

POETIC SUN



ISSUE 1

**EDITORS: SHIYANG SU
JIANING RAN**



We write for this world.

我们总还在为这个世界挣扎/写诗/歌唱/流泪/为不曾降临的明日/熠熠生辉的今昔



Contributors

Ann Christine Tabaka

Brian Jerrold Koester

Gale Acuff

Gerard Sarnat

Jack D. Harvey

Jianing Ran

John Tustin

R. Gerry Fabian

Shiyang Su

William Doreski

Cover Design: Xiaoman Liu

Repelling Forces

The flames rise within my breast.
I stand alone at hearth.
Blackness closes its eyes.

I am warmth stolen from ancient embers,
they smolder but for naught.
Red bleeds into black,
white hot and gray ash,
seep around my edge!

You were the night - you chilled my soul.
Ice crystals formed upon my flesh.
I fought against your frost.
Your icy blue demeanor erupted.

We repelled all emotions,
while seeking to adjoin.
I would not give up my fire.

You tried to douse my burn/light/joy.
The antithesis of each other,
we could not survive.

The forces that once drew us close,
have extinguished / we are now cinders.

— Ann Christine Tabaka

No One Wins, No One Loses

Barricaded emotions, blocked fears,
we stood beside the storm,
challenging all who dared to pass.
We wanted everything our way,
we would not relent. Our way was the only way.

Numbered pages flew by our eyes.
We shut ourselves to truth.
There was so little left, we could not see.
We inflicted the pain that we bore.
We never stepped aside.

Who dared stand in our way?
The righteous shall be first.
There is never enough to go around.
Mountains fell before us,
as we climbed up to the sky.

Sheltering our senses,
covered faces walked behind,
in front, and all around.
Severed longings now lie dying
amidst the last reaches.

We are numb, we are choking,
striving for the reins.
Winning is the only trophy at hand.
At the pinnacle there is no glory,
there is no taking back.

Although most will not admit it,
at last breath, we are all the same;
grasping for what we cannot have,
be it redemption, fame, or wisdom.
No one wins, no one loses in the end.

— Ann Christine Tabaka

Bio:

Ann Christine Tabaka was nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize in Poetry. She is the winner of Spillwords Press 2020 Publication of the Year, her bio is featured in the “Who’s Who of Emerging Writers 2020,” published by Sweetycat Press. Chris has been internationally published. Her work has been translated into Sequoyah-Cherokee Syllabics, into French, and into Spanish. She is the author of 13 poetry books. She has been published micro-fiction anthologies and short story publications. Christine lives in Delaware, USA. She loves gardening and cooking. Chris lives with her husband and four cats. Her most recent credits are: The American Writers Review, The Scribe Magazine, The Phoenix, Burningword Literary Journal, Muddy River Poetry Review, The Silver Blade, Silver Birch Press, Pomona Valley Review, Page & Spine, West Texas Literary Review, The Hungry Chimera, Sheila-Na-Gig, Foliate Oak Review, The McKinley Review, Fourth & Sycamore.

A Bald Ten-Year-Old on the N Tram near UCSF Medical Center

He was having a good day

jumping around between the seats

I can do it, Mom!

I can do it.

Someday I'm going to quit.

All of this.

He gazed around

with the same defiance

that had kept him alive -

him and me both

Am I going to get in trouble

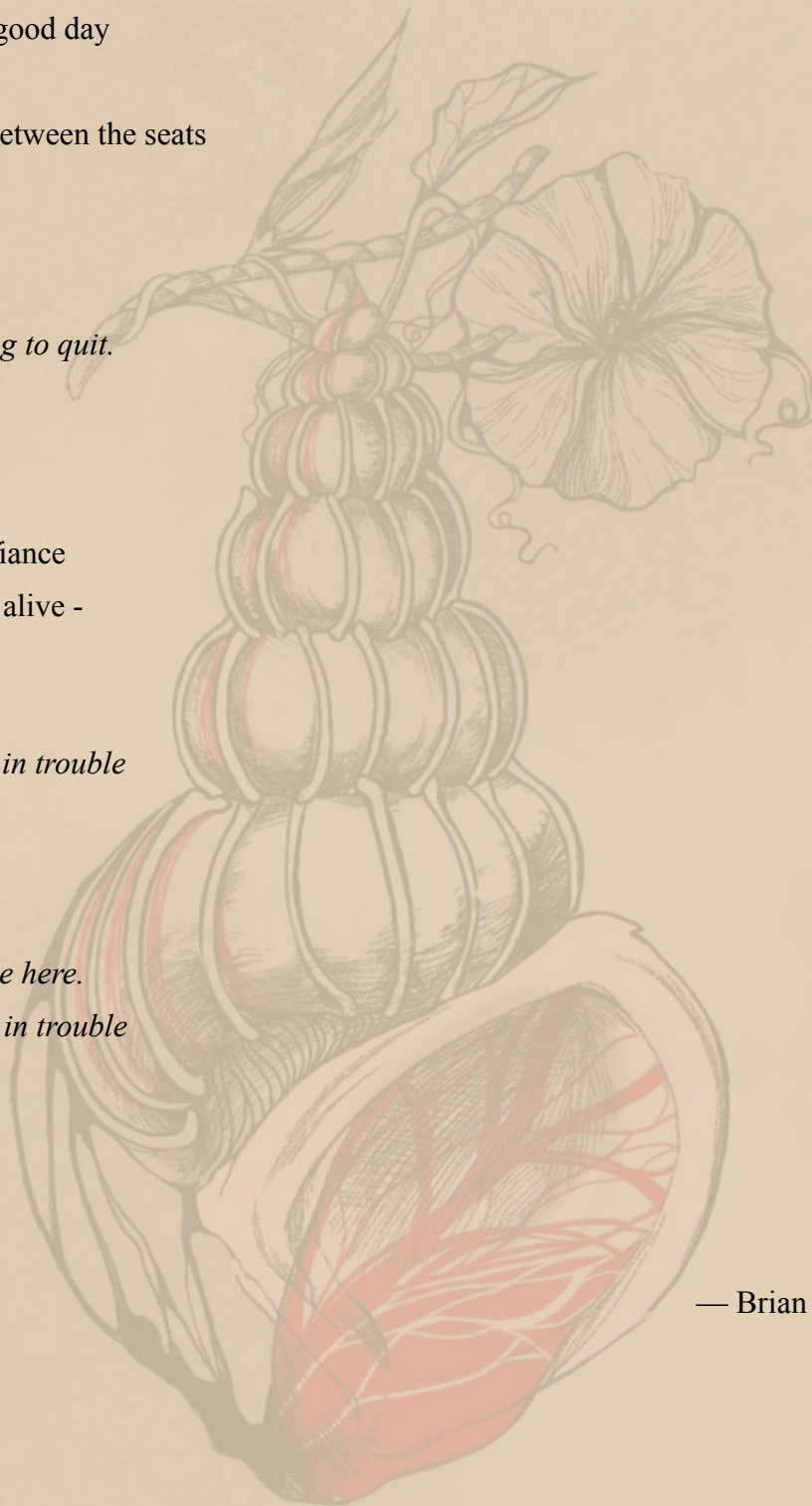
when I quit?

In two years

I'm not going to be here.

I don't want to be in trouble

when I go.



— Brian Jerrold Koester

[Landay III]

We may never be close friends, but Death,
when I believed in nothing else, I believed in you.

Death Vigil

Your breath
heaving like the surf
receding like the tide

If only
you could tell me
where you are

— Brian Jerrold Koester

Bio:

Brian Jerrold Koester is a Pushcart Prize nominee and a Best of the Net Anthology nominee. His collection is titled *What Keeps Me Awake* (Silver Bow Publishing) and his chapbook is called *Bossa Nova* (River Glass Books). His work has appeared in *Agni*, *Streetlight Magazine*, *Delmarva Review*, *Right Hand Pointing*, *Louisiana Literature*, and elsewhere. He lives in Lexington, Massachusetts and has been a freelance cellist.

When you die you get your eternal soul

all judged-up in Heaven and get to hang
there forever-plus but if you've been so
bad that not even the Crucifixion
can get you off the hook then it's Hell hands
down, also for forever and then some,
this is religion and I get it each
week at church and Sunday School and even
if it's baloney it's still nice to know
where you stand, at least to adults and I'm
just ten years old so if I said I don't
agree no one would hear me anyway
until I'm older and start shaving and
get my driver's license and start dating
and have a deeper voice. And then I'll see.

— Gale Acuff

Bio:

Gale Acuff has had poetry published in *Ascent*, *Reed*, *Poet Lore*, *Chiron Review*, *Cardiff Review*, *Poem*, *Adirondack Review*, *Florida Review*, *Slant*, *Nebo*, *Arkansas Review*, *South Dakota Review*, *Roanoke Review* and many other journals in a dozen countries. He has authored three books of poetry: *Buffalo Nickel*, *The Weight of the World*, and *The Story of My Lives*. Gale has taught university English courses in the US, China, and Palestine.

Sentient Beings tanka

Buddhism, unlike
my Judeo-Christian roots,
imagines adult
humans essentially good
same as animals, babies.

— Gerard Sarnat

Bio:

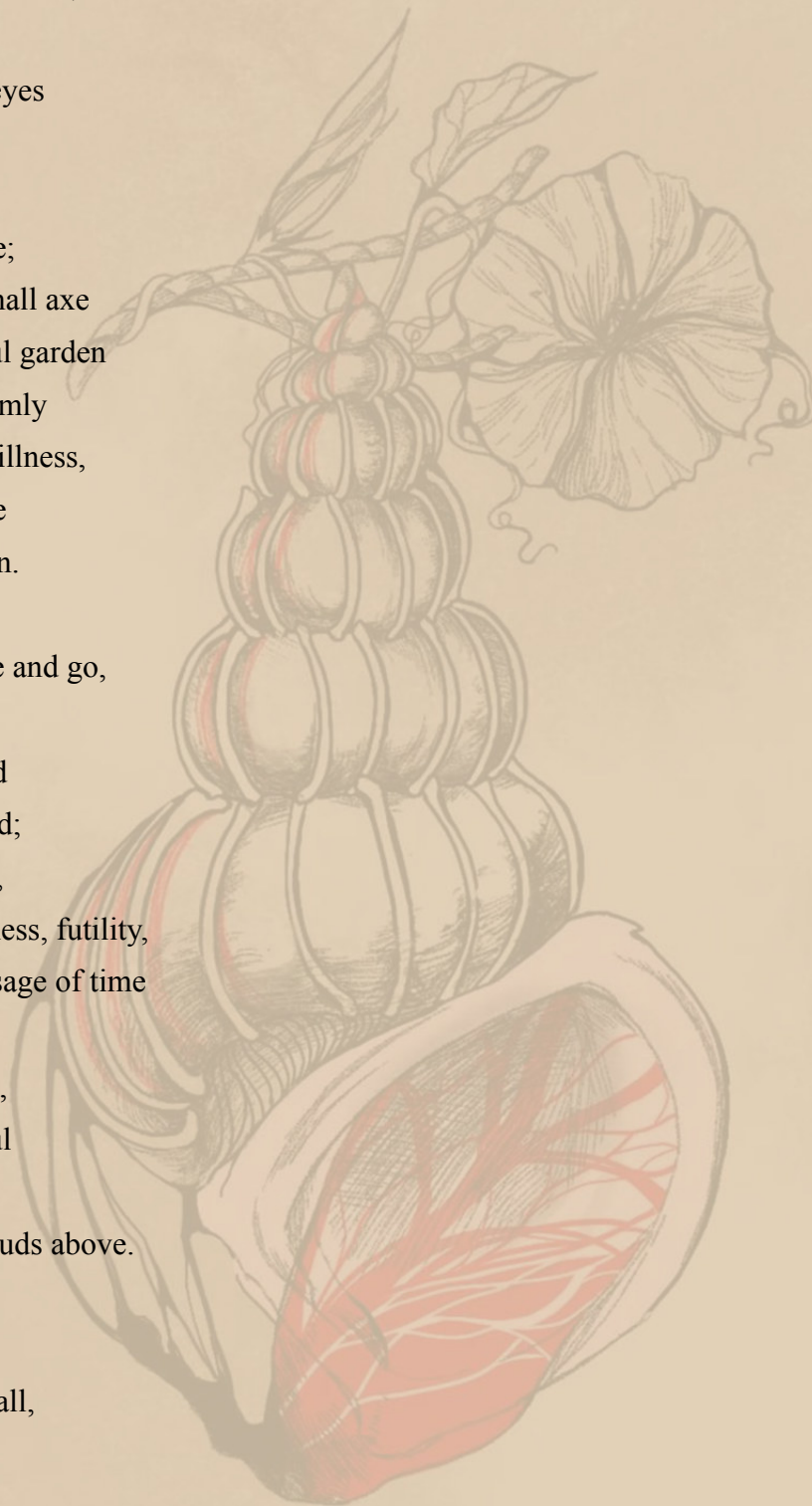
Gerard Sarnat won San Francisco Poetry's 2020 Contest, the Poetry in the Arts First Place Award plus the Dorfman Prize, and has been nominated for handfals of 2021 and previous Pushcarts plus Best of the Net Awards. Gerry is widely published including in Buddhist Poetry Review, Gargoyle, Main Street Rag, New Delta Review, Arkansas Review, Hamilton-Stone Review, Northampton Review, New Haven Poetry Institute, Texas Review, Vonnegut Journal, Brooklyn Review, San Francisco Magazine, Monterey Poetry Review, The Los Angeles Review, and The New York Times as well as by Harvard, Stanford, Dartmouth, Penn, Chicago and Columbia presses. He's authored the collections Homeless Chronicles (2010), Disputes (2012), 17s (2014), Melting the Ice King (2016). Gerry is a physician who's built and staffed clinics for the marginalized as well as a Stanford professor and healthcare CEO. Currently he is devoting energy/ resources to deal with climate justice, and serves on Climate Action Now's board. Gerry's been married since 1969 with three kids plus six grandsons, and is looking forward to future granddaughters.

Portrait of a Mandarin

Goodbye, Chinese man,
sitting on a stone;
your shrewd old eyes
betray a penchant
for leaving
well enough alone;
even holding a small axe
above your careful garden
presents no unseemly
violation of the stillness,
no symbolic sense
of busy cultivation.

The seasons come and go,
like they do,
piling up the mold
in your garden bed;
instincts of virtue,
memories, weariness, futility,
the merciless passage of time
have no power,
lead you nowhere,
leave you peaceful
and detached
as the fleeting clouds above.

Your picture
hanging on my wall,



given to me
by my father,
dead and gone
forty years;
his picture hangs there too.
After the funeral
his cremation
and the smoke
of his burning
rose up the crematory chimney,
spreading out, evanescent,
over the roofs of
featureless buildings.

Let it go,
Chinese man,
sitting on a stone;
my father's gone and
I'll be gone soon myself,
but you'll still be here
in your garden,
sitting in your picture frame
or maybe on the way
to somebody else's house.
Not hard for you to bear,
change is no change for you;
you and your garden are forever,
even after we are gone;
your garden, the stone you sit on,
your axe, immortal in
this world or the next
and the death
of all of us who saw you
cannot touch your garden,
your serenity, your ancient eyes.

— Jack D. Harvey

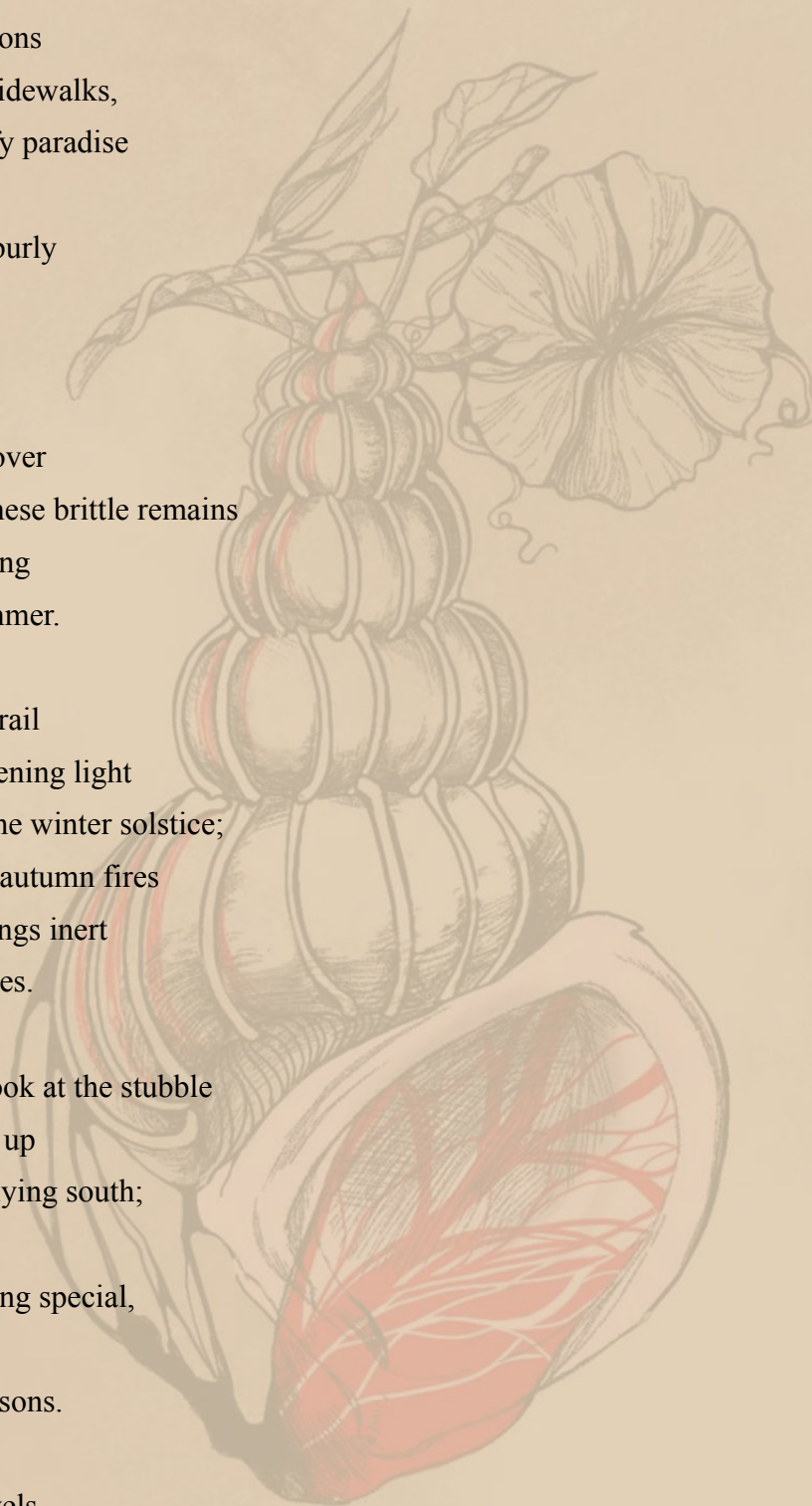
Autumn

Leaves leave
their brittle skeletons
on the suburban sidewalks,
litter of some leafy paradise
far from the dirty
dangerous hurly-burly
of the city;
marbles plinked
by the boys
hesitate, passing over
the thin lines of these brittle remains
left by hearty spring
and abundant summer.

Up ahead on the trail
the season's shortening light
waning towards the winter solstice;
the smoke of late autumn fires
turns sluggish, hangs inert
in front of our faces.

Country people look at the stubble
in the fields, look up
at the last geese flying south;
rooted to the land
for them it's nothing special,
a routine marking
of the passing seasons.

Buried in the bowels
of the metropolis
Ethiopia is bright as a dime
and faraway as the moon



to the black addict,
high and mighty
on heroin;
weak and freezing to death
less than nothing to him
dead leaves on the sidewalk;
all he sees are
the polished spear points
in his enemies' eyes,
in the hard eyes of
his black and white enemies,
one way or another
his dealers of pain and affliction,
relief and remorse.

Crossing the line of despair,
freezing to his bones
in the gloom of the closing day,
resigned, he leans back and
poor black soul,
hits his needle,
his dying eyes
hard and set as glass
and hits his needle again
for the last time.

And from the darkening sky,
leaf by dying leaf,
the abiding sequence of nature
brings no temporal solace
no benign passing of the seasons
to the desperate fatal measure
dealt out to this poor man.

— Jack D. Harvey

Bio:

Jack D. Harvey's poetry has appeared in Scrivener, The Comstock Review, Valparaiso Poetry Review, Typishly Literary Magazine, The Antioch Review, The Piedmont Poetry Journal and elsewhere. The author has been a Pushcart nominee and over the years has been published in a few anthologies.

The author has been writing poetry since he was sixteen and lives in a small town near Albany, New York. He is retired from doing whatever he was doing before he retired.

His book, Mark the Dwarf is available on Kindle. <https://www.amazon.com/Mark-Dwarf-Jack-D-Harvey-ebook/dp/B019KGW0F2>



GREEN AND AMBER EYES

My Tara with the green and amber eyes:

As green as justice, the liberty of music

As a living thing beneath the sun.

As amber as liquid time, as sadness,

As healing as new lust

Beneath the moon.

My Tara with the green and amber eyes:

The colors of day lapsing into night;

Judgment lapsing into need;

Desire lapsing into just the feeling of two bodies

That are connected together

By their tandem pulse

In a house

In a room

On a bed

Beneath the living sun, then

Under the obsequiousness

Of the always attendant moon.

— John Tustin

Bio:

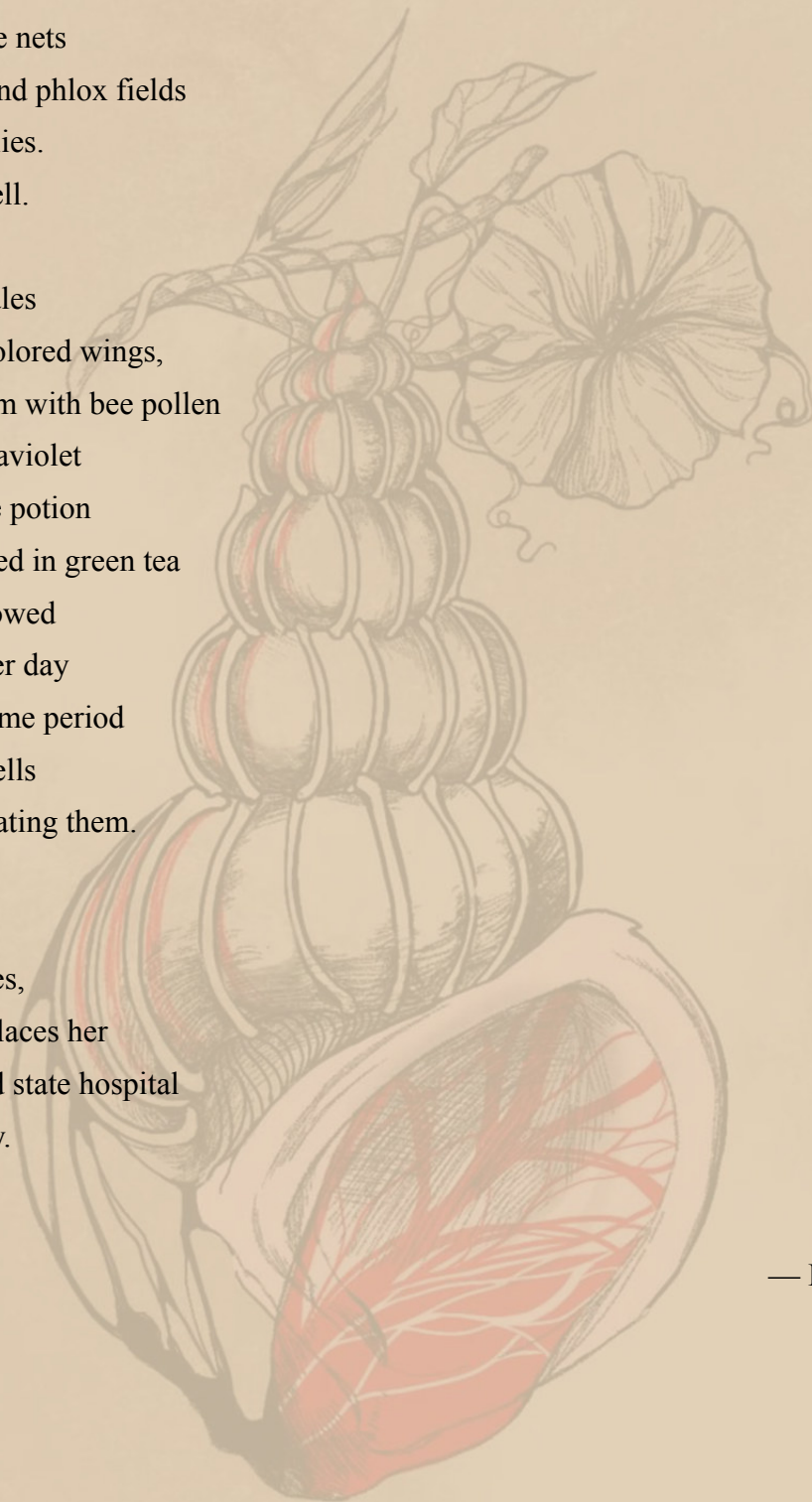
John Tustin's poetry has appeared in many disparate literary journals since 2009. fritzware.com/johntustinpoetry contains links to his published poetry online.

Omnium-Gatherum

The crazy chamomile lady
sends small sensitive children
with large delicate nets
into coneflower and phlox fields
to capture butterflies.
She pays them well.

Collecting the scales
from their multicolored wings,
she combines them with bee pollen
to concoct an ultraviolet
powdered particle potion
that when sprinkled in green tea
and slowly swallowed
in doses of two per day
of a three-week time period
captures cancer cells
effectively eradicating them.

Despite
scores of successes,
the government places her
in an underfunded state hospital
for her own safety.



— R. Gerry Fabian

Minor Irritations

The accidental paper cut
that stings in surprise annoyance
or the hot pizza bite
that bubble roof of the mouth skin
or
the subtle eye burning
of poorly rinsed shampoo
or
the night waking heartburn
that repeats over and over
or
the oozing fluid blisters
of an intense sunburn
or
the ending our implied romance
with a grammatically incorrect
text message.

— R. Gerry Fabian

Bio:

R. Gerry Fabian is a retired English instructor. As a poet and novelist, he has been publishing his writing since 1972 in various literary magazines. He has published four books of his published poems, *Parallels*, *Coming Out Of The Atlantic*, *Electronic Forecasts*, and *Ball On The Mound*. In addition, he has published three novels. They are Getting Lucky (The Story), Memphis Masquerade, and Seventh Sense. All these books are available both as ebooks and paperbacks at all publishers including Amazon, Apple Books and Barnes and Noble. His web page is <https://rgerryfabian.wordpress.com>
Twitter @GerryFabian2
He lives in Doylestown, PA

人生纪实

初生

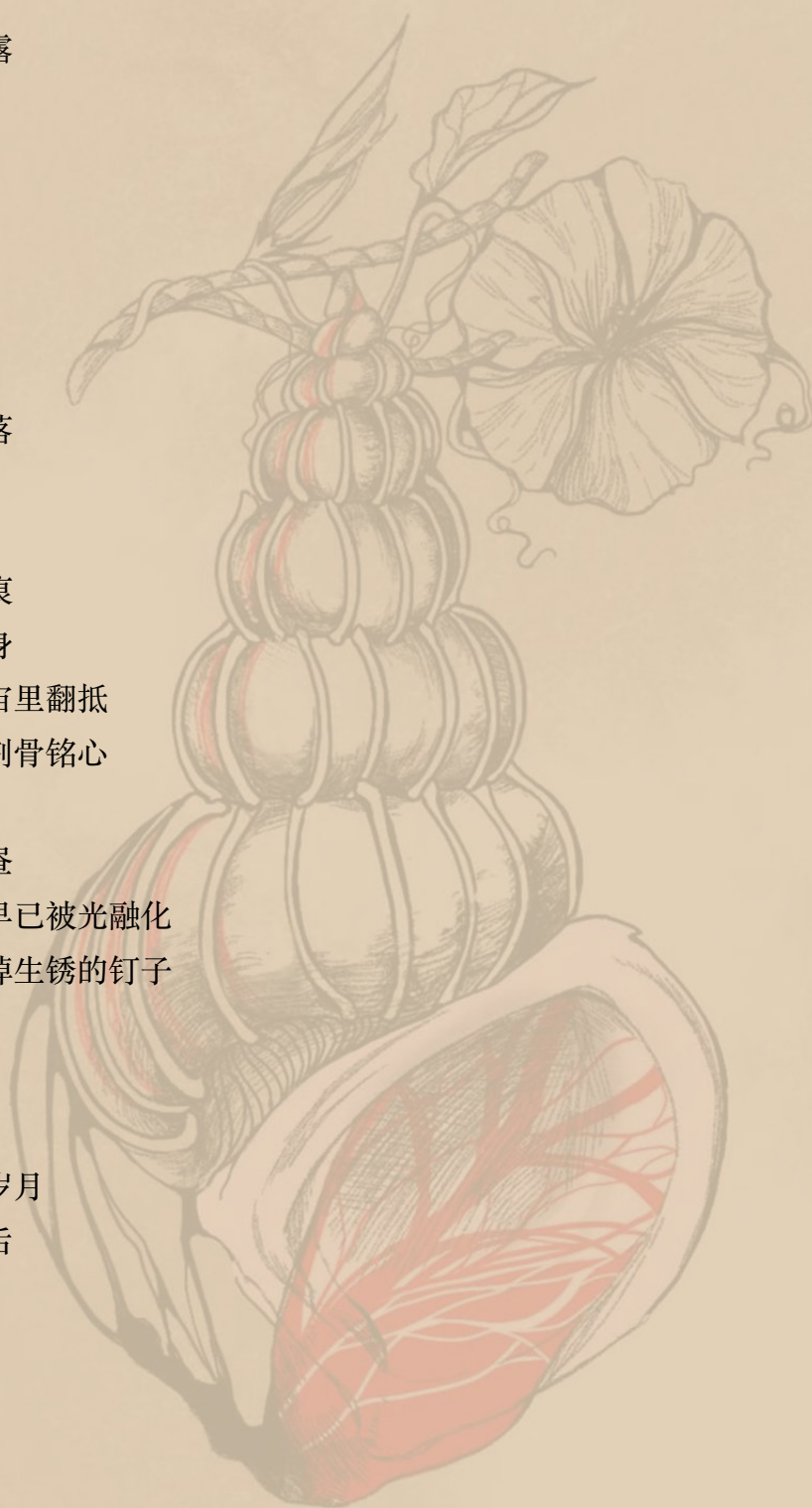
鲜花吞吐晨露
朝霞滚落
洁白的肉体
荡漾着
金色光晕
不愿意
融化成蜡油
从烛火中滴落

十年

年少时的吻痕
像结疤的纹身
在耳朵和宇宙里翻抵
和盛夏一起刻骨铭心
十年间
黑夜吞噬白昼
风里的盐渍早已被光融化
我也试着拔掉生锈的钉子
翻腾的血液
无知无觉
原来
没有名字的岁月
在冬天的最后
杀死了春天
迷途不知返

尾声

后来
我们被人潮裹挟着
主动奔向远方

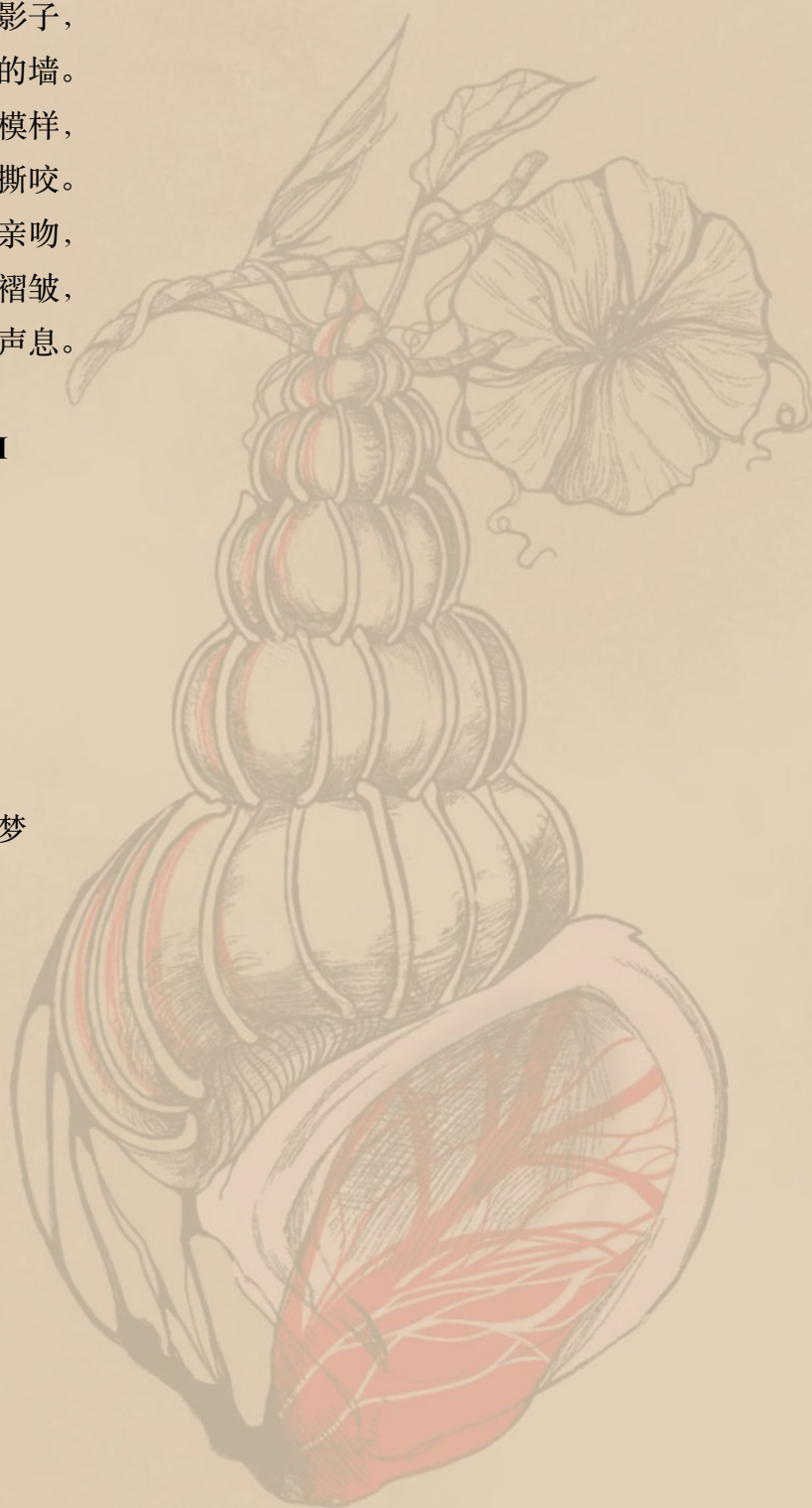


怪语

我们就像窄仄的影子，
低矮的附在潮湿的墙。
想伸展成筋骨的模样，
欲怕风雨沉浮的撕咬。
所以只能小心的亲吻，
对方滚烫轻浮的褶皱，
不成言语又难掩声息。

青春到底是什么I

是写诗和做爱
枪和玫瑰
是我在你身后
焚烧黑夜
干涸的月是寂寞
银辉填满年少遗梦
你没有写完的歌
和潮湿的空气
一起呼吸
空泛的苔
和你的掌心
一起伸缩
扩张成墙
我们便安睡在
对方的嘴巴里
密不透风
稠粘的白昼
喧嚣的星辰
我们走着
睡着了
再也没有
做过梦



青春到底是什么II

是敞亮的午后
我们漫不经心的拨弄
那些欲盖弥彰的美丽
然后任由风吹散
无知无觉
却又一切正好



Bottled Music

Screw-top pints and quarts of jazz,
pop, hip-hop, rhythm and blues.
Cork-sealed liters and half-gallons
of romantic, classical, opera.

A deposit of twenty-five cents
for the thick glass bottles required
to keep the music from leaking
note by note into the atmosphere

and smogging casual small talk.
I open a quart of bebop
at dusk, saxophones groaning
with pleasure, drums clattering,

the bass sketching heavy dark lines
across a smoky den of drunks.
You spend the winter afternoons
savoring pints of folk music

that flit into the living room
like moths escaping their cocoons.
On weekends we uncork an opera
and slump enraptured and heavy

in the deadweight of old age.
Weekly at the supermarket,
usually on Sunday morning,
we renew our faith by restocking

bottled music and the cheapest
Napa Valley wine. Life goes on
despite a plague and politics.

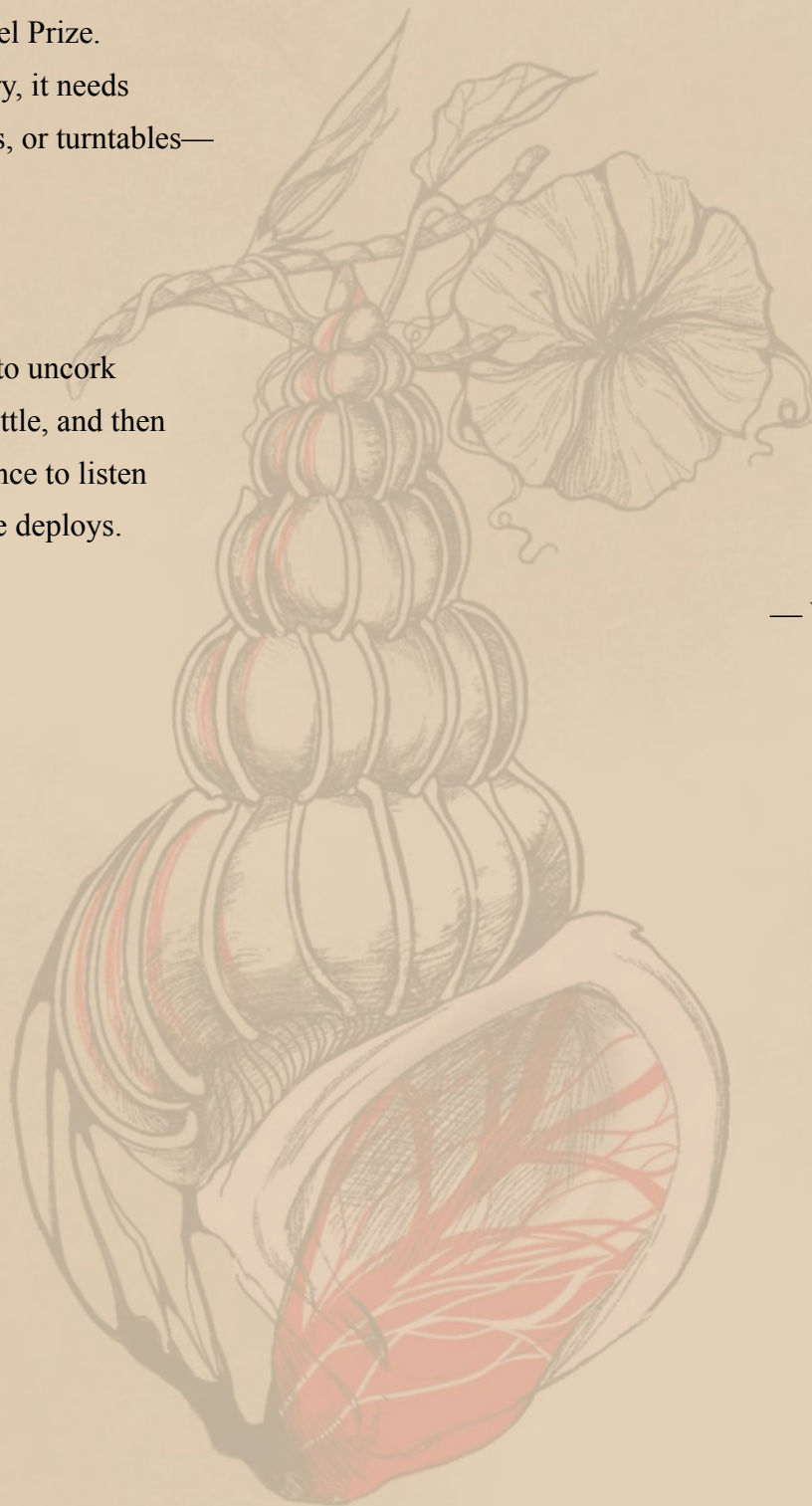
The inventor of bottled music

deserves a couple of Grammys
and even the Nobel Prize.

Cheap and sanitary, it needs
no speakers, amps, or turntables—

only the strength to uncork
or unscrew the bottle, and then
the will and patience to listen
until the final note deploys.

— William Doeski



Dangles and Spangles

Hardly a crystalline dawn,
the rain is critiquing winter
in terms a child would enjoy.

You sometimes act posthumous,
cleaning the cat box or sifting
black oil seed for chickadees.

You web the available space
with senses I've never sprouted
but envy for their precision.

Today we're supposed to stand
by the highway, bearing witness
with signs promoting peace but

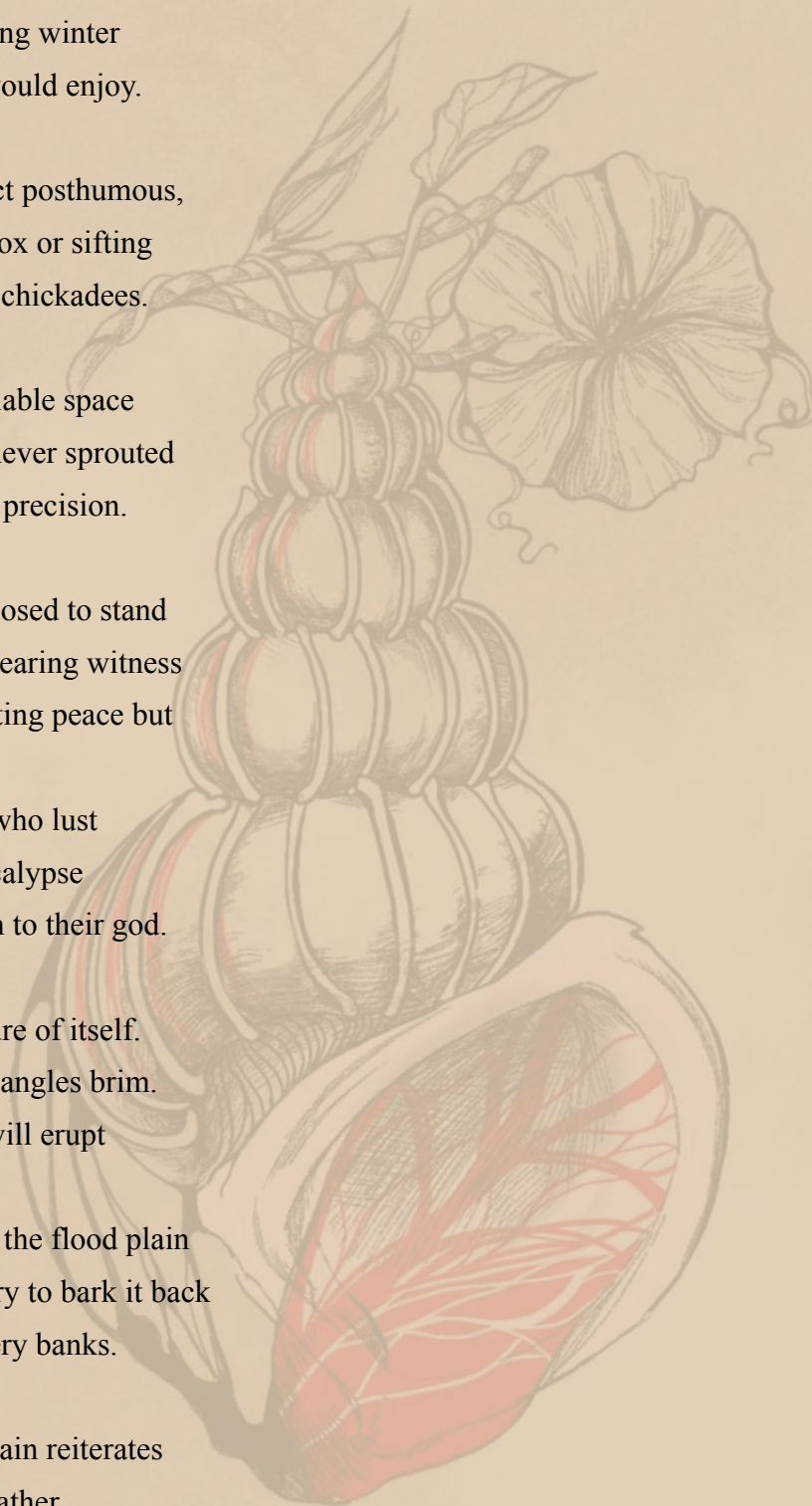
enraging drivers who lust
for a nuclear apocalypse
to wholesale them to their god.

The rain seems sure of itself.
Its dangles and spangles brim.
Our local brook will erupt

into basements in the flood plain
where dogs will try to bark it back
between its leathery banks.

The voice of the rain reiterates
familiar phrases rather
than dredge original syntax

from thick old comforts of cloud.



Such hostile luxury forbids
our casual participation.

Even you with your angles
arranged to accommodate
must retract your tentacles.

Let's toast some toast and pretend
this is the apotheosis
for which plain landscapes prepare.

The inventor of bottled music
deserves a couple of Grammys
and even the Nobel Prize.
Cheap and sanitary, it needs
no speakers, amps, or turntables—

only the strength to uncork
or unscrew the bottle, and then
the will and patience to listen
until the final note deploys.

— William Doreski

Too Parisian by Far

After the daily apocalypse
you face the world without face.

When I meet you on the boulevard
you're still seeing daylight stars

whirling in a van Gogh sky.
We duck into the Cluny garden

although the museum has closed
in authentic medieval style

for fear of the ongoing plague.
You confide in shades of limestone

familiar to those who browse
antiquities all over Europe.

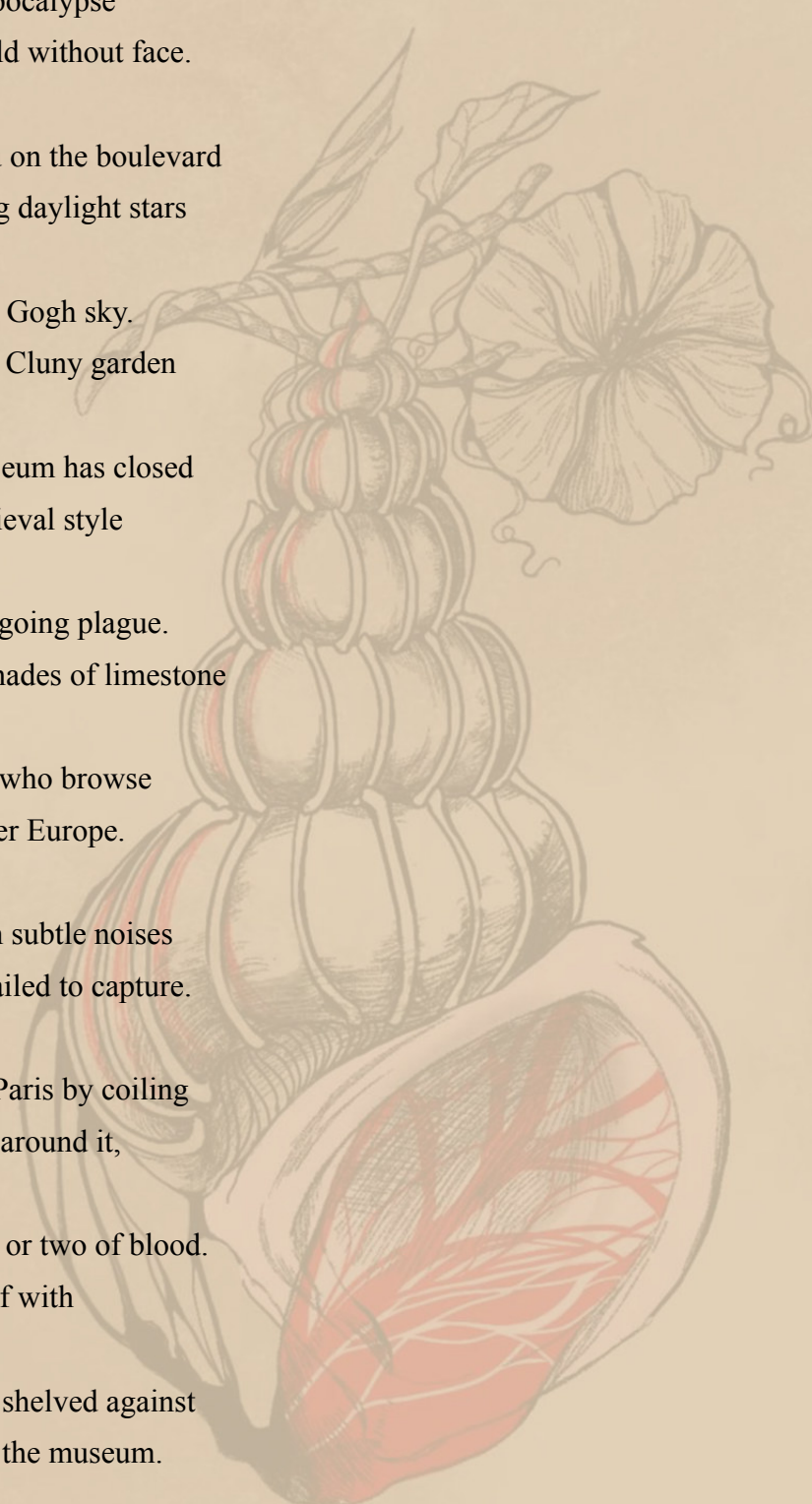
You share certain subtle noises
runes tried and failed to capture.

You've adopted Paris by coiling
your damp spirit around it,

squeezing a drop or two of blood.
I associate myself with

the carved heads shelved against
bare brick inside the museum.

But neither of us belong here,
your lovers snipped from cardboard,



my wine drinking merely a pose
I found in a Degas painting

one rainy morning in the Louvre.
You should return to Petersburg

with your faculties honed and shining,
while I swim the Atlantic

and land in Boston, a new day
brimming with spangles and sparks. [stanza break]
The garden shivers around us.
Leafless foliage clatters while

the Boulevard swarms with traffic.
A few wry tourists shuffle past

although the cafes remain closed.
You talk with ghastly humor

and I listen with my radar
for nuance I can later use.

But we might as well return
to our rooms and lodge ourselves

in the dustiest corners where
perspective invokes the painters

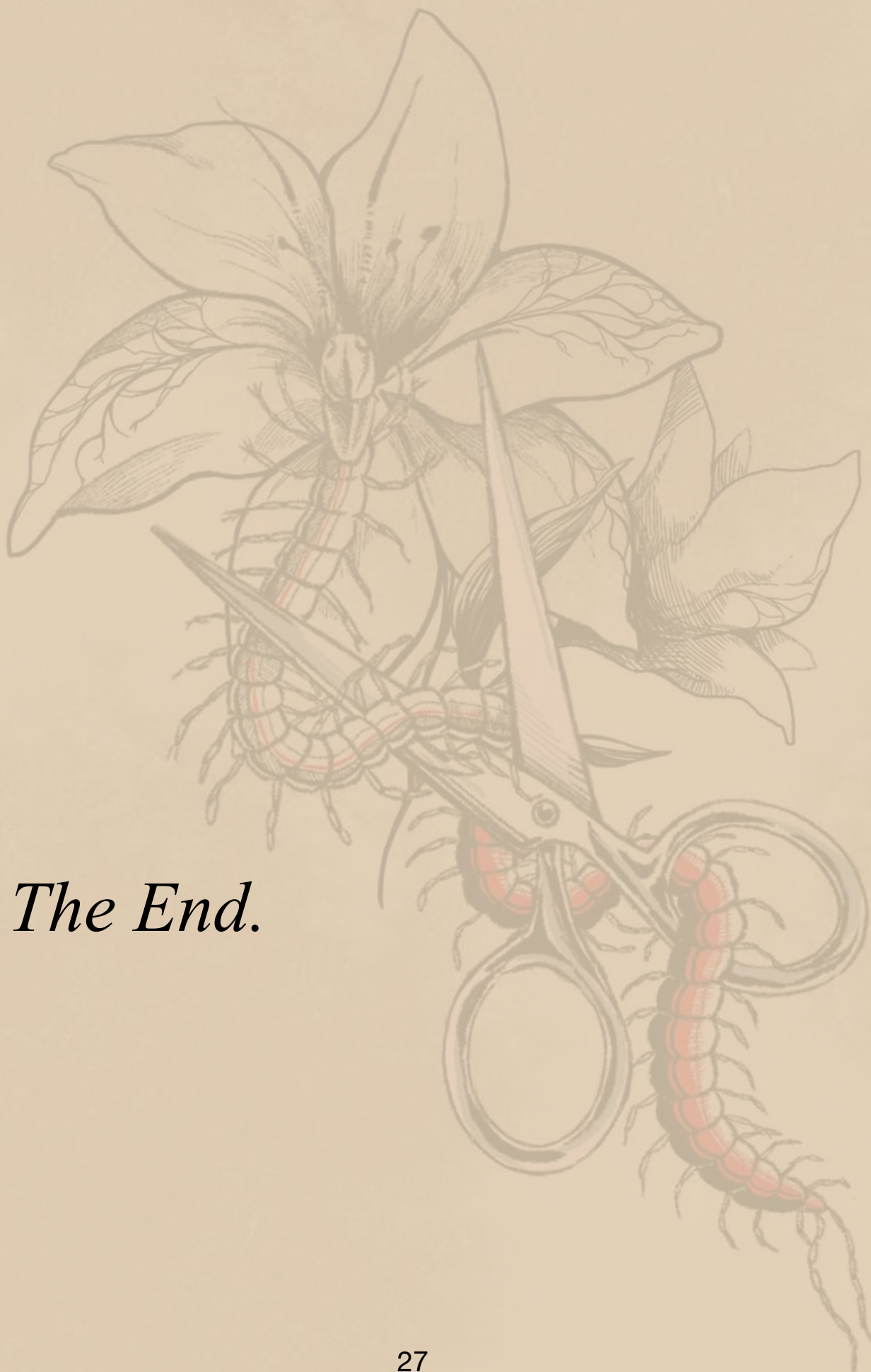
and architects we learned to honor
for their rigid deployment of form.

— William Doreski

Bio:

William Doeski lives in Peterborough, New Hampshire. He has taught at several colleges and universities. His most recent book of poetry is *Mist in Their Eyes* (2021). He has published three critical studies, including *Robert Lowell's Shifting Colors*. His essays, poetry, fiction, and reviews have appeared in various journals.





The End.