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Come in...and be captivated...

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"Untitled #119" by Marcie Paper; <http://marciepaper.com/>

\*As a special feature, we invite you to see words and art put to music in the following music video with animation by artist Marcie Paper and song by Backwards, entitled "Naked Flame". Enjoy this beautiful blending of mediums!



**"nós~ ui, nus"**

by Michelle Kennedy

The color of you  
is embedded in me  
tattooed, neatly etched  
Every flexing and stretching  
finds you there in  
the marrow of my ribs  
in the thrust of my words  
the dance of my lips  
in the inhale and exhale  
Between the here  
and the there  
you are everywhere  
like sweet clementine juice  
I taste you in the air  
sticking to my every thought  
We are knotted, neatly, bound

**Remnants of Sound**

by Felice Aull

It started out like other hikes we'd taken up that path:  
legs bending, then stretching to meet the steeply sloping earth.  
Earth pockmarked with rocks or soft with moss. We passed the cascades  
of whooshing foaming rush, soon losing it all to quiet.  
And then aware -- the air -- faintly tainted in high-pitched sound  
that gathered, streamed, did not relent, shrieked, pierced its way forward.  
Surrounded, enveloped in sound. We pressed into it, through  
until it faded, died. The same path back provoked the same  
crescendo. Days later the news of local locust swarms.  
When we went back, their broken shell-like skins were everywhere --  
silent remnants, an invisible force made visible,  
the ghostly graveyard of an army that had disappeared.

**The Lure**

by Felice Aull

Wisteria, if you felt  
your own dwindling,  
could imagine the bare vine,  
would you plunge more recklessly  
from up to down the brownstone wall,  
pour more hanging clusters  
to play against the muddy stucco?  
Would you perform your color  
more deeply, or paler?  
Yes the color, epitome  
of lilac- violet- blue  
How it lures me even when  
you are nothing  
but a charcoal vine.

**Not Mistakes**

by Peter Franklin

We are all alike, but just as different  
As the night is from the pair of shoes

Dangling off my feet...  
We are who we are, the amalgam

Of experience, successes, foibles, dreams.  
Oh! Those dreams!

Our hope is that the apple we're about to bite into  
Is crisp and succulent,

Mouth-watering...reminiscent of that which  
Makes us smile.

Hold the worm.  
But isn't life full of worms?

And we just need to learn to fish? Or to Garden?  
Oh! Those dreams!

Truthfully, we are the cause of who we are –  
Whether we are conscious of that or not.

The footprints behind us are  
Ours, pointing in the exact direction in

Which are headed.  
It's no accident we are here.

It's no accident we are aware.  
There are no mistakes.

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**Equinox**

by Peter Franklin

Subtly  
Silently  
Somewhat slyly,  
Sun's arc  
Pushes higher...throbbing,  
Pulsing,  
Wresting every ounce of warmth  
Out of its  
Hoary-tinged hiatus.  
Not-so-arbitrary dividing line,  
Astronomic wonder, truly...  
Actually began days,  
Weeks  
Ago.  
Wind blows stronger (now)  
Frantically  
Clinging to its  
Arctic  
Heritage...  
But what's the use?  
It is futile  
For I can already discern  
Smoothness  
To its rough edges.  
That which was bleeds into that which is.  
The continuum,  
Countless cycles,  
Careen  
Into one another with ungoverned  
Speed...  
Needing no assistance from us  
To  
Complete the change.  
Fuss  
With your clocks if you must...  
I,  
Though,  
Obligingly turn my face to the sun...  
For I need no assistance either.

My genetics have figured it out.

**The Grounds, St. Paul de Mausole Hospital and Vincent Van Gogh**

by Patricia Daly-Lipe

The trees were just as he saw them  
Twisted trunks, withering branches  
Plaintively reaching for the glow  
Of the pale blue and pink sky.  
Gray leaves flashing silver at the falling sun,  
Dry, pale ochre weeds coating the earth below.  
The edge of his palette knife  
Marking this place  
Still so full of his presence.

Image link~ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hospital\\_in\\_Saint-Remy.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hospital_in_Saint-Remy.jpg)

**Oberon**

by Denise Bouchard

Worship me always  
as a goddess

Though I may take your power and leave your jagged edges raw, your body  
weak

Still, come into my garden

Leave me drunk with you and languid in the forest of our bed, beneath the  
moon, unable to speak

My summer petal gown ripped

While I cradle you and rock you softly like a ship

Sending your storms out to sea

**Reminder Ashes**

by Cheryl Sommesse

They rested gently on my forehead  
although a few trickled delicately down  
my cheeks.

Black powder  
reminding me from where I came,  
strengthening my faith as to the place I  
one day may go.

Blank stares found me,  
befuddled faces filled with curiosity,  
hope,  
anguish,  
joy.

I knew them all  
for each one was me.  
Traversing one circuitous route  
or another  
while traveling on this journey,  
my coral lips couldn't help  
but smile.

I didn't wash that evening  
somehow it didn't feel right.  
The creamy pillowcase welcomed me  
anyhow,  
allowing my head to rest against  
its silky comfort like a guiltless babe  
nestling by its mother's breast.  
Frankly  
I never felt more whole.

The fabric now bears the stain

of my mortality,  
I did not mean to pass along transgressions  
to something that never did  
any wrong.  
I can remedy the situation,  
still  
I think I'll wait a bit before I cleanse  
the now-marked cloth.

### **See With my Ears**

by Charlotte Lewis

To live in a world where color does not exist  
Faces are a myth  
Sunset and sunrise only in a cocktail glass over ice  
Take my hand and walk with me  
Come and see the unseen  
See without being biased  
Heart and soul manuscript of dark world which holds vibrant colors

I would fall in love with the world pictures he painted  
Allow my finger tips to paint the masterpiece which is his face  
Smile that is held by endless dimples  
Eyes that are tender and loving  
Lips that are kissable  
Releasing words that entertain love and soothe my existence  
And in his absence I would touch my finger tips to my face  
And it would be as if he kissed my cheek

To live in a world where images are self-made  
I would allow the earth the speak to me  
Hear its cries of social injustice  
Discrimination  
Poverty  
Economic rape

I would see with my ears  
What the eyes block out



I could see the pain through the tone of a woman's voice  
As she and her family struggle to make ends meet  
Not assuming her well-dressed groom  
Clean car  
Means that she has a foundation to call her own

Shopping cart wheels playing a melody against the pavement  
As he drags his life before him  
Shuffle of his feet says that he has difficulty walking  
But pushes through for it is a matter of survival

If I lived in a world of darkness  
And I relied upon one's touch to tell me who they were  
Or await a voice to embrace my hearing  
I would not miss a movement  
A sound made by those I loved  
Discerning a happy walk from a sad walk to I am angry  
Take note of the various melodic tones their speech conveys  
Understanding what they mean  
Not taking for granted the simple 'I am okay'  
But hear what the body says by means of its movement  
Not taking for granted what appears on the surface  
Digging deep to know and understand our loved ones  
Our friends

If I lived in a world of darkness  
I would allow my voice to be guide  
Heard on every mountain top  
Teaching and inspiring  
According to what my heart and soul recorded  
As result of seeing with my ears

**Adrienne Rich**

by Vince Corvaia

When you dove  
into the wreck  
I followed

to the depths  
of my own tortured  
sunken verses  
like an explorer  
bent on conquest.

When you dreamed  
of a common language  
I freed  
my own words  
rising like bubbles  
from the deep  
bearing wisdom  
like notes in green bottles.

Then you appeared  
at a small college in New Jersey  
and so alienated  
the male professors  
that I felt ashamed  
for my sex  
and slunk away afterwards,  
your book unautographed.

I feel  
the loss  
thirty-four years  
later  
as I read  
of your death  
in the pages  
of Entertainment Weekly.

### **Upon Sighting Snow Geese, Flight North**

by Rachael Z. Ikins

Storm peeled back night sky's  
skin, a deeper, pewter hue. In the west

shade's drawn, but overhead reveals  
a slice of silver moon, dangles one crystal  
from her chin. Thin feathers of clouds  
friable as tissue in wind's steel, flee.

Snow dervishes dance, sway as if house,  
tree angers air. Overhead, indigo behind  
shining sliver, where star's eyes peek through  
night's torn fabric; I hear them:

Above the hiss of blizzard's retreat, slow flow,  
softer whispers from folds of cloud  
tatters, two no, three pastel streaks, geese.

Not familiar birds in tux or tails,  
these glow white as swans. Quiet voices.  
Pairs fly onward. Above me, upside down,  
my eyes, snow geese, a raft of them,  
rows of rafts, ride rapids through heaven's  
open gate. "My God!" I call, unbidden two words leave my lips,  
smoke air that rips them from me, "Oh, my God!"  
I turn, I turn, a child on a merry-go-round, fingers reach for

glowing geese, moon dangle, the clouds, snow dervishes'  
demented swirl, this February night. Tears frozen down  
my cheeks, it is all God.

### **Untitled**

by Simon Perchik

You have this kinship, the limp  
balances you and the Earth  
already blossoming

with nothing under it  
though you lift one foot  
closer to the other

hillside after hillside  
the way mud settles and clots  
--you're used to losing, come

so this cane can grab your hand  
almost in time and what's left  
above the ground, knows

you're drowning, in rain  
stops and starts, in dirt  
and tells you everything.

### **The Battle of Vandam Street**

by J.E.A. Wallace

On Vandam Street in the pouring rain  
They watched his window with eyes of flame

Inside  
Time was getting was short  
Cigarettes were being smoked to extinction

He violently wished not to have to go  
To the merry gentlemen in the street below

Deep inside  
He knew nobody  
Chooses the hour of their damnation

He looked at his dog asleep on the bed  
And softly scratched its dreaming head

Deep inside  
It was shouting down  
The moon in a war of attrition

But it stirred as he quietly dragged  
His shadow down the stairs that sagged

Inside  
His dog put its face to the window  
And bared teeth that shone like salvation

The tumbling glass flickered eyes of flame  
On Vandam Street in the pouring rain

### **Aunts in the Kitchen**

by Linda Eve Diamond

Someone dropped  
a secret  
in the kitchen—

a juicy, sticky secret!

The aunts sense the sweetness  
of a rich, savory secret  
from every corner of the house.

Into the kitchen they march...

Past the snacks, to the greatest feast of all—  
the sumptuous, scrumptious crumbs  
of a great story!

### **Inherited friend**

by Fiona Sinclair

News of mother's death reached her friend  
like the last sensation of a local Marilyn.  
Slipping into the back pew on the final bars  
of 'The Lord is my shepherd',  
she left as the curtains touched.  
Then I receive her letter's extended hand.  
So on chintz sofa holding china cups,

I listen as she riffs about the past  
until suddenly the electric shock  
of her casual your mother...

Thirty years before,  
when my uncle decided  
he'd married the wrong sister,  
civil war in my family; grandmother and aunt  
bombarding this woman with telephone salvos  
until her I can't be friends any more  
left my mum making boozy begging calls.

So I am on a bed of nails  
as she fondly recounts how mother would nurse  
their Chihuahua on her lap all afternoon,  
and when she departed,  
the little dog smelt foppishly of Chanel no 5.

**Sweet Yellow Table** (*prose poem*)

by Beth McKim

The round formica table, bright yellow with silver chrome trim and legs, is lonely. A survivor of the 1950's, she has four chairs made of yellow cushioned vinyl with black trim, metal studs, and matching chrome legs. They sit around her like formerly stalwart guards, now bored from inactivity.

In recent days past, this group resided in the kitchen of a small yellow bungalow from the same era. This was the center of the house where residents and visitors alike gravitated toward her sunny and welcoming presence. She had shone brightly when the family tossed witty banter or silly gossip around her as if she were one of them. When they discussed money issues or marital problems, she supported the weight of their misery. Through the years, she never faltered or gave way while displaying meals, shopping bags, party fare, or an occasional centerpiece.

Now she waits upstairs in the newer, larger house. There seems to be no place for her downstairs. She remains for a retro look only, in a game room

at the end of a hallway. She is rarely visited but, if questioned, could tell fascinating tales of days gone by. She realizes that sometimes, if one lives long enough, one becomes less relevant. She sustains herself with reminiscences of what she gave to the people in her life when they still needed her.

Editor's Note~ As a further example in this issue of how poetry can heal, effect change and foster awareness, we chose to include the piece below as a special feature along with commentary by the poet that includes a bit of the back story that inspired the poem and how it is being used.

*Rosemarie Wilson a.k.a. One Single Rose, is an award winning poet, writer, advice columnist, and a staunch advocate of integrity and fidelity. She is a Davenport University graduate, four time National Poetry Award (NPA) nominee, 2010 recipient of the National Poetry Award's New & Upcoming Poet and Poetry Author of the Year awards and first place winner of the Detroit Writers' Guild Paul Laurence Dunbar Poetry Contest. Rosemarie has performed nationally and internationally and her poems are included in various anthologies, publications and websites. For more information, visit [www.onesinglerose.com](http://www.onesinglerose.com).*

A very dear friend was killed by her abuser in February 2011. Since that time I have been speaking out as much as possible against domestic violence. I wrote "Generational Curse" in her honor. As a result of my spreading the word about domestic violence, on Friday, May 18, 2012 I was honored by S.A.F.E. (Sisters Acquiring Financial Empowerment [www.newsafestart.org](http://www.newsafestart.org)) as a "Safe Ambassador" at their 6th Appreciation Event. S.A.F.E. is a non-profit organization that helps women who have survived domestic violence get back on their feet financially. I am honored to help spread the word about their endeavors to help domestic violence survivors.

### *Generational Curse*

by Rosemarie Wilson

*My soul ached every time dad whooped on ma.  
The second time I saw him hit her,  
I vowed to never love a man who raises his hands at me.*

*I heard my dad tell my mom, "I'll never hit you again, baby," 5,011 times.  
I spent 14 years,  
physically untouched,  
emotionally scarred,  
spiritually deceased  
and  
mentally drained.  
I've been where I am and can't believe I'm still here, living in fear.  
All summer my man quoted my dad's line to me as he washed my blood,  
his sweat  
and my salty tears from my face.  
I don't expect his recitations will reach hundreds  
but we were well past 50 in December.  
I wouldn't be caught in the same rut if I hadn't been raised as a slave to the  
one two check up.  
Three fingers point back at me when my index points at another.  
I have choices.  
The promise I made to myself  
became entrapped within the universal front of my man's handsome face,  
swift tongue,  
the love we make,  
and the couple dollars he throws my way.  
I love me some him,  
but I should love on me some me!  
My tomorrows were squandered yesterday  
as I live each moment stuck within sour times.  
I've lost more than I care to remember.  
Mom courageously left dad when her sister was killed by her husband.  
They tried to save each other.  
If Aunt Addie were here,  
I know she'd sing to me what she sang to my mom every day,  
"Why would you stay?"*

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