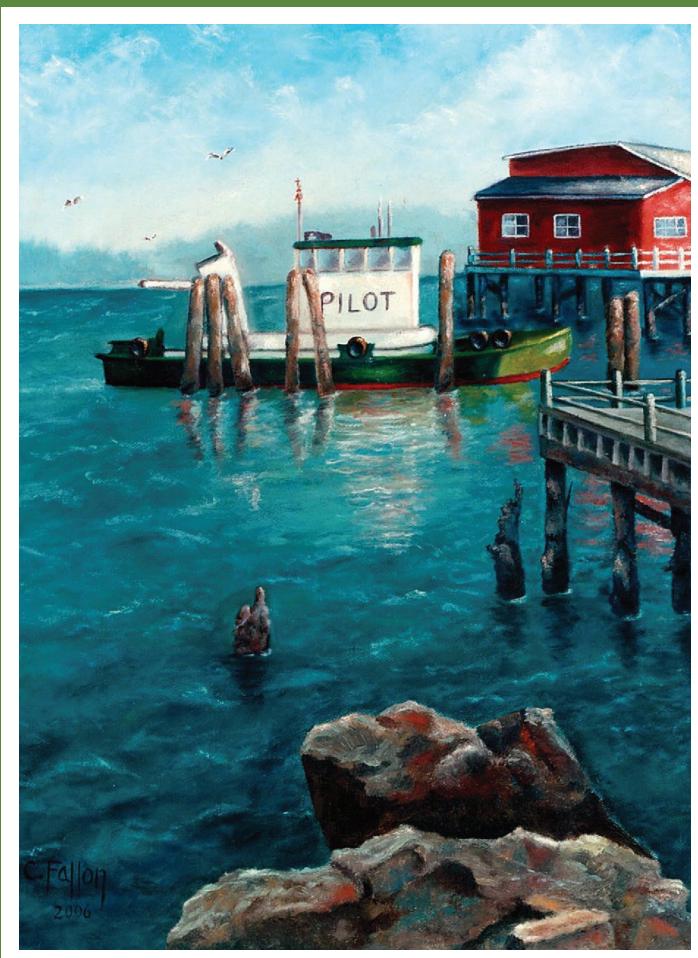


CLR

CLACKAMAS LITERARY REVIEW



2012
Volume XVI

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Clackamas Community College
Oregon City, Oregon

CLR

CLACKAMAS LITERARY REVIEW

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Editor in Chief's Note

In 1997, with the support of the Clackamas Community College English Department, Jeff Knorr and Tim Schell created *Clackamas Literary Review*. Over the years and under the guidance of many editors, the voice of *CLR* has shifted subtly. Some years, we may have been seen as a poetry journal, while in others, a journal dedicated to fiction. In 2001, Tim wrote “that the mission [of *CLR* at the beginning] was obvious: create a literary journal that would publish the best literature we could find regardless of who wrote it.” While the editors have changed, we want to reiterate our stance: *CLR* will always strive to offer the finest essays, fiction, and poetry to its readers.

Thank you,
Ryan Davis
Editor in Chief

The Poetry Teacher

Jack Powers

*In the great poetry factories of China,
I tell my students, each poet,
must produce a poem every ten minutes.*

Students hunch over blue-lined papers.
They clutch pens like wild quills.

*Randall Jarrett, I say, said poets
stand in thunderstorms
hoping to get hit
five or six times in their lives.*

*But the room is cold, say the students
and the water colder.*

*We are seeding the clouds, I say,
We are speeding the clashing fronts
We are standing to our hips in water.*

They scribble furiously.

*Our factory is a ship, I say
hunting for storms in the sea.*

I roll marbles in each hand
to trouble their cadence.

See the lightning in the distance!

But we are sinking, say the students

*You must learn to swim, I say,
To breathe under water.*

Glub glub, say the students

*The fish have little flippers, I say,
and the ocean is vast.*

Water magnifies their panicked faces.

*Don't flail your arms, I say,
but they can't hear me.*

I squint against the shock of lightning
illuminating skeletons of mackerel,
of students floundering against the black sea.

White paper rectangles rise, furl, unfurl.
Pens sink like harpoons into the deep.

I forgot to tell them
about surprise. *None for the writer,*
I say, but it's too late.

The bell rings and they must go on
to Calculus, to History.

End with an image, I say,
but their pens are capped.
They clutch their backpacks and chat
as they paddle toward shore.

Moments of Light

Eric le Fatte

Lying in my bedroom
beside you, and dreaming
about you, I surfaced across
the boundary of sleep
to reconfigure
the flight path of my dream,
which had veered
just a few degrees
from the landing
I had in mind.

Through the window
the moon threw
a huge yellow glow
As though it were
dissolving in clouds,
and the beams fell to earth
to soften your face.

A moment later, I perceived
what had seemed to be lunar
was composed

less of the moon
and more of the light
from a lamppost,
positioned so as
to illuminate
the empty street.

I'm sorry it wasn't the moon.

Whose Face

Jean Esteve

Suppose his face his face don't please
my jaded eyes when waiting's done.
suppose his own eyes hold a cloud
of counterfeit gone seasons

and his hands stay by his side
while mine fray, fray handkerchiefs,
there we stand gaining time
for what next mischief of our gods—

tell me, sure, his feet don't sink
down in slime like treachery
or that his toes don't curl around
mine and say we're both betrayed.

I will sleep I will sleep with my hogs instead
of that boy whose face I don't find splendid.

Nobody Loves a Snowy Girl

David Harris Ebenbach

A lot of times it took Katie a minute of sitting in the big, wide parking lot at the end of the day before she could get out of her car and walk toward the elementary school building where the day care also was, that ugly box-building that looked a lot like the prison eight miles down the same highway. She sat with her hands on the wheel, and on the radio would be Bob Castor, the afternoon talk radio guy who was “the last and humblest defender of America.” She had a feeling he was making a lot of things a little too simple, and he was not a nice guy, but she liked to use his voice, his certainty about who was right and who was wrong, to help gather the strength to go inside. There was something heavy—too heavy—about the building and what was inside. She saw the dull no-color of the concrete and just felt like she was under it.

“And so you’ve got these liberal people,” Bob Castor was saying, “who think of the word family like it’s a four letter word, these guys who would put their sons in dresses if the New York Times fashion pages told them to, who would sell their grandmothers to the Cubans for cigars, who would tack on an extra wife and a gay *life partner* and cite the Koran as their authority. I mean, that’s what we’re talking about, here, and I’d like to hear someone say something intelligent about it today on the phone lines.” Katie knew that he was responding to something particular in the news, something that had happened to-

day, but she had only been listening for a few minutes, and had missed the main issue. But the way he talked—it straightened her spine.

She turned off the radio and stared at the box of a building another few seconds before finally getting out of the car. Then she crossed the gray parking lot, feeling her exhaustion and the cold—November was bad this year—and went into the cement of the school building, down the dark hallways, thinking of caves like the ones they always used to talk about being in Afghanistan back when everybody was talking about Afghanistan, and then she opened the door to the room.

Immediately she was hit by the burst of sound from a bunch of four- and five-year-olds screaming. It was like a punch, almost. Breathing deeply, she spotted Lexie, her blonde hair loose from its ponytail, lying on the ground in her almost-new blue shirt and her blue skirt, mixed in with another girl and a boy, caught up in playing with some stuffed animals in the far corner, and she was steeling herself, was just about to go get her and then get out of there, when she was blocked by a girl she'd never seen before. This girl, around Katie's age, mid-twenties, but with black curly hair, stepped forward in a way that was a little bit of hesitating and a little bit of forceful.

“Ms. Turner?” the girl said, her hands behind her back.

“Mrs. Turner,” Katie said, feeling some anger rise up in her before she could get it back down, turn it into a smile.

“Oh—I’m really sorry. My mistake,” the girl said. She had an accent, a not-from-Indiana kind of accent, certainly not from southern Indiana, maybe an east coast kind of accent.

“It’s okay. You can call me Katie, really. Mary calls me Katie.” She pointed at Mary, who gave a wave from the other side of the room, and who was the main woman in charge of the four-and-five group.

“I’m Jen Shafer,” this girl said, and she put out her hand for shaking. “I just started in your daughter’s room.” Katie took this in, worked more friendliness into her smile. “It’s good to meet you,” Jen Shafer said. She was a pretty girl, a little more tan than most people were by this time in the fall, a couple of dark freckles high up on her cheeks. “I was hoping we could talk a minute before you took Lexie home. Do you have a minute?” And already, as she was asking, she was moving them back. Before she knew it, Katie was out of the room again, the door closed.

“Is there a problem or something?” she said, feeling like she was in trouble somehow, looking up and down the hallway, which was empty but still close around, and the windows were caged in with wire so that no kids, she guessed, could just jump out, even though this was the first and only floor of the building.

Jen Shafer herself looked in both directions, and then, while Katie’s heart tightened, pushed a chunk of black, curly hair back out of her face. “Well, first of all, I wanted to introduce myself,” she said. “I haven’t met you yet.” She put out her hand again, and they shook again.

“It’s nice to meet you,” Katie said. Somewhere around a corner a door opened and closed. The sound of footsteps moving away.

“And I also wanted to talk to you about Lexie,” Jen Shafer said, like she was just finishing a sentence that Katie had interrupted. “Like I say, I’m new, but I thought I should tell you what I’ve been observing this week.”

Katie felt herself go tight again. Who was Jen Shafer, anyway, going around observing anything? Where was Mary?

“I’m not going to tell you anything you don’t already know. Lexie is a great kid—so smart and so enthusiastic and so sensitive.”

Katie relaxed, but only for a second, because Jen Shafer kept going, her nose wrinkled like she was embarrassed about what she was saying. “But I’ve been noticing how her energy can get a little out of control sometimes. I’ve been seeing her grabbing toys from the other kids, and even doing some shoving. And today she threw one of the blocks at me. I mean, it was a soft block, spongy,” she rushed to add. “Don’t worry about that. I just thought you should know.” She pulled her hair back again. It just wouldn’t stay out of the way. Jen Shafer waited a second for Katie to say something, and then said, “I’m worried about her aggressiveness.”

“Her aggressiveness?” Katie finally asked. “But she’s a five-year-old girl. You said she was sensitive.”

“She is, Mrs. Turner, but—”

“*Katie*,” Katie said, snapped. But she heard new footsteps in the hallway, coming toward them, and she flushed with embarrassment. Then, softer, “You don’t have to use my last name.”

“Okay,” Jen Shafer said, nodding. “I just wanted to draw your attention to this. Like I say, Lexie is a great kid. I just wanted you to know about what I was seeing. I thought you could think about it. Maybe you would have some ideas about it.” Another girl, maybe another mom, went past them up the hallway toward the other rooms.

“How come Mary never said anything?” Katie whispered, thinking, *Maybe it’s you, New York girl. Maybe you’re making it up.* And then she felt embarrassed thinking that.

“I don’t know why,” Jen Shafer said. The door opened behind her, and Tina, Sammy’s mom, came out with her son.

“Hi, Katie,” she said, all bright smile. Tina was a nice girl. She saw the conference going on and hurried her little boy down the hall.

Katie turned back, tried her best to try to put on that same kind of smile. “Thank you so much. I’m really sorry if Lexie has been a pain at all for you.”

“It’s okay,” Jen Shafer said. “We don’t have to turn this into a whole big thing. Why don’t you go get Lexie. We can just all keep our eyes on it. Okay?”

“Sure,” Katie said. Despite herself, she was thinking unsmiling thoughts. She went ahead of Jen Shafer back into the room and looked around for Lexie, who rushed over and wrapped Katie’s legs up in her arms before they had even made eye contact. The room around was crazy with screaming kids, and here was this girl who loved her mother. Katie looked up and saw Mary smiling over at them. Over all the noise, Mary called, “How are things?” and Katie called back, “Just fine,” even though she wasn’t feeling fine, and that was all of that. Then she loosened her daughter’s grip, and Lexie looked up at her with her Mommy’s own green eyes, and they walked out of the room again without another look at Jen Shafer.

Still, in the car she asked Lexie about it. She had the volume on Bob Castor turned down, so that he was just this low kind of drumming sound in the background, and she said, “I met someone just now.” There wasn’t any answer, and she looked at her daughter in the rear-view mirror.

Lexie, sitting in her big-girl car seat, had her blonde hair forward over her shoulders, and she was playing with it in both hands. It was long enough that she was always playing with it.

“Lexie?” Katie tried again.

“You met someone, Mommy,” Lexie said. She had this thing of repeating what you said sometimes, to show she was listening, but it sounded like she was running the conversation. Katie always got em-

barrassed when it happened out at the supermarket or the post office or somewhere like that.

“I met Miss Jen.”

Lexie’s eyes went up, met her mom’s eyes in the rectangle of the mirror. It was hard to say what was in her mind.

“Miss Jen wanted to talk to me. What do you think she wanted to talk to me about?” Katie said.

Lexie gave a cautious shrug. “I don’t know, Mommy,” she said.

“Have you been behaving yourself in your room?” Katie looked out over the road, which was empty. “Playing nice with the other kids?” Bob Castor said something loud on the radio, yelled it, but she missed it anyway.

“Yes,” Lexie said quietly.

Katie opened her mouth to ask something more about that, but a different question came out. “What do you think of Miss Jen?”

“She doesn’t like me.”

That could have been. Even with all that “great kid” stuff she had said, maybe Jen Shafer just didn’t like Lexie. As far as Katie ever saw, Lexie was the good girl, the one who shared toys when she was supposed to, who always knew to say “nice to meet you” and “please” and “thank you.” She had tea parties with imaginary people and was a really polite hostess. *Soooo nice to see you*, she’d say to her imaginary guests. *Have more. After you.* And now she was staring at her mother through the little mirror, her green eyes nervous.

“It’s okay, baby. It’s okay,” Katie said. “Don’t worry about that Miss Jen.” The drumming of Bob Castor continued in a calmer way. She said, “Where’s she from?”

Lexie sat back in her seat, relaxed a little, grabbed her hair again. “New York,” she said. And then she started singing some made-

up song, looking out the window at the highway as they passed a strip mall half-full of open stores and half full of ones that were boarded up. There was one store with a broken window, and Katie for a moment had an image of Lexie breaking it, throwing a fist-sized rock at the glass. Katie shook her head. That was what Jen Shafer had given her in two minutes—that image. She turned the radio up to clean her head out.

Elliston had never been a great town, as far as Katie knew. It was never a place where people got rich off of a mine or a well or an industry of some kind, and there was no big river, nothing historical to draw tourists. At one time, though, there had been jobs. There were two factories, both on the same end of town, one of which had made auto parts before it closed down, and one of which still made animal food for zoos and labs—on a day when the wind blew west you could smell that animal food smell—though they did their work with fewer and fewer employees.

Katie worked in a small store—convenience and drug—right on Main Street, a street that was really just a slow stretch of the State Road, rolling in one direction to the animal food factory and the closed-down auto parts factory and beyond, and in the other out toward the prison. There was still some life on Main—the City Hall was there, plus the biggest church, and the pizza place—but a lot of the rest of it was sitting empty. Most of what was left of Elliston was out on the edge of town now, in strip malls. Even the schools, that building they'd just been in and the high school, were out on the edge of town, and that was the beginning for some of the kids; those that were eventually going to leave for other places started getting restless just by making the daily trip to school. Katie had been making those trips

in the passenger seat of her father's car a few years ago, the wind coming in through the leaky windows. She had leaned her cheek against the glass, the ice of the glass. Staring out the window at the banged-up houses on the side streets and along the State road, she had not been one of the ones who thought about getting out of there. Elliston had never been a great town, but she also had the sense that it would never go anywhere, never mess her up, never leave. That was something.

They left the car parked in Mr. Ray's driveway, and after looking up at the low sky—could be snow coming—they went up the steps to their second-floor apartment over Mr. Ray's garage, on Green Street. These stairs were another narrow place, nothing like Katie had imagined for herself when Mike was here and when she and Mike had been talking about the future. Lexie hopped up the steps, two-footed for each step, and Katie carried up her daughter's backpack and all her tiredness from work and all the weight of the day care center. Lexie had to hop back down as well as forward in order for her mother to keep up. Katie didn't think she felt as young as twenty-five was supposed to feel. Everyone told her that was young. "You've had trials," they said, "but you've got your whole life ahead of you."

"You're right about that," Katie would say.

On the way in the door they passed the official military photo portrait of Mike, there in the dark entranceway, his face still and serious and hard to recognize as the guy she'd known. He had been the kind of guy whose face was always on the move, talking or joking or worked up angry or something. "Hey, Mike," she said, touching the photo, like she usually did. Lexie just breezed past toward the living room. It had been a long time since that photo had meant much to her. "Can I turn on the TV?" she said, already turning it on. The sound

of a cartoon started crashing and banging in there. Katie told her she could.

Katie was still standing in the entranceway. *That New York girl is talking about your daughter*, she said to him, in her head. He kept his face composed, still, serious. She had to do everything now—even be mad on Mike’s behalf. She shook her head, went back to the mini-kitchen, and took a can of beer out of the refrigerator, looked out the window at what was definitely going to be snow.

Maybe she would keep Lexie home from day care tomorrow. There was the snow, and maybe it wasn’t good for Lexie to be spending time with Jen Shafer anyway. Katie could call in sick herself. She couldn’t afford to do that, and the whole week at day care was already paid for—for the millionth time, Katie wished her own parents could find a way to watch Lexie at least some of the time—but Katie thought she just might keep her home anyway.

“Do you want to stay home tomorrow?” she called out to the living room. “Lexie?”

“Stay home tomorrow?”

Katie went to stand at the doorway to the living room.

“You’re not going to work?” Lexie said.

“Maybe not,” Katie said.

Lexie smiled a little smile. Mary had never said anything about Lexie being a problem. Mary had been really nice when they lost Mike, and she had never, ever said anything about Lexie being a problem.

They spent the evening watching TV and slowly eating their dinners on the couch. Katie knew that it wasn’t maybe what she was supposed to do as a mother—her own mother would be sure to tell her that, along with a bunch of other things—but Lexie had asked, and both of

them had had a bad day, and this way they got to sit right next to each other instead of opposite one another at the table. The cartoons suited Katie's mood well enough. She pictured Jen Shafer saying, *You know, I think she's watching a lot of TV and I thought you should know*, and she imagined Bob Castor saying, *These liberal people think you don't know how to parent your own children!* and they just watched their shows and ate their dinner.

At one point, Lexie looked over at her mother and said, "What did Miss Jen say?"

Katie looked back at her, surprised. Her daughter's face had a defiant frown on it, a kind of challenge. Katie decided to let the challenge pass by. "It's not important, baby. Don't worry about it."

"Mm," Lexie said, and then she put her eyes back on the television.

When it was a little past the time Lexie was supposed to get to bed, they shut the TV off and Lexie got herself ready in the bathroom and then they sat together in the bedroom, Katie on the edge of the bed.

"You're really going to stay home tomorrow?" Lexie said.

Katie had to admit to herself that she wasn't as sure about it now as she had been earlier, but she said, "It sounds nice, doesn't it?"

"Mm," Lexie said.

Afterward, Katie settled into the couch, which was also her bedroom, and had another beer or two, and watched some more shows. For some reason she kept it on the cartoon channel, didn't feel motivated to change it.

Overnight the storm came in strong and she woke up to it: white thick over everything. She could tell just from the extra quiet outside, even

before she got up off the couch and pulled the shade aside to see the still-dim street, barely marked with tires. Maybe five or six inches, it looked like. There was something nice about the way everything was quieted down like that. The world looked slow and easy.

The apartment was chaos in comparison—dinner’s dishes on the carpet next to the couch, the beer cans on the water-stained coffee table, her work clothes over the back of a folding chair. Toys everywhere. The TV was muted but on, two animals arguing about something. Her own mother would look around at this place in disgust, and she would say it was Katie’s responsibility to take care of it. *Your mess*, she’d say. *Your problem*. Katie thought about jumping out the window into the soft snow, but then with some determination turned the TV off and gathered everything else, throwing away the garbage and folding her clothes, straightening the pile of magazines and then tossing them out, too, after more thought. She wiped down the counter in the kitchen area, washed and dried the dishes. She put her shoes in the closet near the door. She found a box from a case of beer and began to fill it with the stuffed cats, the Barbie, the little doll clothes, and put all of it by the hall down to Lexie’s room. Then she stopped. The carpet was still too many colors and she half-wanted to take down the ugly pictures of forests on the wall—they seemed ugly to her now—and just leave the one of Mike in the entranceway, but she saw that she was being a little nuts, and so she just went around the surfaces, dusting and wiping, and called it done.

Down the hall in her room, Lexie was asleep with her mouth open. She looked slow and easy, too. Katie just stood at the door and watched her daughter, sleeping with nothing to worry about. The room was crazy with bright drawings all across the floor, dolls, little sneakers, clothes, and here she was sleeping quietly in the middle of

it. Katie set the beer case box down on the carpet, and even though it didn't make a sound as far as she could tell, Lexie lurched up in bed.

"*Oh no!*" she said, in a panic. "What happened?" Her eyes were wide, her hands on her mouth.

"It's okay, baby," Katie said, leaning tired against the door jamb. This was how waking up was for Lexie sometimes. "Nothing happened." Lexie's eyes slowly came to an understanding of the room. She closed her mouth, wiped it with the back of her hand.

"Mommy," she said. And then her little shy smile, the one that said she was out of that evil place between asleep and awake, that she was fully here now.

There was a little time before Katie had to really decide anything, so she took Lexie outside first thing to enjoy the snow. While they were getting their coats and boots on, Lexie said, "Are you really going to stay home today? Do I really get to stay home today?"

Katie opened her mouth and closed it, and then said, "You know, let's see."

Lexie's face squeezed a little in an unsure kind of way, but then she got back to the task of tugging at her boot.

Mr. Ray's house had a rough little yard in back, and he didn't mind if they used it whenever they wanted. Today it was rambling with snow, and they had to kick through drifts even to get around back to it.

"Wow," Lexie said. She was still young enough that this kind of thing was a big deal every time. "It's a lot." And then she dove in, scooping up snow and throwing it loose into the air. Katie stood back and watched it all snow down again, nice and bright with the sun really coming up now. Over and over Lexie did this, and then Katie said,

“Do you want to try to make some snowballs?” and they both tried it. The snow was a little too dry, but they managed to make a few, and they threw them at the one tree back there.

“That’s the bad guy,” Lexie said. “Get him.”

“You got it,” Katie said, though she wasn’t picturing a him so much as a Jen Shafer. Either way, they kept missing.

“This is stupid,” Lexie said, after one too many misses.

“Okay, well, what else do you want to do?”

Lexie didn’t answer, just roamed off a few feet, crouching, her arms buried in the snow. She started to just toss it around, creating little new snowbursts in this direction and that. Katie looked up at the sky, which was heading for blue and clear. The morning was cold, cold, cold. She looked all around—at the little paved strip behind the yard, also covered in snow, the other houses, the glimpses of Green Street, not plowed but dug through by the force of cars that had already had to get somewhere. Those cars were gone, though, and the whole world was quiet and still. It was like there was nobody anywhere.

Suddenly she heard Lexie making a strange sound, and her eyes snapped back to her daughter, who was turned away. “Are you okay?” Katie said. Lexie just kept making that sound, not answering, so Katie went over to her, turned her to see. Lexie was holding up her mitten hands, and Katie saw that the mittens were too old and too small, and that there was snow all over them, and through them, and inside them, and she saw that the sound was Lexie crying. “Oh, baby,” Katie said.

Lexie turned away harshly, moved a step from her mother. Katie went to her again. “Let’s go inside, baby,” she said.

“No,” Lexie said sharply, hugging herself.

“Your hands are cold, Lexie. Let’s go inside and warm up.”

But she was crying so much, too much for just cold hands. She kept pulling away from Katie, and was now basically bawling.

Katie tried again. “Baby, what is it?”

Lexie said something too quiet to be heard, and when her mother asked her to repeat it, she said it a little louder. “Nobody loves a snowy girl,” she said, turned all the way away.

Katie felt a swelling in her, around the surprise, the sweetness, of Lexie’s words. She moved forward with determination now, turned Lexie, hugged her with a lot of strength. “I love a snowy girl,” she said. “I love you.”

But all of a sudden Lexie was saying “NO! NO, NO, NO!” and shoving at Katie, shoving her hard away. Katie let go in shock, fell back to sitting in the snow. Her daughter looked wild, her wet face twisted in anger. “NO!” she yelled. And then she was grabbing snow and rushing at Katie, was throwing it in her mother’s face, smashing her face with snow and with mitten hands. Katie found herself scrambling backward, her hands up helplessly, until she was back against the house, until she had curled up to protect herself, her head between her knees. Still Lexie kept the barrage coming, kept it coming until she stopped.

Katie lifted her head, saw Lexie stomping off across the yard. She touched her own nose, knew that there was a little blood there. Lexie was pushing her way through the snow and then plunging her hands into a drift against the tree. Katie flinched, expecting more violence. And maybe it was violence—Lexie ripped furiously into the snow, threw snow off to both sides, and whether it was digging or punching Katie couldn’t tell. She didn’t get up to intervene. She just watched her daughter do it, whatever it was. There in the bright of the snowy morning Lexie dished out her punishment—against the cold,

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against the weather, against her mother and everything else—and Katie watched. She bled from her tender nose and she watched and she didn't intervene. In some sense she was rooting for that girl.

Contributors

Erick Aare lives near Gaston, Oregon and attended Portland State University.

Ruth Beck is a writer born and raised in rural, coastal western Oregon. She holds a degree in Religion and Philosophy with a minor in Creative Writing from Marylhurst University, where she was the recipient of the Binford Writing Award. Her poetry has appeared in a handful of literary journals. Ruth lives with her husband and son in their 120-year old farmhouse, and works on her family's sheep and tree farm where she makes artisan soaps.

A lifelong New Englander, **Jeff Bernstein** divides his time between Boston and Central Vermont. Recent poems appeared or are forthcoming in *The Auorean*, *Ballard Street Poetry Journal*, *Hobble Creek Review*, *Loch Raven Review*, *Main Street Rag*, *Penny Ante Feud*, *Route Seven: A Vermont Literary Journal*, *San Pedro River Review*, and *Thrush*. His poem “A Short Guide to the Proper Treatment of Maryland Blue Crabs” was a semi-finalist in the *Naugatuck River Review* 2010 Narrative Poetry Contest. His chapbook, *Interior Music* was published by Foothills Publishing in 2010. Jeff’s writer’s blog can be found hurricanelodge.com

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Taproot Literary Review, True Romance, Lucid Stone, and Green Hills Literary Lantern. Two of her poems have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. She holds Master's degrees in English Literature and Education and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership. She teaches in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Doug Bolling's poetry has appeared in *Georgetown Review, Blue Unicorn, Marginalia, Slant, Oregon East, Wallace Stevens Journal, English Journal, Bluestem, Italian Americana, Cider Press Review, and Connecticut River Review*, among others. He was the featured poet in the January 2011 issue of *Flowers & Vortexes* and has received two Pushcart nominations. He lives in Flossmoor, Illinois, outside Chicago.

For the moment, **John F. Buckley** lives in Orange County, California. His work has been published in a number of places, one of which nominated him for a Pushcart Prize in 2009. His chapbook *Breach Birth* was published on Propaganda Press in March 2011. His full-length collaboration with Martin Ott, *Poets' Guide to America*, is coming out on Brooklyn Arts Press in summer 2012.

Tracy Burkholder's writing has appeared or is forthcoming in *Cincinnati Review, Portland Review, Silk Road, and Pacific Review* as well as the anthology *Our Portland Story, Vol. 2*. She received her MFA from Bennington College and lives in Portland, OR.

John Randolph Carter is a poet and artist. A finalist for the National Poetry Series, his poetry has appeared in journals including *Bomb, The Cream City Review, LIT, Margie, North American Review, The*

Pinch, Verse, and Washington Square. He has been the recipient of NEA, New York State Council, and Fulbright grants. His art is in thirty-two public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art. One-person exhibitions include The University of Michigan Art Museum and the Minneapolis Institute.

R.T. Castleberry is a widely published poet and social critic. He was a co-founder of the Flying Dutchman Writers Troupe, co-editor/publisher of the poetry magazine *Curbside Review*, an assistant editor for *Lily Poetry Review* and *Ardent*. His work has appeared most recently in *Comstock Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *The Alembic*, *Patterson Literary Review*, *Caveat Lector*, *Perigee*, *Silk Road*, and *Argestes*. He was a finalist for the 2008 Arts & Letters/Rumi Prize for Poetry. His chapbook, *Arriving At The Riverside*, was published by Finishing Line Press in January, 2010. An e-book, *Dialogue and Appetite*, was published by Right Hand Pointing in May, 2011.

James Deahl was born in Pittsburgh in 1945. He grew up in there, as well as the Laurel Highlands region of the Appalachian Mountains. He moved to Canada in 1970 and now lives in Sarnia. He is the author of twenty literary titles. His three most recent books are: *North of Belleville*, *Opening The Stone Heart*, and *No Star Is Lost*.

Retired from teaching children with special needs, **Susan Duke** manages a storage facility with her husband, three adult children, and two grandsons. She enjoys reading, writing, and her morning one mile walks.

David Harris Ebenbach's first book of short stories, *Between Camelots* (University of Pittsburgh Press), won the Drue Heinz Literature Prize

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Don Eckler first began writing poetry in a journal given to him by his 4th year high school English teacher. A retired Master Chief of the US Coast Guard, Don received his BS degree from Black Hills State University, and served in the Peace Corps in the Fiji Islands.

Jean Esteve lives in Waldport, Oregon, likes dogs, and enjoys swimming. New work is scheduled for publication in *Freshwater*, *Mudfish*, and *Pearl*.

Colette Fallon is a fine art oil painter living in a suburb of Portland, Oregon. Her range of work includes landscapes, seascapes, portraits, and still life. Her work has been featured in various galleries in Oregon and she has received awards for her work. She has also done commission work for interested parties and has been painting for over 30 years. Living in the Pacific Northwest has given her a wealth of subject matter. Colette is also a composer. She has a CD of her music and a music video of one of her compositions. She is currently working on another music project as well as continuing her painting endeavors.

Brandi George's work has recently appeared or is forthcoming in *Nimrod International Journal*, *Gulf Coast*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Best New Poets 2010*, and elsewhere. She currently resides in Tallahassee, Florida, where she teaches writing.

Arthur Gottlieb is an Oregon poet whose work has appeared in many small literary magazines, including *The Ledge*, *Chiron Review*, *The Alembic*, *The Pacific Review*, *Lullwater Review*, and many others.

Danielle Hanson received her MFA from Arizona State University and now lives in Atlanta, GA. Her work has appeared in over 40 journals and anthologies, including *Hubbub*, *Iodine*, *Lake Effect*, *Rosebud*, *The Cortland Review*, *Poet Lore*, *Asheville Poetry Review*, and *Blackbird*. She has edited *Hayden's Ferry Review*, been on staff at The Meacham Writers' Conference and received the Fulton County Arts Council Grant for a residency at the Hambidge Center.

Lisa Ohlen Harris lives and works in Newberg, Oregon, where the annual rainfall averages more than 40 inches. She is the author of the Middle East memoir *Through the Veil*, which was a finalist for the 2011 Oregon Book Award.

Kait Heacock is a recent transplant to Portland, Oregon, having grown up in Central Washington and spending the last six years in Seattle. She is a graduate student at Portland State University working on a Master's in Book Publishing. She has been writing short fiction for most of her life and earned her BA in English from Seattle Pacific University. Her greatest literary influence is Raymond Carver. She admires

his unique combination of brevity and intensity. They also happen to be from the same hometown.

Joseph Holt works in bridge maintenance around northeastern South Dakota and teaches at the University of Minnesota. His fiction has recently appeared in *Gulf Coast* and *New Ohio Review*.

Rich Ives is the 2009 winner of the Francis Locke Memorial Poetry Award from *Bitter Oleander* and the 2012 winner of the Creative Nonfiction Prize from *Thin Air* magazine. The Spring 2011 *Bitter Oleander* contains a feature including an interview and 18 of his hybrid works.

William Jolliff serves as professor of English at George Fox University. He has published critical articles and poems in over a hundred periodicals, including *Northwest Review*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Christianity and Literature*, and *Appalachian Journal*. His most recent poetry chapbook is *Searching for a White Crow* (2009).

Tanque R. Jones lives in Knoxville, TN, where she earned her BA from the University of Tennessee. She is currently writing a book of poems, a novel and a collection of essays while she earns her MFA.

Sara Kirschenbaum is a writer and artist in Portland, Oregon. She has been published in *Calyx*, *Fiction International*, *J Journal*, *Kalliope*, *Mothering Magazine*, *The Oregonian*, *Poetica*, *Portland Parent*, the *Portland Tribune*, and other publications. She has been a guest commentator for NPR's Marketplace and has published on Salon.com.

She is currently seeking a publisher for her memoir about postpartum OCD. She can be reached through her website: sarakirschenbaum.com.

Stephen Kopel is a teacher, cyclist, art collector, civic benefactor and a working wordsmith. Author of chapbooks *crux* and *crax*, as well as novel *Spritz*, his work resides in *Margie*, *The Evansville Review*, *Aethlon*, *Main Street Rag*, *Harpur Palate*, and *Antigonish Review*. The poet invests in the 'take stock market' with assets allocated in straight talk, caring and courage. Contact: stephen.kopel@live.com

Haesong Kwon was born in Incheon, Korea, but has lived most of his life in the states. Presently, he lives in Stillwater, OK, and pursues a PhD in English at Oklahoma State University. He's an assistant editor at the *Cimarron Review*, and has poems in *Roger*, *Red Rock Review*, *Oxford Magazine*, and others.

Teresa Lane, 19, is a freshman at WSU Vancouver majoring in journalism. She has been honored with an award for her poetry from the Nature of Words Rising Stars writing competition in Bend, Oregon. Her short story work has been nationally recognized through the YoungARTS program. She is very excited to be part of this edition of the *Clackamas Literary Review*.

Eric le Fatte graduated from MIT with a BS in Biology; went to graduate school at Northeastern University in English Literature; worked as the Returns King at Eastern Mountain Sports; and returned to MIT to receive a PhD in Biology. He currently teaches, backpacks, and writes in the Portland, Oregon area. His poems have appeared in *The Moun-*

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Robert Levy's work has appeared in *Poetry, Paris Review, Georgia Review, Southern Review*, and many others. New work is in, or forthcoming in, *Alaska Quarterly Review, Southwest Review, River Styx*, and *Tar River Poetry*. He is a past winner of an NEA Fellowship and has published two full-length collections, *Whistle Maker* (Anhinga) and *In the Century of Small Gestures* (Defined Providence), as well as four chapbooks.

Jack e Lorts is a retired educator living in Fossil, Oregon. After several years as School Superintendent, he now serves as Mayor of Fossil. His poems have appeared widely, if infrequently, over the past 40+ years in such places as *Arizona Quarterly, Kansas Quarterly, English Journal, Fireweed, Fishtrap, Oregon English, High Desert Journal* (upcoming), *Arsenic Lobster*, and others. Two chapbooks are out from Pudding House and *Dear Gilbert Sorrentino & Other Poems* from Finishing Line Press this past year. Forthcoming from Pudding House later this year is *The Love Songs of Ephram Pratt*.

Rebecca Macjeski received her Bachelor's degree in English and Music from Simmons College in Boston, and earned her MFA in Poetry from Vermont College of Fine Arts in 2011. Her lifelong studies of classical violin and writing have prompted travel to such countries as Austria, Slovenia, and Japan. She currently serves as assistant poetry editor for *Hunger Mountain*.

America Marie lives, works, and writes in Portland, Oregon. She loves gardening, travel, and Scottie dogs. Her writing has appeared in *Poetry Motel* and *Analekta*.

Rick Marlatt's first book, *How We Fall Apart*, was the winner of the Seven Circle Press Poetry Award. He is a graduate of the MFA program at the University of California, Riverside, where he served as poetry editor of the *Coachella Review*. His poems have appeared widely in print and online publications including *Rattling Wall*, *New York Quarterly*, and *Midway*. Recently, his criticism has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Poetry Magazine*, and *Rattle*. Read more at rickmarlatt.com.

Erica Woiwode Mason is a teacher, classical pianist, and poet, among other things. Her work has been published in *Turbula*, *ArtisticRights*, *Academic Exchange*, *The Poetry Conspiracy*, and *L.A. Miscellany*. Erica was born and raised in San Diego, California, and now lives in Portland, Oregon with her husband and son. She teaches at Clackamas Community College.

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Jean McDonough was born in Omaha, Nebraska and now resides in upstate New York. She earned an MFA from Rainier Writers Workshop at Pacific Lutheran University and was the recipient of the 1995 Academy of American Poets Prize. Her work has appeared in *Dos Passos Review*, *Cold Mountain Review*, *The American Literary Review*,

Quarterly West, Tar River Poetry, Salamander, Bayou, and Poet Lore among others. Her poem, “June, Maybe” is forthcoming in *The Untidy Season: An Anthology of Nebraska Women Poets* by Backwaters Press.

M.E. Mitchell is a former thoroughbred trainer who divides her time between downstate New York and historic Saratoga Springs. After leaving the racing industry, she focused on writing again in addition to earning a BS in Communications and a MA in Sports Management. Her fiction, gleaned from those years at various racetracks, has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Other Herald, Bumble Jacket Miscellany, Down in the Dirt, A Few Lines Magazine, and The Threshold*, among others.

After teaching for nearly 30 years in Grinnell College’s Writing Lab, **Betty Moffett** has turned her attention to her own writing—and developed real sympathy for her students. Her stories, poems, and essays have appeared in various magazines and journals, including *The MacGuffin, Limestone, The Licking River Review, The Grinnell Magazine, and The Wapsipinicon Almanac*. She and her husband live on a farm in Iowa and play with the Too Many String Band.

Paul Nelson was for years a Professor and Director of Creative Writing for Ohio University, and has six books out. These include an AWP Winner, and a University of Alabama Press Series Selection. A new book, *Burning the Furniture*, is forthcoming with Guernica Editions. An NEA Fellow, he lives and writes now from the North Shore of O’ahu where trolling miles out is like writing poetry, waiting for a strike by something natural.

James B. Nicola has had over two hundred poems appear in publications including *Tar River*, the *Texas Review*, *The Lyric*, and *Nimrod*. A stage director by profession, his book *Playing the Audience* won a CHOICE Award. He also won the Dana Literary Award for poetry, was nominated for a Rhysling Award, and was a featured poet at *The New Formalist* in 2010. His first chapbook of poems, *Still*, will be out in 2012 from Stasia Press.

Stanley Morris Noah has a BGS degree from The University of Texas at Dallas. His work has been published in the following: *Wisconsin Review*, *Nexus*, *Cottonwood*, *South Carolina Review*, *Poetry Nottingham*, and other publications in the U.S.A., Britain, Canada, and New Zealand.

Dan O'Brien's poems have appeared in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Greensboro Review*, and elsewhere. His play *The Body of an American*, about the haunting of war reporter Paul Watson, is the winner of the 2011 L. Arnold Weissberger Award and will premiere at Portland Center Stage in 2012. Website: danobrien.org

Simon Perchik is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The New Yorker*, and elsewhere. For more information, including his essay “Magic, Illusion and Other Realities” and a complete bibliography, please visit his website at simonperchik.com.

Dylan Dean Plotner is a student at Clackamas Community College, working on his Associate's degree, focusing on writing and literature. His hope is to become a successful fiction writer. He enjoys writing inspiring and passionate stories and poems.

Connie Post served as the first Poet Laureate of Livermore, California from 2005- 2009. Her work has appeared in *The Aurorean*, *Calyx*, *Kalliope*, *Cold Mountain Review*, *Chiron Review*, *Crab Creek Review*, *Comstock Review*, *DMQ Review*, *Dogwood*, *The Great American Poetry Show*, *The Pedestal Magazine*, *Slipstream*, and *The Toronto Quarterly*. She was the winner of the Cover Prize for the Spring 2009 issue of *The Dirty Napkin* and the winner of the 2009 Caesura Poetry Awards from The Poetry Center of San Jose. Her most recent book *Trip Wires* was released in September 2010, and received praise from Al Young, California's former Poet Laureate.

Jack Powers lives in Fairfield, Connecticut with his wife and three children and teaches at Joel Barlow High School in nearby Redding. His poems have appeared in *Rattle*, *Poet Lore*, *Cortland Review*, *Inkwell*, and elsewhere.

Lee Rossi's latest book is *Wheelchair Samurai*. His poems, reviews, and interviews have appeared in *The Harvard Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, and *The Southern Poetry Review*. He is a staff reviewer and interviewer for the online magazine *Pedestal*. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. His assets consist solely of used clothing and some rapidly depreciating poems, and he is still waiting for his government bailout. If you're as troubled as he is and know where his TARP funds went, please contact ghostdiarist@yahoo.com.

Andrea Scarpino is the author of the chapbook *The Grove Behind* (Finishing Line Press) and a forthcoming full-length collection from Red Hen Press. She received an MFA in Creative Writing from The Ohio State University, has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and

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Peter Serchuk's poems have appeared in a variety of journals big and small including *Boulevard*, *Poetry*, *Denver Quarterly*, *North American Review*, *Texas Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *New York Quarterly* and others. A new collection, *All That Remains*, is forthcoming from WordTech Editions. He lives in Los Angeles, California.

Kristen Svenson is an author, publisher, and adventurer living in Portland, Oregon. She studied English at Willamette University and earned her Master's degree in writing and book publishing at Portland State University. Her poetry and short stories have appeared in various national journals and anthologies.

Michael Torok lives in Austin, Texas with his son. He has a day job as community strategist and director for a software company and looks forward to the infrequent times he is unplugged from the grid. He received his PhD in English from ULL in 1999 and has been previously published in *Fox Cry Review*, *Louisiana Review*, and *Red Rock Review*, among others. His first book of poetry, *Goodbyes are Hellos*, is due out in 2012.

Dennis Vannatta has published stories in many magazines and anthologies, including *Chariton Review*, *Boulevard*, *Antioch Review*, and *Pushcart XV*. He also has three collections: *This Time, This Place* and *Prayers for the Dead*, both by White Pine Press, and *Lives of the Artists* by Livingston Press. His newest collection, *Rockaway Children: Stories*, is forthcoming from Rising Star Press.