



*POETIC
SUN*

#ISSUE 9

*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

Alan Swope

Alexis Garcia

Alita Pirkopf

Carol Pierson Holding

Connie Woodring

Danny P. Barbare

Eva-Maria Sher

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Judith Cody

Justine McCabe

R. Gerry Fabian

S.F. Wright

Sandra Salinas Newton

Saramanda Swigart

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Virginia Schnurr

DOUGHBOY

A faded purple box held battle clasps that read
Aisne-Marne, Meuse-Argonne, Saint-Mihiel.
The khaki Marine uniform, impossibly small,
lay in a trunk, acrid with mothballs, a large
bronze medal on the pocket with the words
The Great War for Civilization.

His Great Event.
He and other boys in foxholes,
wearing shallow bowls on their heads,
stopped Germany's push into France.

Later, much later,
I knew him as my sad, wrinkled father.
Hard to see the Marine,
the slender sharpshooter.
I measured myself against him then,
as men must, and felt the better.

Until now, when, running short on future,
I take stock. A tarnished medal can't give
a life greater weight, I tell myself.

But I fear
my footprint
will fade
before his.

— Alan Swope

Bio :

Alan Swope's poetry has been published in *Fort Da* and *Roanoke Rambler*. He is a practicing psychotherapist and an emeritus professor with the California School of Professional Psychology. Alan enjoys singing, acting, travel, cinema, and gardening.

The Before Effect

“I want to look proper for my dad”
My mom says, the night before
We’re expected to see him
Lying there still
Where the cough won’t hurt him anymore
Each day that passed, he lost pieces
Of his former life
My mom, a stranger one minute
His loving baby girl the next
I feel so damn underdressed
My blazer, my slacks are back
At school
Why didn’t I bring them?
Ma hates that her outfit’s too tight
I can’t believe I’m wearing the black sweater
With glitter on it
For such an occasion

My mom, she just wants to make a good impression

On her father, one last time
I don’t have it in me to tell her
That it doesn’t matter what she wears
Because Grandpa can’t open his eyes
And tell her that he doesn’t like it
Maybe he can, I’m not good at this
The number of times my mom has asked me to visit him
Within the last couple of years
Is the same number of times I’ve sighed, shrugged
My shoulders and said, “next time”
I can’t talk my way out of it now
There’s no more opportunities left
For a next time.

— Alexis Garcia

Bio:

Alexis Garcia is a queer Hispanic writer from New York, NY. She graduated from Manhattanville College in 2017, where she studied Creative Writing and Criminal Law. Since then, a few of her poems have been published in the anthologies UNITED: Volume RED and UNITED: Volume HONEY with Beautiful Minds Unite LLC and Upon Arrival: Threshold with Eber & Wein Publishing. Most recently, she has had more of her poems accepted for publication in Third Estate Art, Door is a Jar, Mixed Mag, Air/Light, along with other literary magazines.

AGAINST THE TIDE

Finally one fights to swim,
and takes to do so
twenty-five milligrams of something
tiny and green that every day
masks the black, relentless waves,

changes the sea to turquoise—
a gentle, painted pool, shallow,
smooth-tiled, less threatening;
one hopes, life guarded.

David Hockney may have
walked the plank, as I did,
also over dangerous oceans,
before we chose cool green pools—
and he, diving boards.

UNFORGETTABLE

A shadow, a ghost,
the German artist paints all of us,
using, besides bountiful color,
bold shapes and patterns,
the tricky blacks and whites,
positive and negative space,
a friend explained.

Those ghost-white,
sometimes-flaming shapes
were easier to see
than shadows in shadows
say in gas masks or trees.
But it was all there and visible,
the particular war that filled our time.

— Alita Pirkopf

Bio:

After receiving a master's degree in English Literature from the University of Denver, Alita Pirkopf became increasingly interested in feminist interpretations of literature. Years later she enrolled in a poetry seminar where poetry became a long-term focus and necessity.

THREE SEASONS ON THE SALISH SEA

June/Sprouting

Buddy Boy drives you across the mudflats of Davis Slough onto Camano Island. Yes, you're back in a love as fierce as when you were both in college thirty-five years ago, but could you really leave New York now for this place?

Your first impression is the Island's shocking viridescent green, a green about to burst open, verdant and fecund, the green of a young girl's crush, green that overwhelms you with limerence as much as if you were tripping on Ecstasy.

As he turns into his driveway, you see green that's been tamed into something familiar: a neatly trimmed median splitting a driveway that runs through close-cropped grass, bordered on both sides by evergreens. Then you see a broad lawn up ahead, also cropped and edged by a man who, you'll discover, loves his power tools almost as much as he loves his nature.

Before you reach the lawn, you look to the left and are hit with more psychotropics—a tall bush with clumps of tiny, cream-colored petals that weigh down its stems as heavily as if they were bunches of grapes. Behind the bush is a fenced pasture at whose far edge you see a forest split open, a green geode with a center of tall, naked trunks of immature Douglas firs, skinny zombies pale gray and scabbed with lichen. It's the only thing here in paradise that will take time to love.

August/Harvest

You come back not expecting anything to have changed. Buddy Boy's property was once a horse farm, with stables and pastures and lawns for dogs and children and odd circles of white rocks around solitary towering trees. He lets nature make the alterations, so the forest encroaches on his grass and those inexplicable rock circles are partially erased. Changes that take decades, not a couple of months.

And still the change is astonishing. Could it be the light, in June ever-present and dazzling, now dimmed, a sad premonition of gloomy winters you're used to living back East? The grasses are now the color of straw. The "Oceanspray," as he calls the tiny, white petals clumped like grapes, is as discolored and brittle as old lace. The joys in August are the harvest—sweet purple blackberries from the acre of bramble that grew when he stopped tending his north pasture, big male crabs he catches from his little boat, corn as sweet as Michigan's best.

When you ask how he makes it through winter, when it's cold and dark and always raining, he looks amazed that you don't identify the dismal season with fire. "It's my favorite time of year," he says. He shows you his woodshed, a room attached to his workshop covered on three sides with rows of firewood. Near the entrance is an oval galvanized bucket containing axes and a mound of kindling. How different from your old life, where all your tools fit in one kitchen drawer. Does he know that aside from hanging pictures, you've never worked with your hands?

December/Vernalization

It's raining. Just as cold and dark as you feared. You've left it all to come here. You're frightened, sad, overcome by loss.

But because you've convinced your daughter that leaving was the only righteous thing to do; because you were sick from a life spent in elevators and conference rooms; because you could no longer stand the stink of your ex's gym clothes; because even your first apartment would cost ten times what it cost then to buy back now; because your ex found a girlfriend just three weeks after you left; because you took his crystal wineglasses without telling him; because you were sick of standing in line because everything in New York was a competition; and most of all because you love Buddy Boy, you could never go back.

You look out the window from the room Buddy Boy gave you as your writing study, and the view straight ahead is of those naked zombie firs. Only now their trunks are smoother and white, more toy soldiers than monsters, your steadfast defenders. You turn away, then minutes later turn back. The rain has stopped. The firs undulate in the wind; one tosses a cone down from its green crown. An offering?

A musky perfume drifts into your room. Buddy Boy must have added a cedar log to the wood stove.

He was right about fire.

— Carol Pierson Holding

Bio:

Carol Pierson Holding's commentary on climate change ran for seven years in *Huffington Post* and was syndicated in 200+ environmental outlets and news websites such as BostonGlobe.com, WSJ.com, and *Salon*. Her essays and fiction have appeared in literary journals and anthologies, including the Hugo Award-winning *Borderlands 6: The Anthology of Imaginative Fiction*. Carol holds degrees from Smith College and Harvard University. She spends her free time reading, walking through the forests of Camano Island, and volunteering for Hugo House, Seattle's literary center.

On Death Row

I was not killed today.

No car ran me over as I put my trash can out on the curb.

No active shooter shot me as I picked the ripest bananas at the grocery store.

Nobody stabbed me in the dark.

I watched as my fellow inmates were killed today.

A three-year-old girl was killed on her porch as rival gangs played war games.

What earthly crime could that child have committed?

Ten people were crushed to death as the rabid audience pushed toward its favorite rapper star.

Hundreds of black men were shot in the back by vigilantes, cops and white supremacists.

Karma? Is the karmic producer racist?

Women were strangled and tortured by their lovers, husbands, neighbors, online dates, johns, serial killers.

Karma? Is the karmic producer a misogynist?

Random people were killed by toxic and poisoned corporate products and policies.

I dodged the bullet.

Will the executioner come for me tomorrow?

— Connie Woodring

Bio :

Connie Woodring is a 76-year-old retired therapist who is getting back to the true love of writing after 45 years in the real job. Woodring has had many poems published in over 35 journals including one nominated for the 2017 Pushcart Prize.



The Fishermen

Down by the
bridge
at the Fair Play
exit
night laps against
the shore
as the boats
go and the
lanterns glow
fishermen's
voices quiet.

Excursion at the Lake

Walking on the prickly
loblolly pine needles
then the dry sun grass
step onto the hardened
wet red mud
then my toes sink
wade up to my chin
my lower body
cold breathe through
my mouth and nose
contently, happily
tread in the lake water.

— Danny P. Barbare

Bio :

Danny P. Barbare resides in the Southeastern USA. His poems have recently appeared in El Portal, Farming Magazine, Open Ceilings, Way Words, and North Dakota Quarterly. He lives with his family in Greenville, SC.

VOLUNTEERS FOR MOTHER

for Mutti, 1911-2003, Germany

Today at Well's nursery, I noticed a flat
of violas and remembered that in the spring
after we buried you, a cluster of them
volunteered at the foot of your grave.

I remembered our two small rooms
under the tiled roof of the old villa
the makeshift kitchen, the two-burner
stove, the dishes in the chipped

enamel bowls waiting to be washed.
You sang sad songs, I crouched
at your feet in a rectangle of sunlight
worked to undress my wooden doll.

Sometimes, toward evening, you would
play Chopin, the old piano a little
out of tune, the purple scent of petunias
wafting through the balcony door.

On sunny Mondays I helped string
the clothesline between posts
in the lawn behind the house while
the sheets and whites roiled in the big

copper tub of the basement wash-kitchen.
I helped sort socks with socks
blouses with blouses, pants with pants.
On tiptoes, I handed you the pins.

There were five big planters on the balcony:
chives and mint, nasturtiums and marigolds
snapdragons, asters, pole beans, tomatoes
and always the bright little violas you loved.

Down under the birch tree, I played marbles
with my friends. At six o'clock, like a muezzin
you called my name from above. Bread, cheese
and the first ripe tomatoes for supper.

You were not one to give hugs. I can't remember
a kiss from you. You kept your fears and pain close
to your chest. An artist at heart, you spent your time
in food lines for a few turnips or a piece of fish.
Once I spied you. as you climbed the stairs

from the basement. On the fifth flight up
just before the top landing, you set down
the coal shuttle with a thud.

You wiped your face with the back
of your smudged hand and gave a small sob.
I ducked behind the shoe shelf, afraid
that you might see me see you cry.

Oma told how you and Uncle Kurt raced
barefoot through the village, trying to catch
a glimpse of a motor car that rumbled past
the half-timbered houses. Sixty years later

you stepped into an airplane and crossed
the Atlantic to cradle your first grandchild
in your arms. I almost told you I loved you
but teased you instead, when at the height

of summer, you insisted on closing
every window, fearful that our babe might
catch cold. You were seventy-eight
the year we nearly missed your return flight.

How we ran! You were stumbling
clutching your handbag. I wiped the sweat
from your forehead, pushed you through
the gate, minutes before it closed

wondered whether I would see you again
on this continent—or ever...

YESTERDAY I STOOD NAKED

before the mirror: the graying hair
the (unflinching) blue eyes
the nose (usually in other people's business)
the lips (thin now)
the skin (mottled)
the jowls, the wattles
the narrow throat (guarding secrets)
the shoulders (hunched)
the bosom (too big)
the heart (gone to pieces)
the knotted hands (idle)
the belly—the belly!
the sturdy thighs & calves
the balding mons veneris
the bunioned feet

Yesterday I stood—
glad to be standing

— Eva-Maria Sher

Bio:

Eva-Maria Sher poetry has appeared in After Happy Hour Review, The Adirondack Review, Big Scream, Bluestem, Brief Wilderness, Cadillac Cicatrix, California Quarterly, Cape Rock, Door Is A Jar Magazine, Dos Passos Review, Doubly Mad, Drunk Monkeys, East Jasmine Review, Euphony, Forge, Free State Review, Front Range Review, GW Review, Hawaii Pacific Review, The HitchLit Review, The Hollins Critic, I-70 Review, ken*again, The MacGuffin, Old Red Kimono, OxMag, The Paragon Journal, Penmen Review, Pennsylvania English, Poydras Review, Prism Review, riverSedge, Rougarou, Ship of Fools, Slag Review, Soundings East, Third Wednesday, Vending Machine Press, The Virginia Normal, Visitant, Westview, and Willow Review.

Born in Germany at the end of WWII, Eva-Maria Sher was already writing poems as a child. At seventeen, Sher emigrated to the United States, studied literature, taught, raised three children, and have in the past ten years rediscovered the passion for writing. Sher lives on Whidbey Island, WA, where Sher offers workshops for children and adults in poetry, book-making, SoulCollage(R), and puppetry. Sher recently published two books of poems: *Chewing Darkness* and *The Old Villa*. Sher has written and composed a CD of lullabies, and Sher is the author/illustrator of *The Scintillating Little Dragon*, a coloring book to encourage and nurture the creative spirit.

Tonight

Chimes tap against our
windowpane. This evening
becomes starry sapphire
as sea gulls rise in
flight over rooftops.

Winds wrapping around
trees tossing leaves.

The court yard is full of
aromas from dinnertime.
Shadows growing longer
each minute. Lights go
on and I wait for you.

Soon we will feast on
guava y queso con galantes
sipping espresso.

— Joan McNerney

Bio:

Joan McNerney's poetry is found in many literary magazines such as Seven Circle Press, Dinner with the Muse, Poet Warriors, Blueline, and Halcyon Days. Four Bright Hills Press Anthologies, several Poppy Road Journals, and numerous Poets' Espresso Reviews have accepted her work. She has four Best of the Net nominations. Her latest titles are *The Muse in Miniature* and *Love Poems for Michael* and *At Work* all available on Amazon.com and Cyberwit.net

THE BOOK OF THE DAY

Out of bed,
my giant stretch
becomes the story
of the moment.

The second chapter
has me sipping coffee,
eating cereal,
cornflakes with
sliced banana.

In the third,
I take the dog for a walk
and write poetry.
Not at the same time
but in one
life-embracing flow.

The tale continues
with a siesta at noon.
More writing in the afternoon.

Dinner with my lover
is the climax
before the real climax.
Any food tasted
by candlelight
puts ambrosia on notice.

There is some time dedicated
to television,
what I call immersing ourselves
in other people's narratives.

But then comes bed, lovemaking,
that promised resolution,
the happy ending good characters deserve.

Dreams attempt their own subconscious yarn.
But the best they can do is plagiarism.

A BEAUTIFUL MORNING, UH HUH

Walls begin where darkness ends.
Light is like fireworks
to eyes sapped by shadow.
Glass pane refraction gifts me gold.
The vase nearest the sun
welcomes its fiery breath,
petals open wide
for their upside-down look at the sky.
The last man sleeping
is now the one man standing.
Stark blue, barely tempered by cloud,
is pierced by an opening window.
A small bird is jolted.
A car's nudged sideways.
Wind blows back on itself,
ruffles a young woman's hair.
But wounds close. Pieces reassemble.
No harm done.
Time is a healer.
Always in the long term.
Often in the now.

— John Grey

Bio:

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in Sheepshead Review, Poetry Salzburg Review and Hollins Critic. Latest books, "Leaves On Pages" "Memory Outside The Head" and "Guest Of Myself" are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in Ellipsis, Blueline and International Poetry Review.

Coffee Stain Concentric Circles

The less it makes sense the more I can't stop looking at it
I'm sorry if you too are familiar with this as defamiliarization
We both dove so deep into the note book
We know none of them are perfect bound

I prefer that stitched and ripping apart at its spine
but I don't prefer that the new bookstores
are really just newer used bookstores
The words are not from anyone alive but the cover art is new

Only in art forms distorted through bureaucracy
can free labor be exclusionary too, especially to those who labor
My time gets split like pennies on the 711 counter at 3AM
Like I guess I'll have to put the banana back this time, just the coffee again

New Daily Affirmations

They talk about the blood, sweat, and tears
The endless, tireless, thankless years
I can't be too critical that's been my whole catalog too

But what about the moments where you remember
writing poems in marble composition notebooks
in the back of a class you didn't understand or didn't understand you

We whinge about being outcasts but I remember getting in the boat
I remember casting out into the ocean and I remember the awe
When for the first time in my life I could hear silence that pure

I recall what it was like before being a purist
before bickering over the merits
of century old critical literature theories

We didn't need back then and don't much need now
Not when we are still sitting at the craft table
Making paper doll chains out of phonetics without considering rhetoric

Bio:

— John Maurer

John Maurer is a 26-year-old writer from Pittsburgh that writes fiction, poetry, and everything in-between, but his work always strives to portray that what is true is beautiful. He has been previously published in *Claudius Speaks*, *The Bitchin' Kitsch*, *Thought Catalog*, and more than sixty others.
@JohnPMaurer (johnpmaurer.com)

RIVER

Rivers strengthened with
great sustenance provided by
torrential storms race out of their
fair-season restraints, wander away
to explore the legendary things
that humans accumulate pursue.

Rivers gather them all within a
quickenning morass, things of
home and hospice and office
and market and cathedral and
bordello and those beloved and
those bereaved and all that is us all.

Rivers refuse to calculate among
big or small or pale or tan or white
or black or gold or silk or hide or
rage or love or hate or tender with
desire or fierce with disdain or lost
or discovered or frozen or slack or
mysterious or almighty.

Rivers cast out the innocent from
their shelters, the guilty from their cells
the pure from their mothers' wombs
the resting-in-peace from their graves.

Rivers find no matter of import
there in the world where we walk
no object known or part of recollection
within the sense of willful rivers
yet free to journey to revert
forgotten, forgiven again as austere streams.

— Judith Cody

Bio:

Judith Cody is a poet, writer and photographer. The Smithsonian Institute features her poetry on the Smithsonian website and placed it in their permanent collection; she has won national awards and honors from The Atlantic, Amelia, Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, Soul-Making Keats Literary Competition, Robert Frost Foundation's Director's Shortlist was nominated for a "Best of the Net" award, and is published in over 160 journals. She edited a PEN Oakland anthology, was Editor-in-Chief of the first "Resource Guide on Women in Music". A poem was chosen from a world selection by the Norton Center for the Arts for a year-long gallery exhibit. Books include: "Garden On An Alien Star System", the internationally noted "Vivian Fine: A Bio-Bibliography", "Eight Frames Eight", and in photography Cody's World War Two photo essays rank number one Google out of about two hundred billion. www.judithcody.com

LUNAE LUMEN

Moonlight enters our room
without knocking.

Nothing impedes her
diaphanous
gown of
ocher moonglow
silently
enveloping
our bed
of sorrow

like a golden sheet
of Nabulsi *knafeh*
sweet strands
suddenly
grab hold
of my belly
summoning me
to sob
uncontrollably

for the warmth
of your back

now
in the palm
of my hand.

— Justine McCabe

Bio:

Justine McCabe is a cultural anthropologist and practicing clinical psychologist with several academic publication credits. She enjoys doing play therapy with children, walking in nearby wetlands, and writing letters to editors, several of which have been published in *The New York Times*. Her op-eds have been published in *The Hartford Courant*, *The Litchfield County Times*, and *The CT Mirror* as well as essays in *Green Horizon Magazine*. Her poetry has appeared in *Evening Street Review*, *Flights*, *Pennsylvania English*, and *Avalon Literary Review*.

Parallel Universe Therapy

I become again
as I am encapsulated
through this wormhole
and
this new sterile system scans
environmental emotions
which is why my erratic entry
is a dictated delay
as they remove you
from my sense
of longing.

— R. Gerry Fabian

Bio:

R. Gerry Fabian is a published poet and novelist. 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 four novels : *Getting Lucky (The Story)*, *Memphis Masquerade*, *Seventh Sense* and *Ghost Girl*.

His web page is <https://rgerryfabian.wordpress.com>

Twitter @GerryFabian2

Linkedin <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gerry-fabian-91353a131/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100010099476497>

He lives in Doylestown, PA

COLLEGE

“And when I’m really confused,
I talk to God,”
The bald paunchy guy said.
Our professor,
Also paunchy,
But with a Hemingway beard
And Frederick Exley hair, said,
“And does he answer?”

I sat in the back.
My classmates
Listened to this exchange
More with fascination
Than interest,
But still—they listened.

But that was college:
Unbearable professors;
Arduous papers;
Solitary meals
Of greasy food;
Relished cigarettes
In between classes
While pining for the
Empty library
And glasses of
Bourbon and Coca-Cola
Waiting at home.

No storybook,
Hollywood memories—
Instead,
The bald guy saying,
“No; but I know he hears me.”

— S.F. Wright

Bio:

S.F. Wright lives and teaches in New Jersey. His work has appeared in Hobart, Linden Avenue Literary Journal, and Elm Leaves Journal, among other places. His short story collection, *The English Teacher*, is forthcoming from Cerasus Poetry, and his website is sfwrightwriter.com.

CORRESPONDENCE

I thought of you today as usual
My eyes opening to the empty pillow
Beside me
My lips dry and unkissed
Since you have gone.
Before I set down more
(On paper that feels too light
To carry so weighty a message to you)
I wonder how many hands
Will touch this letter
Thus muting our connection
In distance, time, and sense.
Goodbye I want to write,
Just that one word
To seal inside an envelope
Like closing a tomb.

— Sandra Salinas Newton

Bio :

Sandra Salinas Newton is a Professor Emeritus of English at Naugatuck Valley Community College. Her published works include *Enjoying the Arts: Poetry* (1977) and *Enjoying the Arts: Film* (1978), and a short story, “The Balikbayan,” in *Philippine American Short Stories* (Giraffe Books, 1997). Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Apricity Magazine*, *Decadent Review*, *Evening Street Review*, *Fauxmoir*, *Neologism Poetry Journal*, *New Note Poetry*, *OPEN: Journal of Arts and Letters* and *Vita Brevis Press*, *Oberon Poetry Journal 2021*, *Vita Brevis*, *Vultures and Doves*, and *The Woolf*. She earned her B.A. from The City College of New York, her M.A. from Hunter College, and her Ph.D. from Fordham University. She has also been an arts reviewer.

SEEN AND SEEING

when we judge
we call it ego
but can't we also
say it is the
yearning to be
seen?

to be claimed as kin
by a wild world

the way this flower
screams its yellow
see me at the bees
and the birds
and at me—

I see you, flower,
and you, bottle-blue
dragonfly, and you,
water whose
ripples oppose
each other,

toyed with by
different winds,
beneath those two
dancing birds
diving and weaving
above it

— Saramanda Swigart

do you see me?

Bio:

Saramanda Swigart completed an MFA in creative writing from Columbia University and a supplementary degree in literary translation. Her short prose and poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Alembic*, *Azure Literary Journal*, *Border Crossing*, *The Broken Plate*, *Caveat Lector*, *Diverse Arts Project*, *East Jasmine Review*, *Euphony*, *Evening Street Review*, *Flights*, *Fogged Clarity*, *Glint Literary Journal*, *Green Hills Literary Lantern*, *The Grief Diaries*, *Levee Magazine*, *The Literati Quarterly*, *The MacGuffin*, *The Meadow*, *OxMag*, *The Penmen Review*, *Perceptions Magazine*, *Plainsongs*, *Ponder Review*, *Poydras Review*, *Ragazine*, *Soundings East*, *Superstition Review*, *Thin Air*, *Visitant*, and *Wrath-Bearing Tree*; her work has received an honorable mention from *Glimmer Train* and a 2017 Pushcart Prize nomination. Saramanda is working on translating some of the more salacious stories from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Saramanda teaches at City College of San Francisco.

THANKSGIVING

I missed you so much.
I love our house.
I'm so glad to be home.

Can I have the car
Saturday, Sunday,
three dollars for a video,

five thousand
for an ecological trip
to Kenya?

Just so you know, my hall-mate's
father died a month ago.

The Macy's Day Parade police
attacked the Barney balloon.

Did I help make your
marriage work?

Did you ever notice
my high school
self-portrait is angry?
Must you run my life?

My purple sweater
needs hand-washing.

I don't eat turkey,
cranberry sauce, gravy, soufflé.
I prefer grape leaves, tofu, caramel popcorn.

Is my purple sweater
ready? Why can't
something practical be sexy?

Don't worry, don't try
to run my life.
I'll be fine in Kenya.

I'll miss you so much
but we'll talk at Christmas.

You're welcome
for the marriage help.

— Virginia Schnurr



Bio:

Virginia Schnurr's poetry has been published in Hey, I'm Alive Magazine, Primavera, Fox Cry Review, Calyx, So to Speak, Nightsun, Thin Air Magazine, Visitant, Worcester Review, Confluence, Controlled Burn, Eureka Literary Magazine, Evening Street Review, and Meat for Tea: The Valley Review. Her work is also forthcoming in Oprelle's anthology "Matter-2021 Edition." She is a trained children's librarian, and ran the literary magazine at a Quaker boarding school, helping to develop and preserve the Quaker collection as librarian.



The End.