



# ENGLYN

*Journal of Four Line Poetry / Issue One*



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“I find myself making vessels that punctuate oceans, in the same way as a bird’s call will mark an internal landscape forever. The sound of a wind will describe a landscape and a vessel remembers it for me.”

Gordon Baldwin  
*Ceramic Artist*

cold winter shadows  
at my heels  
bold in darkness  
the shrieks of youths

Joanna Ashwell

There is no  
nothing as I  
sleep inside  
your soul.

Charles Bane Jr.

**i'm so alone**

even the rock under which i hid  
    has left me to fend for myself  
& the birds call out nobody loves you  
    nobody loves you & i know it's gospel

Robert Lee Brewer



## Chaos Theory

Simplicity and complexity relate  
In the fluctuating population of birds,  
The propagation of impulses along nerves,  
The inevitable surprise of change.

## Niels Bohr, Physicist

A large dictionary in one pocket,  
The complete works of Charles Dickens in the other,  
A Danish man arrives in England  
To unravel the universe atom by atom.

## Outer Margin to Discall Cell

If a butterfly flaps its wings in Mexico  
Will it cause a hurricane in Trinidad,  
A tsunami in Hamamatsu,  
Or a storm in my teacup heart?

Sophie Boyce

## **Identity**

The British propensity for stoicism  
Is excelled and exemplified  
In a show of forced nationalism  
Until I feel approximately nothing.

Sophie Boyce

red roses  
born of spring rain  
there's no silver lining  
on a mushroom cloud

Anna Cates

## Evening Commute

Silhouette: vermillion sky, India-inked wintery limbs...  
An unknown artist must have magic in his ancient pen nibs.  
Sitting in the twilight traffic, through my windshield,  
I trace the strokes.

RJ Clarken

## Blue is the Color of a Notion

*“Every once in a blue moon, something new comes along that scrambles your preconceptions.” - Unknown*

There was a time when I thought I knew  
all the things one can know. Then the blue  
moon came, scrambling my thoughts. Now I’m rambling...  
Gone, my world view, by that blue-moon hue.

RJ Clarken

## **In this House of the Mind's Eye**

In this house, creativity stirs  
the pot, so discovery occurs.  
A thought or kernel, sketched in a journal?  
Imagination entrepreneurs.



I'm in love with the crack  
of lake ice  
when it breaks the news of thaw  
to the fish

Jack Darrow

## Bill Evans

a seven-layer bow  
fingers curl on a flat nine  
the doctor practices without a prayer  
chromatic faith healing

Jack Darrow

Ice cream cone is warm and melting.  
Shoes are getting quite a pelting.  
Chocolate blobs are raining down.  
Once-white shoes are turning brown.

Lori Degman

## teeth and claws

At first, it reminded me  
of a kitten with its claws  
out, a pet pain that I thought  
I could train to be gentle.

*I, too, thought it could be tamed,  
named, and walked on a short leash  
but time passed, it grew more wild;  
no pet, it's the Devil's child.*

It runs at me, not away -  
a sprawl followed by a fall -  
master of bruise and bloodshed,  
it sinks teeth into my bones.

*Friend, we must kill or be killed.  
We will stand at the high bluffs  
and hurl these rabid creatures  
to their deaths. You bring the gin.*

She leaned over  
and whispered  
your face  
is disappearing

Bruce England

Protest over -  
the pretend dead  
rise up  
and mingle

Bruce England

## Home

no longer loose, black boots  
slap across the floor—

you are full, deadly:  
all too human

Lisa Fusch Krause

## **Stir**

She sits, quiet;  
begs only  
that wind will stir

the bamboo windchime



peering into the private mechanism of a watch  
the sun sinks below the waterline  
fishermen fish  
sandpipers dance

Mark Gilbert

## Love

A three-year old daughter about  
Her five-year-old brother, asks  
Mother: *Since Robbie's your son*  
*Can I be your moon?*

Joan Hofmann

## **SURVIVAL SEQUENCE**

### **Diagnosis**

Struck by lightening -  
my life sharply divided  
into a before and an after  
and the marks of the incision hurt.

### **Foe**

A minuscule tumor  
turns light into darkness,  
like a small ominous cloud  
threatening to cover the sun.

### **Probabilities**

Compelled to speculate:  
How many more birthdays?  
Will I be there when...?  
What are the odds?

## **Battleground**

My body a combat zone  
with parts missing in action,  
the scars - inscribed memorials  
to all that was lost.

## **Surgery and Beyond**

On the operating table,  
I die a little. But waking up,  
I greet the blue sky  
with new clarity.

## **Healing**

Life is pulling me back -  
whispering in its alluring voices:  
Come back... Come!  
There's more.

Nurit Israeli

You begin to dream  
those dreams

then winter comes  
all intimate with snow.

Bauke Kamstra

A gentle deer  
might be a troll

breaking twigs  
in the dark.

Bauke Kamstra

Sometimes ghosts come as crows  
re-scavenging the same crusts  
all over again

a futility of need.

Bauke Kamstra

The wind chanting  
slow circles  
about my grief

mistaking tears for rain.

Bauke Kamstra



Storm puts its knees  
on the field  
laying down grain  
  
an unwelcome lover.

Bauke Kamstra

## October Day

Not minding the wind,  
a spider weaves its silver spell.  
Starlings murmur in the sweetgums.  
How long it takes a single leaf to land.

Debra Kaufman

## Early Warning

Her eye's been keen since childhood to detect  
the slight shudder before the slap. So naturally  
they found each other, her with her what's wrong?,  
him with his sullen nothing, neat scotch.

Debra Kaufman

**September, 6 a.m.**

All summer the maracas of cicadas in the trees  
as mate found mate. Last night only one sang,  
then hushed. Today autumn snaps its crisp sheets,  
delivers the fiddling of crickets: time to wake up, time.

Debra Kaufman

The Ice Queen said that she was cold  
to a Knight fresh from the fray,  
so he took the maiden in his arms  
and she melted clean away.

David J Kelly

Are we alone? Is life a road?  
Is love a cup of tea?  
I don't need to know the answers  
while you're travelling with me.

David J Kelly

There's something missing, I just can't find it,  
I don't know what to do.  
What is missing? I am missing!  
I am missing you.

David J Kelly

## **Amherst**

again, lining the street,  
crabapple blossoms  
the color of raspberry sherbet -  
I never tire of them

*cheap whiskey  
in the basement bar at Psi U  
Jim Steinman on piano  
Robert Frost old and asleep*

Larry Kimmel & Joy McCall



## high wires

high on a hill  
two wires sing, wind or no –  
at dusk it's worth the climb  
to listen

*why can't I be a wire  
strung tight  
singing and feeling  
the slight weight of swallows?*

Larry Kimmel & Joy McCall

## **diminuendo**

the longest day begins  
with grey skies and pain  
the year and me  
winding-down slow

*once so loose and easy,  
my grip tightens  
as the long  
diminuendo narrows*

Larry Kimmel & Joy McCall

**tracks**

the gleam  
of trolley tracks  
under winter streetlights ~  
a cigarette's orange glow

*night train beside  
the empty platform  
a man steps  
out of the shadows*

**closed**

afterwards –  
her battered mind  
like a bruise on the thigh  
of intimacy

*his tears fall  
on his own hands  
his fingers his only lovers  
behind the cell door*

Larry Kimmel & Joy McCall

## here be dragons

screaming  
the marbled linoleum  
with unfocused eye -  
a cloud-like-morphing bestiary

*April sky sailors' warning  
of hailstorms  
the clouds shapeshift :  
dragons, breathing fire*

Larry Kimmel & Joy McCall

## **At the Funeral**

Rivers of light circle the grieving,  
but like a cat in the underbrush  
flicking its tail, darkness  
tenses it haunches to spring.

Richard Krawiec

## 4AM

The crows call light from the sky;  
still it's hard to see past  
my reflection bouncing back  
from the black panes.

Richard Krawiec

## **Aging**

Above the futon, my sons'  
cabbage patch doll sits preserved  
inside a zip-lock freezer bag.  
The past I can't release.

Richard Krawiec



Today I'd come and declare  
my undying love for you  
I am not scared of your dad  
But then that pitbull!

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

Seeing you walk down the road  
swaying your hips today  
I fell in the rubbish heap.  
Indeed love is blind!

Shrikaanth Krishnamurthy

old bent woman  
climbing the stairs  
stops, sits and sighs  
head in her hands

Joy McCall

She finds it difficult to know  
whose hand to take, which way to go.  
She throws the coins, they fall: hold fast.  
The choice is made, the die is cast.

Joy McCall

The child falls from her sullen womb,  
thrown in the bin; no grave, no tomb,  
no priest for prayers, crosses, or creeds.  
She picks at her skin until it bleeds.

Joy McCall

## **knotted**

I stare into space  
while the crazy wind tears  
the leaves from the trees  
and the people from prayers.

Climbing the ladder  
to the top of the wall,  
the higher I climb  
it's the further to fall.

The well is too deep  
for the bucket to reach.  
Sinners don't listen  
when it's sinners who preach.

And something keeps pulling  
at the knotted string, tied  
and tethering down  
the dreams that have died.

on the morning table  
a frail hyacinth  
you bustle around the kitchen  
your thoughts scattered

Matsukaze

in this extended midnight  
learning that Ryuka was composed  
in reaction  
to tanka

Matsukaze



yellow saffrons or some type of flower  
that punctuated Mokichi's grief  
deciding to send him  
a tanka or ryuka

Matsukaze

such tender feelings  
revealed in those letters  
from a man  
who stepped into death

Matsukaze

a gift from the Muslim man  
wrapped in brown satin  
a shofar -  
a new chapter of life begins

Matsukaze

i have watched my daughters grow up  
become women and marry...  
i fold memories  
deep into myself

Matsukaze

kaleidoscope  
a crowd of people  
scurrying about on a pier  
folding into themselves

Don Miller

in the dark trees  
coyote moon song  
the last night  
of late September

Lynda Monahan

fifty tiny buttons  
down her back  
the slow undoing  
of her wedding dress

Lynda Monahan

she took up running  
until she realized  
it wasn't getting her  
anywhere

Lynda Monahan



must be October  
fat yellow moon  
riding the horizon  
combines churning the night

Lynda Monahan

A stack of postcards  
ephemeral  
like beach sand  
and freckles.

Wendy Oldenbrook

Patterns of abandonment  
A bottle of red wine  
She feels it coming  
A matter of time.

Wendy Oldenbrook

her mama says,  
“Close your eyes, baby  
and that highway sounds  
like a River”

Wendy Oldenbrook

My dimpled son  
Off to capture the world  
Armed with a lunch box love note  
and a glue stick

Wendy Oldenbrook

He arrives with demons  
he can't share  
worry lines  
fine brown hair

Wendy Oldenbrook

## **The Dream**

The kids

Gather tiny pebbles.

In the evening they return

With streams of dream.

Pravat Kumar Padhy

## Saddened

Silently the tree  
Sheds drops of rain.  
She wasps her eyes  
Over the melting edge of grief.

Pravat Kumar Padhy



## Similar Harmonics

Beach balls bouncing on the beaches  
bring to mind the languid reaches  
of the swells in the Atlantic  
when the shoreline makes them frantic.

William Preston

## The Widow Ponders

A lone chickadee  
is lonesome, yet free;  
I join you to be  
alone, chickadee

William Preston

## The Rhyme of the Ancient Pensioner

Now that I'm old, I pray for two gifts  
more precious than riches, more useful than pluck:  
a thimble of octogenarian wisdom;  
a bushel of abecedarian luck.

William Preston

unlocking  
the mystery  
of failure  
your fragile hands

Ernesto P. Santiago

the free will  
of the wind  
the kindness of a colleague  
I hardly know

Ernesto P. Santiago

winter rain...  
the urge to create  
nothing  
out of nothing

Shloka Shankar

summer beach...  
I wait for that one  
stray metaphor  
to be washed ashore

Shloka Shankar

## He Walked Away

The trail along the creek crackles, the water's edge laced with ice. Our boots leave wet prints on frost, evidence of a long search for something small and quiet as a fawn, frightened as a child.

Jane Shlensky



## One Better

While we puzzled over the perfect  
birthday gift for our father,  
he packed up his fishing gear and  
a few clothes and bid us farewell.

Jane Shlensky

## Caged

My sister collects instruments to hang upon the wall.  
So beautiful, the workmanship, mother-of pearl, rich wood,  
and strings. She does not wish them played.  
They stand like wax tenors, song-choked.

Jane Shlensky

## Easy Things

I'm getting old, in love with easy things,  
ideas like laughter and losing weight, waking  
fluent in languages and instruments, energy settling  
over me like a cotton gown, lilting like praise and grace.

Jane Shlensky

## What Lies Beneath

Beneath the snow lies possibility tucked into earth,  
rebirth of seed or bulb awaiting sun to stun pods  
housing hope. Nature unfolds as we do, infinite  
layers rising to light.

Jane Shlensky

## If/When

If we eroded down to dirt, becoming over time  
wild ground, amazed with random flowers, nothing  
nature did not found, would you be happy then,  
raising your petaled face to sky?

Jane Shlensky

## **Identity**

Sometimes I'm fisherman, sometimes fish  
Or snap of line  
Or rippling chill  
Or morning mist burned clear

Jane Shlensky

## **Lily**

Lillian hitched her way to LA  
bought a Harley during her stay  
changed her name to Lily one day  
texted her mom everything was okay

Listen to the heartbeat  
of the waking cosmos,  
the sky, the land,  
the nurturing ocean.

Richard St. Clair



Old stale memories  
plague my overcrowded brain:  
I push and pull,  
but images won't leave.

Richard St. Clair

The last leaves of autumn  
are sighing, sighing.  
I sigh, too, when I think  
of all the times I should have let go.

Debbie Strange

The silken water slips quietly  
over stone shoulders.  
If you listen deeply,  
you will hear the night undressing.

Debbie Strange

The great blue king on unfurled wing,  
sails through mackerel sky,  
to alight once more upon shingled shore,  
with strident, raucous cry.

Debbie Strange

At the dentist's office,  
collywobbles distract me  
from the war being waged  
in the blood of my mouth.

Debbie Strange

She is Sweet Sixteen.  
Wherever she goes,  
bouquets of small children  
cling to her like butterflies.

Debbie Strange

## **Abundance**

The brass rose sieves single drops—rain  
from the belly of the watering can.

The bride's crystal sash circles her waist  
on silk threads knotted at her spine.

## Exuberance

The silver flute answers Purgatory  
Brook, feral and tumbling downstream.

The groom's peach-dotted, pink bowtie  
undulates on the apple of his throat.



My head aches, my eyes are heavy  
Sharp shingle worries beach my mind  
Is it really the year's last day  
That shakes these bones awake?

Liam Wilkinson

Listening to Coleman Barks reading  
The evergreen lines of Rumi  
I become a small white pebble  
On a long stretch of sand

Liam Wilkinson

## **First Weaponness Winter**

Cacophony of silences  
Fat flakes falling into the sea  
At the break of dawn I discover  
A new kind of blue

I wish to live out a life here  
On the slopes of this small mountain  
Sailing out these tiny vessels  
On the snow hardened sea

Night snow falling on Weaponness  
The moon a blur behind the mist  
For the first time in eighteen years  
I am invisible

Liam Wilkinson

Oak, ash, birch, beech  
the young forest  
breathing, growing  
passing on life.

Steve Wilkinson

A gentle breeze  
sways the branches.  
Long shadows shrink  
across the lawn.

Steve Wilkinson

You in my thoughts  
on this cold day.  
The path ahead  
covered in mist.

Steve Wilkinson

Thinking of you,  
I watch the sky  
let out its tears.  
Alone again.

Steve Wilkinson

on the morning rooftop  
the crow's stretching echoes

across  
commuting drivers

Joshua Eric Williams



back porch  
music

thundering  
through woods

Joshua Eric Williams

a delivery  
leaving the door

as it was  
September winds

Joshua Eric Williams

flowers waving

concentric  
rings after

the crane fly

Joshua Eric Williams

the darker ground  
in circles  
under an oak—  
her breath and mine

Joshua Eric Williams

warmest winter  
yet a mantra drips  
from upstairs  
and out of my dreams

Joshua Eric Williams

## **A Carnival of Butterflies**

The stillness  
of the orange leaves...

The orange grove  
studded with butterflies

## Sudden Strike

what an idea!  
the sudden strike  
of a sparrow's beak  
on his forehead

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