLUME: 7

ISSUE: 1

In order to proceed, count the spots on this dinosaur! Then, after you have read all the pieces in this issue, check the last page to verify your answer.





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Being the Murdered Ukulele Girl

The thing about being the murdered ukulele girl is you set the plot in motion.

You'll be one of them, girls in their bedrooms, girls in lip gloss and stocking caps to hide their botched trim-your-own-bangs, girls on the edge of their beds, strumming the simplest chords, playing *Riptide*, *everyone can play Riptide*, strum down, down, up, down, up, but after you're dead, they'll say they liked your version best.

They'll love the break in your voice when you sing the line about getting the words wrong, the way you stared unblinking at the camera. They'll practice staring that way, they'll make their eyes big, their mouths small, look in the mirror, look in the camera, hold, hold, hold their blinking.

You'll have a thousand followers, ten thousand, a hundred thousand. They'll leave comments on your old videos, *you were too pure, you were so pure*, they will play them again and again, look for clues in the background of your room. The edge of a poster on the wall, the rumple in your bedspread, tipped-over unicorn figurine on your bookshelf. They'll listen for outside noises, for a tremble in your voice, *there, there, does she sound afraid?*

Does she know, they'll think. *Does she know it's coming?*

It will be your cover of *Sukiyaki* that they'll come back to and come back to, the way you stumbled over the Japanese, the way your fingers stuttered the chords. They'll say how authentic it was, how real.

They'll play it again and again, they'll turn their faces to the sky the way the lyrics (in translation) say, *so the tears don't fall*, their parents, when they first heard the news, *why are you crying, it's not like you really knew her*, the girls wiping their tears away. *People like you*, they said, and couldn't think of anything else, *people like you*.

They'll play your songs, think of them as *your songs*, their fingers going ukulele-calloused from strumming, down, down, up, down, up, they'll send their love out to the world, they'll whisper your name, they'll close their eyes, one tear will fall, and then their hands will reach forward, shut the camera off.

Seth Jani

This is a Developing Story

In the raw news of this world
there is suffering again:
small figures bundled in snowdrift,
the breadless hunger, a shadow
stalking the vulnerable steps.
There is beauty also.
A power which haunts the
shuddering nerves, calm and quixotic,
a cool wind come to bless
the feverish expectancy,
a body let down at death
into a golden field,
a love nudging our essence
into the transformations of form:

Rock. Flesh. Heart.

Breath. Condensation. Dew.

*Light shimmering back and forth
from star to ocean.*

Reflective water to child's eye.

In the raw news there is
the blowing winter doorway,
lives arriving and departing,
radiance lassoed in from
the distant fires,
a gradual lessening of the dark.

Alice Pettway

Retreat

At a certain height the breath draws in,
a bird rustling deeper in the branches

to escape the foraging cloud
mouthing one peak after another,

white maw swallowing even the breeze
into a colorless second when nothing

is as important as descent. Too long
above tree line makes the lungs forget

the necessity of air, and dust, and the clack
of storefronts rolling open in the dark

hours of morning, shouting themselves
again and again into existence.

Alice Pettway

Long Distance

Two eagles, claws locked, falling
toward love, and far south, hidden
in memory, a murmuration of starlings

whirling dark over the fields of childhood.
You wait across the ocean now, where the metal
has come to roost and the factories stand

on their hind legs challenging me to return
to you. Your call is soft under the lake wind,
two clouds rubbing at their edges, a leaf

settling onto low cranberries, I hear it
in the long Alaskan evenings
when the sun is forgetting to set.

Andrew Hutto

Pre-dawn

There are scenes on your eyelids

of cold starlight on
still dark water,
of candle soot in the
curve of a jar.

Nestle yourself snug within river grass,
for (—)
lilac trees never know to
that —
much is a dream in concentric rings.

Look past that lake evaporation,
for (—)
A hummingbird lands in my hand —
just a respite, it shakes its beak
back to my sugar.
Still, it's not dawn yet, still,
shiver like a skipping stone
next to (—)
the next of me.

Woman on a Beach

Here first... is what she says as she walks along the shore : sand damp with last night's detritus She rose – does rise || will rise – early : so that for a whole hour she has the seafront : the island : the world to herself She makes her way to a point on the shore : a point at which she looks out upon the iridescent lo, barefoot in the water : only the blank of the sea and the sky

Occasionally a seagull or plane might stray across the canvas or a cloud might *loom* oblivious : but she is patient || and she waits || and it is this absolute of nothing being the reason she is here : in such moments she finds peace

How is all this? Years ago she took a slow boat from «there-to-here» on what was then a whole day's journey and a full month's wage and eked out a subsistence until she became : η μοναχική κυρία, a harmless old thing : the foreigner who came : who stayed and stayed

Audrey T. Carroll

teaching names of birds

(1) *dark-eyed junco*

winters east, slate against
snow, shadow sparrow
bouncing to a cadence
of frozen feet, escaping
with a dancer's agility

(2) *red winged blackbird*

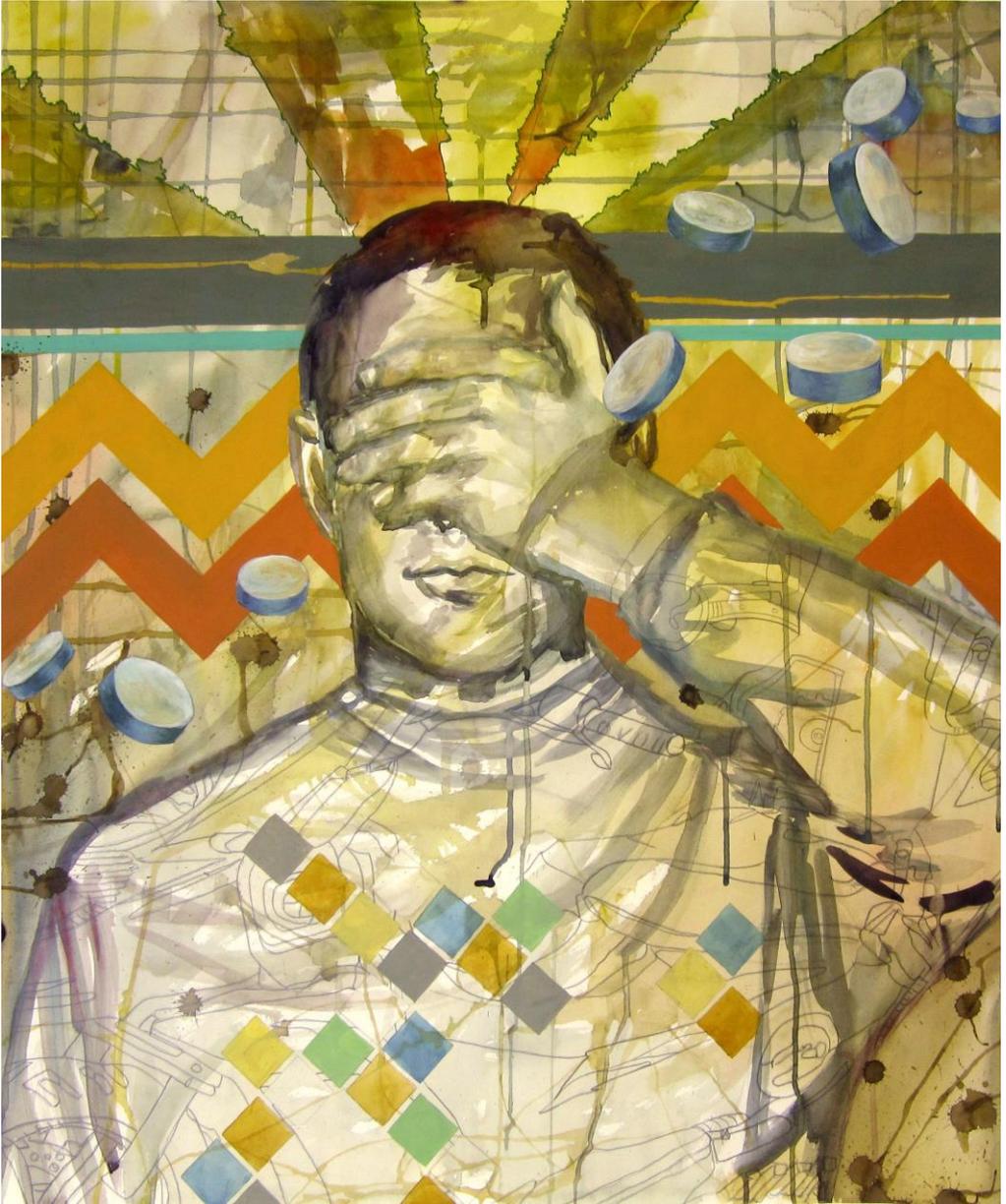
post-perched, oceanside
luring would-be sailors
for nourishment with fire-
engine painted wings,
others absent of color (save
for shadow) neglected

(3) *American goldfinch*

spark of sun, shadow-
streaked, golden-
feathered amongst earth-
soot creatures feeding
communal as You point,
asking what to call each

Kami Galeana

No Warning



Kami Galeana

Résumé Monday



Kami Galeana

Underwater



Reunions

Initially, we were surprised as we saw them coming up over the hill.

Outwardly, they hadn't changed at all, still looking exactly how they did when we had left them those 400 days earlier along the shore in that terrible morning light. "This isn't possible," one of us said under their breath. It was what we all were thinking but had been too terrified to say out loud. And they walked toward us without uttering a sound; their steps measured and sure, the crunching of their boots echoing and filling the thin air between us as they rose and rose.

Fate

It was neither love nor chemistry. Ricky Blue craved power. Steal a kiss, claim a throne. He thrilled in the snatch, smack, muah, mauling of another 9-year-old girl's. I was next to the jungle gym when he found me. *Gonna get me some new girl*, he said as he cupped my head and yanked toward wet lips. I bit my tongue when I twisted away, landed mouth first into green metal. Teeth were broken, warped. My parents blamed him when I needed braces. He had it right, though. The playground's serious business. I have degrees in things now – archaeology, forensic anthropology, craniofacial reconstruction. Ricky went on to rape a woman outside a liquor store. The police shot him in the face when he tried to get away. *What a mess*, his sister told me. It wasn't the rape she was referring to, but the hole that had been his mouth and sinus cavities. *They're gonna fix it for the funeral*, she said. As if there was something left to fix.

The very middle of anything at all

Things that people despise:

Waiting for a response to a carelessly sent text message. Hangnails. The very middle of summer or winter. The very middle of anything at all. We hold dear beginnings and endings — incipient conversations that unfold into kissing. The autumn coolness that carries so softly within it the end of summer. People tend to despise themselves. As I scavenge through bone white thoughts, a hatred grows that only can become love with an ending. On a deathbed. In a dementia infused mania. An ode to the mania of the whole of a life. A bipolar illness stabilized into ecstasy that a society could not hold but a nursing home can.

Things that make your heart beat fast:

Coffee and antidepressant cocktail. Being called out as sexist. The lies told knowingly on a picnic bench. Girls locker rooms. Shame will make your heart beat fast and then slow. Slow and rhythmic like weeping. Shame fills trash cans and trash cans are filled with items that contain shame. Finding the warm and pulseless body of a dog named Pony. Images of severed bodies, invading your fake sense of peace.

Things that fall:

Jaws. The glass cabinet in the ghost story that Willow told in a squatted house last Thursday night. Every single human body, into the earth, eventually. Words from mouths. *I love yous* fall repeatedly, clumsily. Togetherness, camaraderie, falls into bitterness, if you are not very careful. Togetherness, bound hands, fall to the sides of bodies that are independently directionless, and going opposite directions. Togetherness falls inevitably into loneliness. Togetherness, the expectation, falls like thunder, invisibly, wondrously scary, into segmented adulthood. Togetherness, the word, falls apart into different letters that blur and lose meaning on wet handwritten poems. Togetherness,

the idea falls deep into the pit that sits deep in my body and holds onto the isolation of shame, the shame of isolation. Togetherness, the sound, turns into a wet, wobbly whisper in their ear. "I want to be held" we spew back and forth at each other, and tumble through sentences that we hold back with the effort of statues.

Endearingly lovely things:

Parisian cafes. A gently tipsy walk home. Small apologies delivered through smiles. Nouns. Mostar, a town in Bosnia. Steffan. My love for you. My love for you.

The different ways that sweat smells:

Fake, like cherries. Like laundry detergent. Real, like bread. Yeast. Like the past that chugs along behind you, occasionally causing you to stumble with its potent burps, reminders of youth contained in soaps, Craft Mac n' Cheese, barbeque sunflower seeds. The house that suddenly appeared in your life, which smells uniform to all of the rich kids' houses that you ever had play-dates at. Sweat frequently smells like coffee. Sweat sometime smells like rotting. Like your father. The repulsive smell after he took his runs. How he would be dripping with sweat in the foyer. How I would stand before him in awe and disgust.

Things that you know you will regret doing at the time that you are doing them:

Shaving your head in November. Turning the toaster oven up to ten. Not saying goodbye. Taking the third shot of espresso at 7 p.m. When someone says "I'm so sorry," and you respond with silence.

The Poet Identifies Closely With John Wick

My grief is a cherry pit.
The dark cherry flesh glistens. It's all about texture.
The cameras don't luxuriate on the textured
glisten of split flesh, but by god do I luxuriate
in his black hair's curved gleam. In the no-gleam
of those black suits. In the void-gleam of the pain,
put to use, put to pain,
in the bones crushed, the wet stab of those knives
in men's eyes. The darkness underneath the day leans
close to me, cheek to cheek,
and all you voyeurs want to touch it.
You want to know it. You all lean in
when he starts crying, but he never starts crying.
How fucking dare you. Every day I spit out the pit of my mourning.
That pit would crack your molar if you bit it.
That pit would eat you if you ate it.

Infestation

They come from a crack in the wall she didn't even know was there, or had glossed over for years, the years she wasn't looking for cracks in the wall. Ants by the thousands surround her home, then infiltrate it, holding it up like a bank, trapping her inside, eating at her psyche, crawling through her brain. Their strength, their order, confuses and rattles her. How are they so organized and yet so inconsiderate? They march forward, single-minded, suicidal, into the middle of her home, with no regard for the fact that this is where she eats, where she bathes, where she tries to live.

The ants are like her daughter's friend Stevie, who knows too much for a fourteen-year-old. Stevie barrels into her kitchen and makes herself at home, helping herself to the fridge and the pantry, flinging cabinets wide open and leaving them that way. She worries that Stevie is introducing her daughter to those naughty things, slithering into the cracks of her fourteen-year-old's unfused self and busting them open raw. But her daughter only slams doors once in a while and still kisses her goodnight. Plus, she wants to be the type of mom who is like a second mom to her kid's friends, especially the ones who don't seem to talk much with their first moms. But at least *ask* before you eat all the grapes and leave their desecrated spine to shrivel on my counter.

She tries traps, but the ants sidestep those ominous black boxes, laughing in her face as they do, she's sure of it. They pour out of new holes in the wall, ones that couldn't have been there before. She closes her sticky eyes. Condensation drips off her glass of iced tea and onto her knee as she sits with her face so close to the air conditioner that she gives herself brain freeze.

They'd gone to therapy. She dragged him there and they said the things and she cried and maybe he did too. Then they came home and she sat in silence instead of what she should have done, which was cook dinner. She furiously attempted to reconstruct each session, failed to fashion some sort of

grand conclusion, and couldn't decide what "progress" meant and if it had been made. Therapy was exhausting. It didn't stick.

Vinegar and water, the internet said, is a "solution," but what do you know, the internet lied. The stinging smelly stuff sticks to her walls but doesn't deter the ants. Next, she clears CVS of its liquid bait traps and dumps their contents right onto the tile, smack in the middle of the land the ants have commandeered. She watches them come in droves. Armies. They sent the reserves. Crazy for the sugar water, they lap it up, bathing themselves in poison, tracking that sweet, sweet kill juice all the way back to home base. She imagines those little fuckers returning to the nest, gasping for air, eyes wide, screaming, "What has she done to us?! What has she done?!"

She sips iced tea and counts them as they emerge from the wall, faster now, manic for noxious nectar. Let's see, how many things are ruining my life right now? 1, 2, 7, 8... Shouldn't they both be home by now? 26, 35, 47... Maybe today was the day she had that thing. 51, 68, 72... Was his baseball game with clients tonight? 89, 100, 2,000... Soon there would be millions of them. They'd envelop her right where she stood, pile into her mouth until she couldn't breathe. They'd dig into her eyes until she couldn't see and burrow into her ears and into her brain. (Maybe they were they already there.) They'd consume her from the inside out, guts, blood, skin, nails, hair follicles, everything, hungry bastards, until there was nothing left but a writhing, squirming heap.

Sunday

When Hanif writes, "loneliness is a kind
of debt," I wonder *to whom?* There was a year

I dreamed every night I died
in a tsunami, as if the ocean was close

enough to render fear, as if I loved it
enough that I would let it

swallow me. But if I tell you dreams are
a kind of prayer, if I tell you sometimes

I'm awake when I sleep, I mean these words
are a canary warning what awaits. I've never studied

enough to become fluent in another tongue,
and most days my tongue sits against the roof

of my mouth, not proctoring
words, never checking the answers. I know

the work of a poet is not to love,
but to encounter it. What I'm saying is

that *debt* is another word for *duty*
and loneliness feels more like a tax

for reaching inward, separating waves
or wave lengths into only words. On paper,

I'm only one color. Loneliness is not
a rainbow, but a wandering strand.

On the last day, god said it was good.
And then the week started over again.

Lorrie Ness

Black Hole

police / paramedics
 g[love] the body
 she grew to hate

say it took ten minutes
 to form the puddle

i do not ask
 if she felt herself grow buoyant
 on sodden rug

they kneel / measure
 narrow diameter
 shore to shore

 say the mercy
was her weight
 compressing corpulent flesh
 to seal the breach
 dam the flow

backspatter bloods my photo
 her final view —
 iron on daughter's eyes
 tapioca fat [yell]owing walls

 a black hole
drinks this galaxy
 thirsting

 like the hunger of body
yearning for rest

swallowing lead for satiation

she crossed the event horizon
gave herself to gravity

I wring my sponge
watch the rosé water
orbit faster and faster

spiraling down the drain

On All Fours

After all the rioting and killing I was sufficiently desperate during that period of my life to become a piece of furniture in a bazillionaire's underground cave-mansion. What choice did I have? No spaceships were racing back to Earth for the leftovers. We were all on our own. It was either turn into decor or starve.

This was back in year six or seven of the Econocalypse. In my former life I'd been a happily married cloud data fracker with a Mini Cooper hover car and a timeshare in Sino-Aruba. Who could have predicted that I'd end up a human footstool? Then came the tsunamis and the floods, the killer asteroid, famine, global warming, nuclear winter—all our worst nightmares. The pandemic was only the last lick.

A postmodernist lounge chair with a sexy, close-to-bald buzz cut was the first of us to get zapped by the bug. She and I used to have a flirty thing going on and traded sleazy jokes and innuendoes between shifts or break times. Necking at work was, of course, explicitly verboten. Actual sex would get you tortured and killed. But who am I kidding? Nobody had the libido for coition anymore. We were all just soulless zombie-slaves by that time, meat furniture.

Anyway—the doomed skinhead girl. Overnight her lymph glands blew up under her armpits like obscene party balloons. Then her skin blistered and the burst corpuscles sprayed her face purple. You get the picture, right? It freaked us completely out of our minds. When she finally expired, we dragged her gangrenous body aboveground and tossed it onto a glowing hill of radioactive rubble, like a broken doll that nobody loved. I coughed and wheezed. The blood-red sky was snowing irradiated ash and the air smelled poisonous, like Liquid ASS. Loops of stringy drool dangled off my lips.

By then a lot of the other cave furniture had already come down with the pestilence, some type of weaponized form of bubonic plague. A massage table perished next. Then the heart-shaped bed gave up the ghost—twin

bachelors, I was told—followed a day or two later by a middle-aged bodybuilder with a PLAY button on her forehead and the anemic lowboy, one of those mutant animal-human-plant hybrids that used to be the rage.

Against all odds, however, I somehow survived. It was a narrow escape. For days I was delirious. My glazy head perpetually throbbed. Half-conscious, I envisioned a solitary manta ray opening and shutting its devil wings inside my skull. Wads of words seemed to drift through me. But I didn't have the energy to hold on to them for longer than a moment. Hunkered down on all fours—a posture which by then had become second nature—I'd occasionally snatch a few suspended seconds of sleep. But if I ever managed to dream back then—something that I seriously doubt—it was only to imagine the vertebrae that pushed at the loose skin of my back, hardening by infinitesimal degrees into perfectly polished and shimmering steel.

Confession with Father Patrick

It's Wednesday, a little after ten a.m., and I'm alone in church. I sit in the confession booth for two minutes before the priests' side door opens and someone climbs in. From the heavy huff of breath and the sharp, rasping groan that comes with the creak of the closing door, I know that my confidant today is my good friend Father Patrick. The groans are caused by his bad right knee, which he injured while snowboarding up at Kentor Mountain a little over seven years ago, just before he became a priest. I know this because we talked about it in this very booth last week while my mom thought I was looking for a job at the library across the street, the place she drops me off at every morning while on her way to work. Ever since my most recent seizure two months ago she says she doesn't feel comfortable leaving me at home by myself.

Before Father Patrick has the chance to open the little window built into the partition wedged between us, I start talking.

"I've pulled back the curtain of death, and peered at the face of God," I say. "And I'll be honest, he's not a bad looking guy. He's no Ryan Gosling, but he's up there."

Father Patrick slides open the window and breathes a comfortable sigh.

"Gretchen, good morning. I'm glad to see you're doing well. Any word on the results of your MRI?"

"They didn't find anything. So they still have no idea why the hell this is happening to me all of a sudden, at age twenty-six. But I recently had an interesting revelation that I think you'll find fascinating."

"The fact that you think God looks like Ryan Gosling?"

"I was actually talking about the curtain of death part," I say, as my right thumb starts twitching on its own. Feeling this, my mind fills with images of my body going limp, my head smashing against the dusty floor, vomit blasting from my bloody mouth. (Always it blasts, the vomit, in these terrifying daydreams of mine. Never does it leak or bubble or do anything

logical.) To take my mind off these awful images, I close my eyes and picture the scene from *Crazy, Stupid, Love* with Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone, the one where it's raining outside his house. "The Ryan Gosling thing was just a joke. Though I do think it would give you guys a nice boost to your attendance numbers if you replaced the crucifix with a carving of a shirtless Ryan Gosling. If you did that you might even see *me* here for Saturday mass, instead of just my mom."

"As much as yourself and the female parishioners might enjoy that, I don't think Monsignor Hoffman would share your enthusiasm for the idea," Father Patrick says.

"Well shit," I say, purposely pushing my luck, trying to get a rise out of this man I've talked to for hours by now but never actually seen.

"Gretchen, language, please. We've been over this."

"I mean poop. Sorry Father."

My thumb finally stops twitching, so I open my eyes. From this angle, leaning my head against the back wall of the booth, I still can't see Father Patrick. But I sense his body beside me, inches away, and this is comforting. It reminds me that I'm not alone with these constant thoughts about life and death. Out of everyone in my life right now, he's the only other person who has to think about these things on a daily basis. Everyone else—Mom, Dad, my girls Rose and Linda over at the library—they all say I'm being morbid whenever I try to talk about this stuff. Or they tell me to see a therapist. But therapy costs money, which I don't have. The church confessional with Father Patrick, on the other hand, is free.

"So what did you see behind this curtain of death?" Father Patrick says, breaking the silence.

"Well, I'm eighty-five percent sure I discovered what happens when we die, and I just wanted to tell you that I think you guys are on the wrong track."

"Really. How so?"

"Based on my experiences, I think *The Sopranos* got it right. I'm pretty sure it's an instantaneous cut to black, and that's it. Because when the brain can't form a memory of something, it's as if that event never happened in the first place. I know this because that's exactly what I experience right before a seizure. According to my mom, just before I had the last seizure, I walked up a staircase, went into the bathroom, and started washing my hands, but I have

no memory of doing any of that. So from my perspective, it's as if those things never happened. So I'm pretty sure that's what it's like for us at the end. Even if we suffer the most horrible pain imaginable, we won't have the ability to remember it once it's over, so it'll be as if it never happened. And I'll be honest, Father. That's a lot more comforting than the stuff you guys are peddling."

"Why do you find eternal nothingness more comforting than what we do here?"

Now my heart starts galloping in my chest, sounding a series of sharp, heavy thuds in the back of my throat.

"Because it's the knowing that's unbearable."

Saying this I realize Father Patrick can no longer help me. Despite all he's seen, kneeling beside the beds of the dying, witnessing their final moments, it's clear the fear has not yet touched him. I climb out of the confession booth and walk to the exit. Over the course of a few weeks I seem to have passed through his sphere of influence, just as I passed through God's many years ago.

James Stelzer

Bad Idea Machine #1

A summary of the shitty ideas that I had at my desk between 23/09/19 - 27/09/19.

Santa Jaws

A Christmas film set in the *Shark's Tale Cinematic Universe*.

The Fault In Our Tsars

A romantic novel that reimagines the 1917 Russian Revolution as the inevitable end-result of a short-lived, youthful affair between Tsar Nicholas II and Vladímir Lenin that imploded bitterly at the turn of the 20th century.

Commando & Conquer

A spin-off of the real-time strategy video game series in which every unit is naked from the waist down, including the player.

Untitled Juice Game

A stealth game inspired by *Hitman* and starring OJ Simpson. Each level is set in a different public space (think bars, restaurants, golf courses, etc.) within which the goal is to wreak havoc on the unsuspecting public by openly filming Twitter videos about everyday topics such as politics and fantasy football. Using disguises and diversions, the player must get set-up and begin filming without alerting members of the public to OJ's presence: busier surroundings and longer videos squeeze out higher point scores. Finding creative ways to make these videos more controversial earns multipliers (litres of 'Juice') that push the player up the High Score leaderboards.

This Is Your Strife

A Netflix reboot of the classic reality documentary series focused entirely on the personal tragedies that have plagued the lives of the show's guests. No redeeming moments, no happy endings!

James Stelzer

Bad Idea Machine #2

A summary of the shitty ideas that I had at my desk between 30/09/19 - 4/10/19.

Dog Eat Dog World

The dying breath of reality television. Think Crufts meets Celebrity Big Brother featuring the likes of Pitbull, Snoop Dogg, Scooby Doo, Dog the Bounty Hunter, and your mate's French bulldog with 41 Instagram followers, all duking it to be crowned *Top Dog*.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

An American sitcom reboot of the classic British *bearytale*. Premise: Goldilocks finds herself abandoned in the woods by her parents and is subsequently discovered and adopted by three gay men in their mid-thirties engaged in a stable trinogamous relationship. The show follows the everyday ups-and-downs of three clueless men raising a teenage girl together. Goldilocks inevitably helps each man find himself. Season One reaches its climax as Goldilocks finds herself in a classic 'three Dads to the Prom' scenario, putting a massive strain on the whole family as the men compete with one another to win her affections. As sitcom dilemmas always require a resolution around the 17-minute mark, an exasperated Goldilocks eventually breaks down and tells the men to take her to the prom *together* – they are *all* her Dads now, and, besides, the audience demands a happy ending.

Ghost Malone:

Your weird uncle's favourite hard rock band fronted by your little sister's favourite rapper.

Volk Hogan:

A poorly written comic book series in which Hulk Hogan inexplicably gains the power to time travel. Where will he go? Germany, 1939. How will he get there? Your guess is as good as mine. But let me tell you something, brother! Mr. America is on a mission (for reasons kept purposefully vague): to subject the Third Reich to a *hostile takeover*.

The Legend of Zelda: The Land of Milk and Honey

Spin-off written

and directed

by Rupee Kaur.

Non-Ganonical.

Fish camp

& when the neighbor woman says:
there used to be a fish camp here
& that building used to be for storage
& a live well beside & a sign advertising the gasoline
for sale so full of bullet holes
when finally they tore it down
the owner wanted to be done once
& for all & she said no she said it's history
& can you imagine: the rednecks
good old boys boating & fishing
& shooting gators
& the gasoline sign
& maybe each other

& who are we to say / & judge the things that came before

when things change she said:
& aren't the way they were & never will be
well, someone should take
a photograph she said
if you aren't going to leave it
you repaint a building she said
& dig up the gardens & dig out the shotgun shells
& put blue shutters on the white clapboard
& the gasoline sign sits still in storage
& she said when things change most people forget
& never remember & never even realize
& that's history she said

& the way she said the word
made it sound like a thing you could
forget or else hold in both hands
or mount like a trophy on the wall
of a den or a garage or a fish camp
& say remember the time

S.T. Brant

Remembrances of Things Past

Yes, the joy of a communion with the present that abnegates Time's washing,
Standing in still waters, to have to wade beyond the surf that brushes
 beaches,

Yet still a ripple that's made elsewhere finds you, and we remember:
The worse sadness of recalling the forgotten you happily forgot.

S.T. Brant

Enough

Enough? such impossible quantity... state... condition: baptize the water with
what spell you will,
Your Enough fills a glass's floor;
A drink that would dry a lawn;
A sprinkle that would less an ocean.

About

Founded in 2014, *After the Pause* is an online literary journal based in Indianapolis, IN, featuring poetry, flash fiction, and artwork, published quarterly.

We look to feature the best creative arts from new, emerging, and veteran creators.

Find us at afterthepause.com or on Twitter @afterthepause and Facebook /afterthepause.

The editor of *After the Pause* and the overseer of its entire doings is Michael Prihoda.

Our Purpose

We believe art is a product of life experiences, from the joyful to the heartbreaking to the absolutely mundane. Life throws pauses at us. Art follows the pause. We want to share the best art we can find and bring hope through those artworks.

Cover Art

Designed by Michael Prihoda.

Answer From Front Cover

If you count the eye and its iris: 17.

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