

Summertime/Transformation

A WCC Double Anthology ~ Edited by Tom Zimmerman



Acknowledgments

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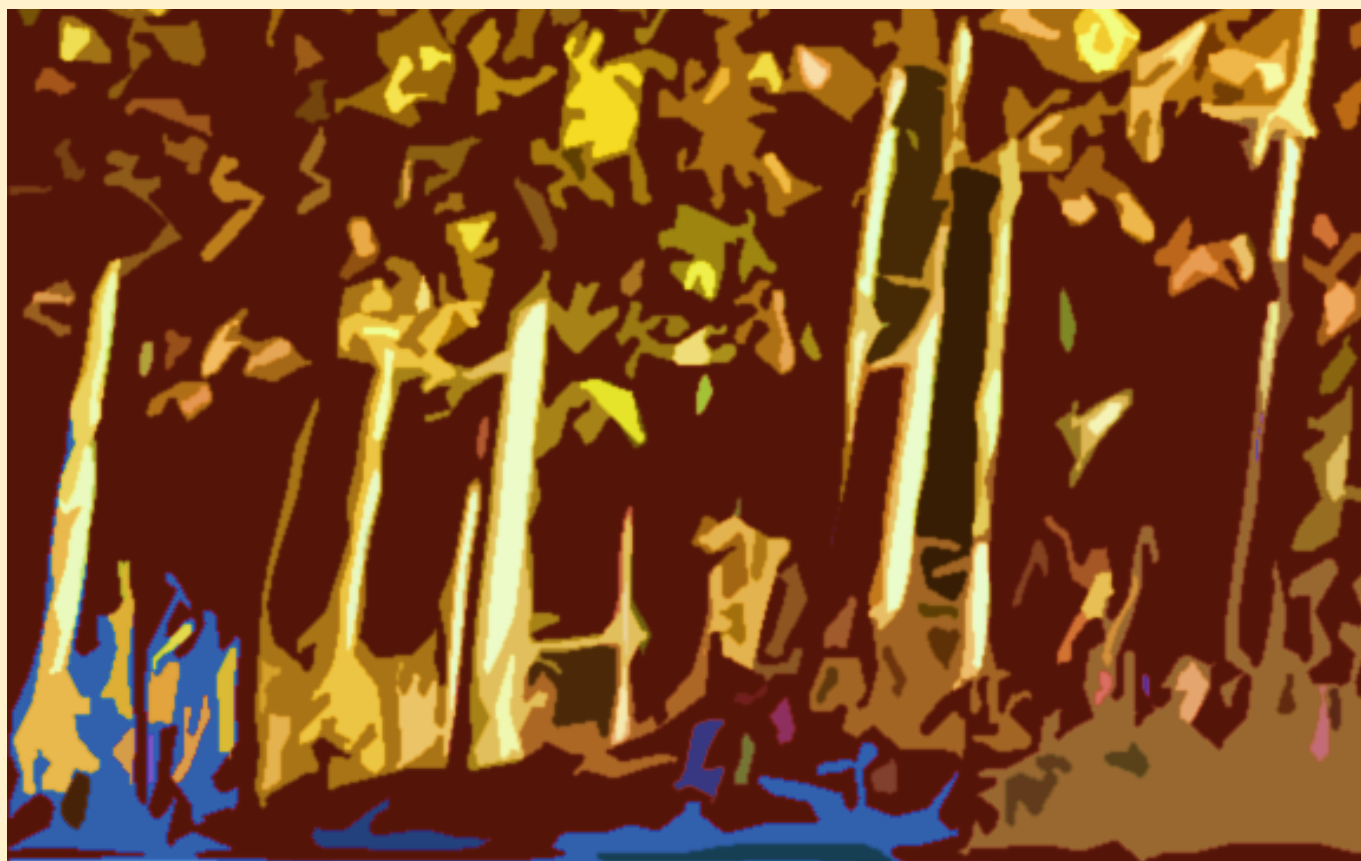
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Summertime



A Summer Survival Checklist

When the forsaken virus starts to wane
after the men and children have survived,
stand silent and pray

to God this is the end. Stay and mourn
the collapse of compassion and empathy,
the broken morals, the shattered mores.

Don't forget your mask. Do not breathe on me.
Resist the righteous bar crowd and instead
sanitize every inch of your body, your dwelling.

Turn your thoughts from flight
to the sunny beaches of Costa Ricas,
unmanned flight gates at the ready,

responsibility shed. The forsaken city
burns too, while vaccines, they say,
cause as much pain and bleeding

as bullets. Show your concern for those
who remain on cruise ships and suffer
theater concerts, and refuse

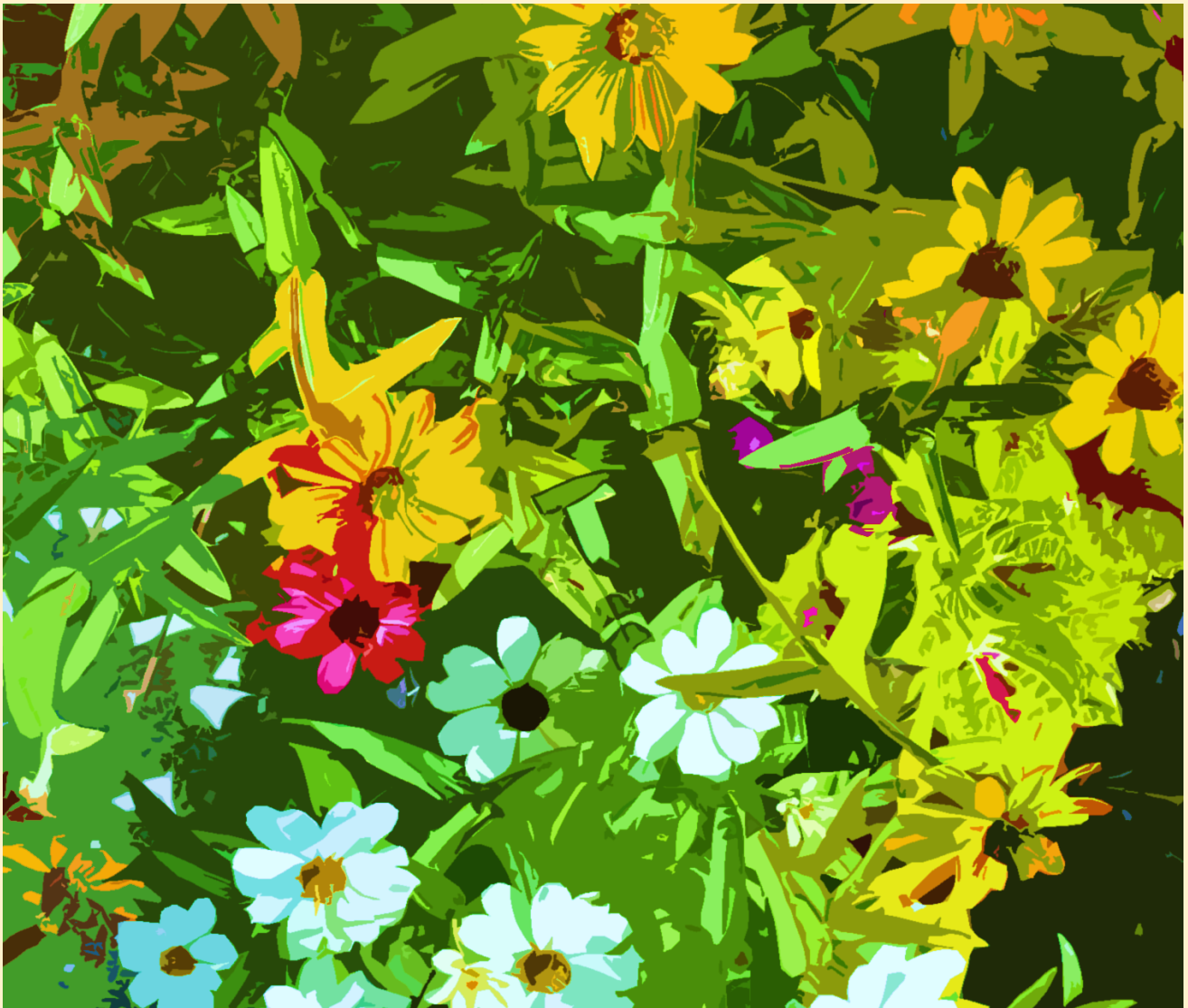
their civil duty, their civic duty to become
someone essential—a nurse perhaps
or test decoder, a true friend.

Refuse to run into the flame
of global hypocrisy, the emergency room
set on fire by BA-5 and lightning greed.

Run from the grocery store prophets
and café Christians touting signs of a new
order, a better species, a dead standstill.

Stand firm against January 6th complacency,
Become a mourner who remembers
every name, every grave, every silent

prayer, every broken promise.
And return home.



Cold Air Hitting Warm: A Fragment

Rain shower blew through a minute ago: cold
air hitting warm, like my sweaty back
on the new bedsheets I bought on sale yesterday.
Ann's beside me, sloughing off the day
like a skin, then slicing and rearranging
the translucent strips into something new to hold
up to the eyes, to see the moon through.
My skin's too tight to shed right now, so I lie
here simmering, simmering, ready to break into
a boil. Reminds me of the Revere Ware pot
I took from Dad's house after he died. I've named
it Thumper: use it maybe twice a month,
so sprung it thumps on the stove burner when
the water gets hot. How many times did Dad
drop it during his late-in-life drunken
nights? What kind of man gives a pot a name?
The kind whose father named his son after
himself. There's a mother mixed up in all
of this, of course. Someday I'll introduce you.

Cut-flower garden

It is jarring
How much kindness and grace
Can come from rusty garden shears
In an old tin box

Fun of Summertime

is pleasant and decent, then all of a sudden, the hot summer heat starts to burn the internal loins, feeling the dreaded heat shining down on bald heads beaming and steaming so intensely to resist from the burning rays of summertime heat and feelings.

As you all gather together trying to cool down with the intense and scorching blaze of the beaming summer fun flying high and low enjoying the summer fun blistering summertime of fun and good fun

As the summertime fizzles and drizzles, summertime feeling free and peaceful all the gold of summertime relaxing all day long enjoying the summertime of fun.

Mona Moorman

Glimpsing the Willow

A sea of green leaves, like feathers
Swimming silently in the wind
Waving the way until a breeze strokes
Over the bowing branches looping
Returning to their places, for the moment
To be swept away on an invisible current
Back to still
As the days move through years
In and out of love, life and loss

Hummingbirds

This summer,
angels have come by the house
every thirty minutes
every day
from sunrise to sunset.
They spread
a little joy and wonder each visit.
Bless their ruby throats.

Mona Moorman

Riding in Diamonds

One night, smack in the middle of summer
Beanie lay on his bed under the extra heat of his lamp
reading Spider-Man. The waistband of his blue Fruit-of-
the-Loom underwear welded dents into his skin.
The bed moaned, "Get off me."

Beanie slogged to the bathroom and peed Coke Classic.
Watching condensation sweat down its porcelain skin, he flushed the toilet.
"Hey Floyd," Beanie said to the dog whose tongue hung open like a door,
panting coolness from the tile floor.
The dog was good as dead in this heat.

Beanie went to his parents, immobile on their bed under the drone of the ceiling
fan. "Can I go for a ride?" Beanie asked. "Sure," Dad answered, "when you're 16
and buy a car."

"C'mon, I mean my bike, now."

"But it's dark out and your bike has no lights," worried Mother.

"But it's cooler," said Beanie. "And there's a full moon and a cajillion fireflies,"
Beanie countered.

Dad exhaled a conclusion.

"O.K. Stay on the old road through the field."

"Yep. O.K. Yep. O.K. I will, I will," trailed Beanie as he whizzed down the hall to the
garage.

"I hope he doesn't fall," sighed Mother.

Clicking into high gear, Beanie burst into a field of night; wild with the on-off glow
of neon crystals.

Of the cajillion fireflies breaking the black. Beanie pedalled fast enough to lose the
heat, riding in diamonds.



Run

It's a long way to the brain
One foot up, one down
Heel dragging, wearing away rubber
Mysterious messages received
Firecrackers in ears
Glassy fluids
Snuffled snot trickles, lips licked
Road far and clear
Moving past trees
Elbows pump air out air in
Avoiding Granny driven pick-up trucks
Butt crack sweat patterns pants
Sticking to skin, grinding off thigh hair
One foot up, one foot pivots
The flag pole turn around
Telescoping back
Long breaths, wet neck
Throat sponged dry
Think salvation, saliva
Is a mile away
Motorized muscles senseless and thick
Taking the last logy strides

Sonnet: A Summer's Meeting

With the start of summertime comes hope for
new beginnings and adventures to be
had. The sun shines bright, oh how I adore!
Radiating. Now I can clearly see.
No cloud in sight, I welcome him into
my life. Strangers upon meeting, now is
the time to get to better know who you
are. The more time we spend, the more I'm his.
The days may be long but hours spent with
you feel like mere moments in time as time
flies away. This is no legend, no myth.
Days, weeks, and months pass, certainly no climb.
Cicadas mark summer's end; hand in hand,
we step into the next chapter. How grand!

Stoic Sacrifice

Your presence is a comfort I take for granted
You give and give
The root of my existence
Always supporting the words I speak.
And you ask for so little.
Your prized emeralds droop in disappointment
As I ease past without a glance
Toward the shiny summer rays that tempt me
And the weeds that demand battle.
But you stay in
And stand as tall as you can
Noble and silently stoic
Waiting for my attention
Until one day you cannot
And I have lost you at last.
My apologies to all the plants
I failed to water.

Summer Confucian (sic): getting my Bjork on

If I follow a raindrop
down the skylight glass, mirroring, prism-ing
the dark clouds above,
I get dizzy.
Not just a brain confusion,
but a literal spinning about in my dryness.

If I follow a Cottonwood seed-fluff
from the tree on a gentle zephyr,
tumble and turn,
I float a long way from home,
straight away into the next burrow,
drifting along curbs and sidewalks and hostels.

If I follow a robin, with its orange tuxedo shirt,
along the garden's edge,
my hearing implodes
with every contraction of worm-prey
every tunnel between the roots
of crabgrass and day-lily.

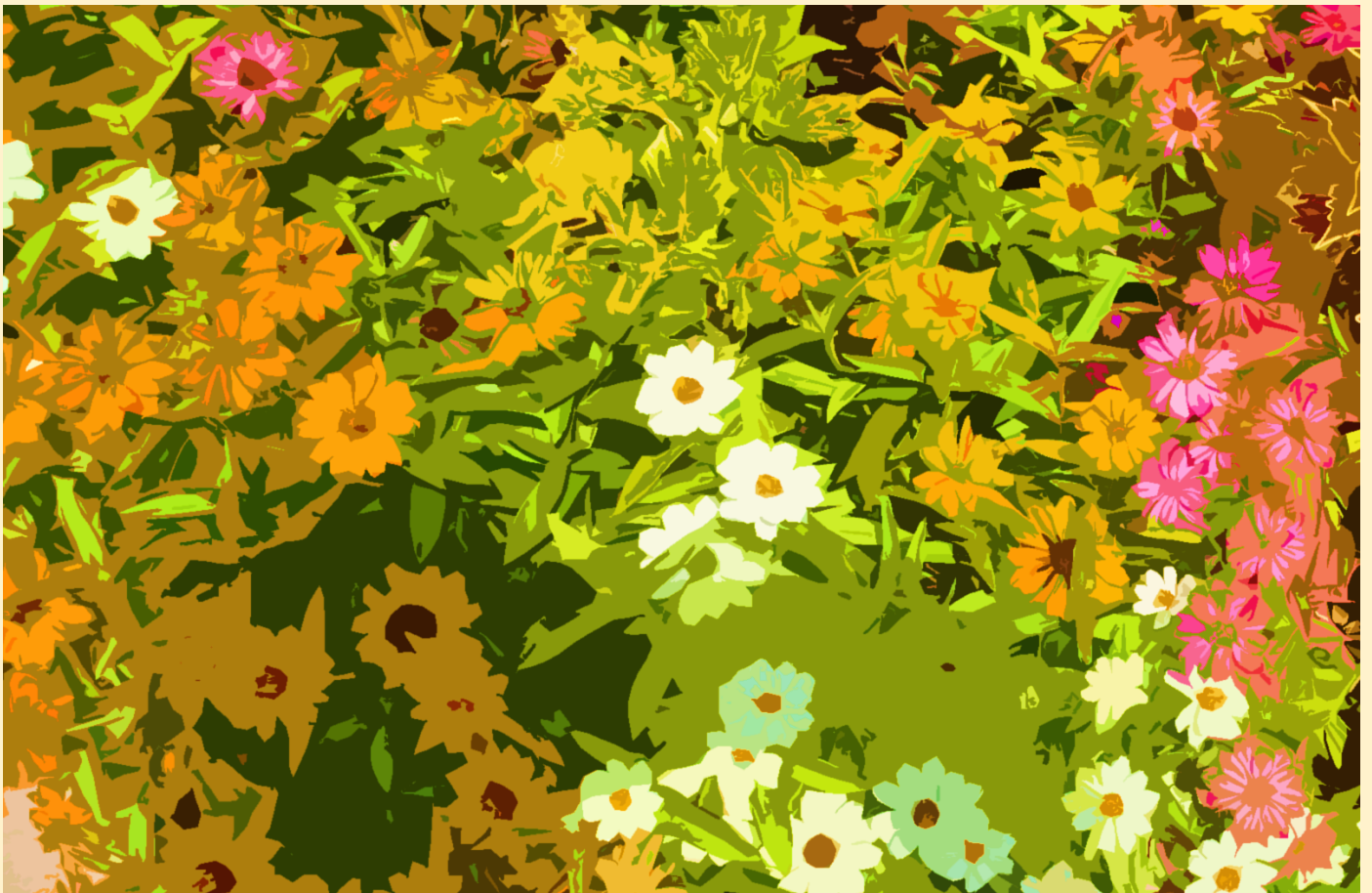
If I follow a chipmunk's excursion
under my front porch, darting in and out,
left and right,
I feel the vertigo of the earth come again,
shake the trees, send seeds aloft
and down between stumps and blades.

If I follow the moon as it wobbles
among the stars on its cyclical path around us,
I feel the chill

of the dark side rub against my skin,
the moon soil give under my bare feet,
its smile turn rancid under my lust.

If I follow the sun across the sky,
that defines atmospheric blue,
I sweat out words
for shine and brilliant, sweat out salt
and toxic epithets for an earth gone mad,
afire, shaken by our lack of insight

and our unspoken desire to be alone
contemplating our weapons.



Andrica Underwood

This Summer

Lost and afraid
Made in beds of thorns
Crates of corn
Multi-colored shades of blue
Hadn't had a clue
In need of a glue
Undone from other human form
This summer I became reborn
Embracing the shadow of death
Kept by the words that kept
Once a sore of guilt
Covered by a quilt
Engrafted with colors of youth
Pacing to the kissing booth
I tripped this time
On Star studded kids
This time no rid
Spaced out the bid
Facing the creed
Seeing the broader need
A Past or a time?
Is this yours or is it mine?
Made it out this time
Crawling through with a rhyme.
Don't be ashamed for telling
It is making room for a dwelling
Planted in riches
Understanding
True love's kisses
Lying in wait
Is a detour of fate

Hope for a fall
Grace found us all
This Summer.



Fernanda Marcelo

Your visible stars

A chilly, Michigan breeze rustles around me. I breathe in and look around at the bright blue sky. I am briefly held by this breeze and look to the great blue above me. I know to you, the sky is dark, and filled with the stars I cannot see. I exhale and hope it reaches your sleeping lungs.

I walk alone now.

You are not here to hold my hand, you are not here to lend me your jacket.

You walk on your own, on the other side of the world, with your own breeze that rivals mine; yours is warmer, more comforting. I am not there to tease your blushing face, I am not there to guide your lopsided walk.

What I would give to feel the same seasons at the same time. Together, we would walk in fall's early afternoon

Or winter's late night

Or spring's midday

And during spring we would sit together and walk our usual walk with no destination.

We would cycle through these seasons with ease; our warmth and love veiling us from past lives' grievances.

We would no longer yearn for a teasing smile, or a held hand, security accompanying it.

We would no longer turn green when we see others that have what we cannot.

What I would give to become what we are so jealous about. Togetherness. Real, physical closeness. Intertwined and forever next to each other.

One day, we will no longer talk about how our two breezes are intertwined.

We will share the same breeze, speak and hear each other. We will be confident that our quelled yearning will bring a warmth that will rival the coming winter's piercing winds.



September: Closing Night

As summer slips away, dogs yelp next door,
the blue jay pipes, the nervy squirrel clicks,
the wren lets her fountain of curses soar
one last time into my ear and lifts

my spirit out of now into forever;
I drop my pen in the dry grass, then bend
and grasp a sharper tool—crow feather,
what stark theme begins when I dip your end

in ink? What wounds will I unearth, what fears
will I scratch by light of the sinking sun?
The cardinal calls it: short days are here, here, here
and cues the shift to minor key. Autumn,

will summer voices so dear to me now
return again? Is this their final bow?

Transformation



~~Autumn~~ Autumn

~~flowers glowing gold and brown~~ flowers glowing gold and brown
~~sky the color of raw skin~~ sky the color of raw skin
~~the color of a woman's face~~
~~the color of a woman's face~~
~~from the driveway~~ Mahler's Symphony No. 9
~~on the stereo~~ on the stereo, a cat meows
~~the color of a woman's face~~
~~the color of a woman's face~~ I think of old girlfriends
~~the color of a woman's face~~
~~the color of a woman's face~~ of the dead behind my lids' blood-lined
~~curtains~~ curtains
~~the color of a woman's face~~
~~the color of a woman's face~~ baggage
~~the color of a woman's face~~
~~the color of a woman's face~~ filled with wizened apples
~~the color of a woman's face~~

Deceitful Hearts

You can walk in the light,
You could choose to walk in the dark.
The biggest difference between the two, is what you hold in your heart.
Our hearts can be deceiving,
For their owner truly knows.
We paint on a smile, even though.
To cloak and cover, is so popular.
When the temporary runs out, where do you go?
The empty is so loud.
Our bodies, like a shell.
We lug them around hoping we don't end up in Hell.

Fall Is Here

They say fall is the season of love. The season where happiness thrives, and cold hearts are warmed. The dead brown leaves fall to the ground stripping the tree branches naked; as they stand tall and bare like skeletons hanging as Halloween decorations. But, as the sun shines through the shadows of the long nights, and short days that fall brings; it uncovers the true meaning of a lonely heart. The undercover truth behind the oversized sweaters and music so loud in your headphones, you cannot hear the love that pours all around you. The screams of happiness, soaring from couples dancing on the crunchy leaves: remind you of why you so desperately wished summer never ends. So, as you walk alone and the sun starts to set as soon as it rises, you begin to realize that fall is not the season of love. But the season of loneliness. The season where pain thrives, and empty hearts stay empty; where the trees are no longer green and full but skinny and bare. As you walk alone: the sky gets darker, the trees get scarier, your soul grows colder, and your heart emptier as you realize:

Fall Is Here.

Fields of Red and Gray

This was not the path I chose
Yet it is the only one I know
Lonely is the darkness
Of the road not lit
Figures in darkness
Hands outreach
Pushing and pulling
The woods how they screech
Into the darkness
Further than before
I thought I was lost
Then learned there was more
A ladder down in the trenches I dare not go
In the persecuted mind, the motors they ring
Into a battalion of crossfire, the bullets they sing
The fires of hell reaching us their kingdom so large
We crossed the barrier as the general yelled to charge
The moments have become slow and merciless
Heated and frail
In that moment once again, I wondered
How I got onto this trail
Seas of blood that would make Ares cry in delight
The rage of the enemy would carry on through the night
Harmony and bliss as I lay upon the field
Saving one good soul my body, his shield
A single choice I made as I marched up to the gates
As I arrived St. Peter replied "too late"
For the choice was not my own
Only what I was programmed to of done
Then once more I became his forsaken son
Off to purgatory seemed a fitting penance

For someone who never took a chance
To be the one he ought to be
Instead I let everyone else make the choices for me
I peer into the wasteland where there's nothing more
It reminds me nothing is worth fighting for
For in the end someone wins and one will lose
I was fighting another man's war
Just a path I did not choose
Guaranteed I would trade my rifle
For a halo and a harp
Not it seems more likely to face the beasts
With fangs so sharp
They will tear into my flesh
And spit in distaste
For the monsters of the pit
Do not enjoy a life that tastes like waste
My grand explorations
Into the transformation of man
I woke up one day to become all that I can
By following someone's orders
And making others bleed
I thought for certain there was something in it for me
They shipped my doubts and worries back home in a box
They told my crying mother sorry for your loss
Pushed in all directions this wasn't the life I chose
Yet unfortunately it's the one that arose
Do your best to try and learn from me
Make sure your life outcome is one you want to see.



Increments of Time

In these increments of time
I can smell the sweetness of opportunity
Future caresses me as time circulates my veins
The wind brushes across my neck
I feel Grace
Grace in its nakedness
As the dawn breaks, grace quickens me
Grace, underlying every circumstance in its entirety
These moments we have diminish into memories
Upon these vivid moments we fear the ending
We then fall into the exact moment we don't want to be

The end

While in the fear of ending vivid moments in time
We reflect on these times, as the perceptions of these moments expire
Embracing newborn moments as we perspire
With anxiety we push to tear the veil of next
That word NEXT being our frenemy
Our most loved enemy
Only because our good times diminish as we fear failure
And our failure decomposes as we long for what's next

AH!

The possibility of success
Our potentials undress us
To help us understand
Stress to us the importance of growth
So looking outward we are moving inward toward our greater self as we have
never known
Facing our fears on our own
In our darkest moments we find peace
Peace that surpasses all understanding
Peace eternal

Peace within
And this is where we win
In the midst of each failure
We find Joy
Joy to get back up again and fly
Even when the flapping of our wings get tired and feel we want to die
We find rest in the embrace of
God
God being the wind that our wings chase
Joy in his mere presence
So that no failure can take that away and we can truly keep a move forward
(moving forward) Realizing that before
We failed to realize that times of failure are funny in times of success
So as we embrace our next
We hold onto the memories of the good times, the way WE know them
Placing our expectations in a glass and allowing the embrace of the experience
BEING
cooled by the aid of truth,
Like
liquid redemption
Allowing Grace to be our exemption
We are alive
We have survived
These increments of time

Instead, dance with me

and that will serve to fill past and future
dance-less days, washed-out weekends,
nights your side of the bed stays made.
I know what neglect is like;
I still have ACEs* up my sleeve
enough to know
that your closed office door
is not emotional abuse, your all-day
Saturday patient education event
is not abandonment.

But it can feel that way.

At dinner, I catch you up on the news
from our yard,
how far the proud cardinal has fallen
for instance. He's molting—
a black, bald patch in place
of his sharp, red crest—
the mate he fed so sweetly in June
has split.

Like her, I feel the need
for flamboyance. I don't want to be bossed,
but a *bossa nova* would do nicely.
Flourish your cape
while I swish seven layers
of scarlet skirt.
Flamenco here now hard fast
if you want to hold me.

*ACE adverse childhood experience

Linear Time Is an Illusion

All the moments of my life swirl about me.
The wedding joy and the moment
I turn at the wood stove to meet his
outstretched hand. Our daughters' births
chase each other around me in a dance.
My father weeps, his hands over his face,
the hot pea soup I did not stop blowing
flung at the wall behind me. It drips
from the ceiling. The little girl
I still am wants to comfort him,
does not register the burns
spattered on my small body.

I already see my widow's mourning cloak,
remind myself my husband is with me
even though someday we will both be dead.
It is still the moment when we pull the
quilted cover off my mother's corpse to kiss
her goodbye again, the day I cry like a bear.
The sobs groan out of me, percussive.
All I can say is a whispered Okay. Okay.
Okay. My brother's arms hold me, as if for
the first time, and I am back in the back seat
with him and our sister, singing on the way
to Aunt Phyllis's house for Christmas.
And I'm still drunk in my room at 14,
banging my head against the cement walls.

In the ER with my mother, a week before she dies,
she is crying in her sleep, wakes to tell me
I can't do it, I can't do this. And here is the moment

in my first labor, when I cry the same thing.
And now this morning, the house is quiet and dark.
The air is thick around me, as porous as sand.



Metamorphosis

I woke with my hands asleep and twisted
into claw-like shapes.
I could not use my phone to call for help.
I couldn't pick up my water bottle to drink,
having dreamt that I was wandering
my neighborhood in search of water all night,
unable to find my house.
This really blows I said to my dog.
Now you know how I feel
without any thumbs he replied.

I tried to move my hands in ways
that would bring back feeling,
but they settled into their disfigurement—
red and tingly and aberrant.

Not having paid time off,
I drove to work with my lobster claws gripping
the wheel as best they could.
This is some Gregor Samsa shit
I said to my coworker who laughed and said,
Somebody's got a case of the Mondays
his hangdog expression making up for the cliché
(a little).

My boss was dissatisfied with my work.
My claws were scaring away potential clients!
I got fired, no surprise there,
and so I drove home with my lobster claws,
turned on the bath with my foot,
and settled into the hot water and the idea of being a lobster

for eternity
since I read they are immortal and cannot be killed
by growing old and withering away...

I heard on a cooking show once
that lobsters don't notice being boiled.
They don't mind it at all.
The water just gets hotter and hotter
and they are unbothered by being cooked alive.
I wonder if it's true.



Nests

Tonight the
buried up to its eyes

My
is a womb of

your heat
your hair
your breasts
cowled in brown-gold bees
My
torso a stubble-field
at your touch, something
shudders into flight

Prostitute in Nevada

You know, I looked it up. It's a well known fact... Nevada is the only state in America that allows prostitution. It's legal in 10 out of 16 counties, with seven counties apparently having brothels. I have about 120 dollars to my name right now. I don't want to go to school. I just want a degree. Something to show the world that I meant something after high school. Last night, I thought of running away. If it can even be called that anymore. I'm a grown woman now. Well, as grown as nineteen can be.

I'm grown enough to be a prostitute in Nevada though. Isn't that something? I've never considered myself particularly beautiful, but I am a woman. Any woman can attract a man with a little effort. I know as a prostitute, I'd never be rich. But maybe I'd get to do rich people things? Rich people hire prostitutes, don't they? Maybe I'd get to fuck a member of a boy band.

Prostitutes in Nevada. Maybe I'll be one.

Kara Zablocki Shaw

Re Worked

Unfixed unglued

Remolded like a wax ball

Then melted

Over and over

40 years of added material

Of emotions, experience

Middle aged- aged well

Knowing it hasn't ended

The transformation

Unfixed unglued reworked

Redefined Future

What a wacky tale of woe and wonder,
woven by lives rent asunder.
A more pleasant story we may dream,
yet nothing is as it seems.

The rhyme and the rhythm,
the steady beating of hearts.
The wishing, the willing,
the re-creation of parts.

Roles played ever shifting.
Songs sung ever lifting.
Up and over and through it united,
our undefined future we've sighted.

This wacky tale of woe and wonder,
rewoven by lives stitched back together.
Common struggles here collected,
offered up and jointly mended.

The moment the whole world changed

I knew that first moment
that the world would never be the same.
She'd laid there for months
and fought the good, expected fight
with doctors and drugs and tubes
and chairs that moved by themselves.

And then it all stopped.
Her last breath was the moment before
and then it wasn't.
I was no longer a child with parents.
I was alone.

No one expects the sinking feeling—
even when a long illness drags on and,
they say, gives time to prepare.
That's so wrong. That's just not so.

It put me in a very deep pit which I've
spent a lifetime climbing out of. No one's up there
with a load of sand to dump on my head,
for me to climb atop, like the farmer's donkey.

I can come up for air
but the crushed heart inside inflates
ever so slowly over decades,
and no one else really cares. No one
has the will or the words to find my
deepest loss, to comfort or relate.

The world keeps spinning, but it seems
only to spin past in a blur of slow motion.
I will forever keep trying to gather
myself back together.



The Wind Will Carry Me

My mother is not here
anymore for me to rage at,
so my fire leaps in odd moments.
Her death makes this year
revolutionary. The only target
is myself. I remember when
the fire in me damped
to a smoky choking fog.
I had to fall to the ground
to breathe as the smoke rose.

The low hoo-hoos of the barred
owl in the pine outside my window
swoon into me like the fever
of blustery winter snow.
Her oboe tones reverberate
through the woods, while
caws of a murder of crows
fill the upper register
of the morning's dirge.

There is no place I can go,
no place I haven't already
been in thousands of years
of living. I must navigate
the rocky shoals of this coast
with my eyes closed,
my mouth open.
If I lean into the wind,
it will carry me.

This Is Only the Beginning

The discomfort of change is inevitable as mankind are creatures of habit, drawn to what is familiar, what is known, what is comfortable, even if it prohibits personal growth.

This mentality leaving us stagnant, stuck, cemented in time, especially when an even greater happiness may be on the horizon should we choose to take the first step.

Similar to the caterpillar, living a life that's familiar, until nature forces the caterpillar to evolve, and this small creature is emerged in a darkness that feels so infinite, its destiny must be finite, carved in stone, with no escape except to endure.

Terrified, the caterpillar eventually accepts its fate: the teeny tiny world they've always known is coming to an end, for this poor creature is surviving in what seems to be a neverending darkness.

What the caterpillar doesn't know, is that they've been undergoing a truly tremendous transformation this entire time and when the caterpillar is truly ready, they emerge from the chrysalis as a beautiful butterfly.

With the realization that the world hasn't come to an end; it has only begun. As the caterpillar transforms from chrysalis to butterfly, I am reminded that I, too, have the opportunity to grow, change, evolve. I am no longer a victim of my life circumstances.

Through the painful reconciliation of my own past, I transformed from victim to survivor, shifting my own mentality as I came face to face with a dark night of the soul all of my own.

In surviving the darkness, old wounds of the heart and soul exist as mere scars, having healed, a reminder to where I once was, a celebration of who I now am, emerging as an ally, who I have become.

My newfound purpose to walk side-by-side those enduring circumstances I once lived, offering solace and support, serving as a reminder that this is not at all the end; this is only the beginning.



Transformed in the Daylight

As the sun begins to rise there you stand by the window listening to the sounds of the chipping birds humming and twisting all of a sudden you walk by the ocean shore gazing at the deep blue sea feeling the rays of the sun blistering over your body.

That moment you begin to feel your body changing like you are floating on air not knowing what is happening to you the feeling in the legs and arms moves like the speed of a Mach 10 F-14 Tomcat it feels scary and you are petrified of the sound.

As you begin to level to the ground your whole body changes that means that you have been transformed through the gate of destiny and beyond night stars.

Transitions

I make a transition every day
from night to day, from asleep to awake,
from unconscious to conscious.
It's automatic. I don't have to lift a finger
or think it into being.

Most other transitions in life are not
so easily accomplished, except perhaps aging,
which forges on while I play at catching up,
slowing it down, filling in the wrinkles,
defiantly shaking my cane.

But I don't slide through so easily when
emotions are involved—love, hate, joy, sorrow,
fear, shame, sadness or grief. I have
as much skin in the game as I do hanging
onto life itself, but these changes carry
more weight.

These emotions that complicate
moving on and my misguided control issues
give power to expectations and make
letting go or moving on impossible.

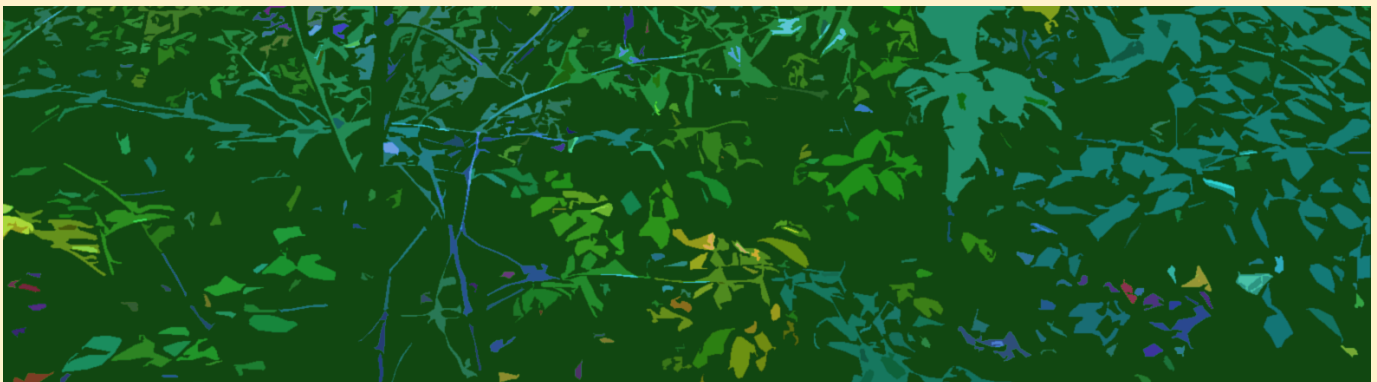
I struggle now in this time of grief with
memories that flow from a 45-year partnership
of love and eight years of struggle against
the dying of his light. Illness muddled
everything.

His transition into death was fraught with inescapable inevitability—IPF’s degenerative nature defied everything modern medical science could throw at it. I didn’t stand a chance as his caregiver to impact his illness or decline.

So I’m left with no husband, no job, no concept of self-care, and so much hurt that moving on would seem a logical cure to all of it. Yet I still wear his ring on a chain around my neck to honor him and our love, and cry every day missing him.

This transition feels so wrong.
This transition through grief is neither simple nor linear, nor short-lived. It will, I sense, take as long as it takes with no hurrying from me.

I’m learning to switch gears from care giver to care taker and focus on my health and wellbeing. Meditation, mindfulness and writing are the keys to survival.
I rely on my own wings to fly
my own voice to tell my truth.



Carolyn Crane

Wilson Wewa and the R.V.

I.

Some things I remember:

straight black braid
hues of purple

straight as his backbone
he sat in his swivel chair
eyes carving mine
honing out my truth

“Will you help me?” I ask.

His eyebrows raise, nose narrows as
he scans my white man map.

“These lines means nothing,” and he looks away.

I follow his eyes to the tokens on his wall,
notice the diploma: “Wilson Wewa: Harvard University.”

“What’s the Paiute word for water?” I ask,
whisking out my reporter’s pad.

“No notes.” That flat, ungiving look again.

“Take only what you can remember.”

With no map and notepad I am naked, spindly.

He sits silent, immense,
black eyes swerve toward no apology.

“Pa-nin” he says in a flat voice.

And I repeat, “Pa-nin—running water.”

Learning a new language in a land of no control.

II.

I'm glad to be the passenger as we journey back to camp.

Sepia blunt cliffs.

We stop,

Look down a canyon to the river a mile below.

Looking still, blue, a trickle.

I hear Wewa's remembrance in the canyon's echo

"On horseback with my grandfather,
we hunted antelope on the bluffs."

I see them in shadows, this country their world,
guns raised as the bow once was
rifleshot piercing a silence they understood.

Now our car winds the pavement toward camp.

Fences scar the landscape, markers of a land
once thought not taken, like water or air.

III.

We pull into Big Bend Camp Ground

(on the Deschutes River)

snake around to our campsite

the most remote on the riverbank

where we've spent a week.

In front of our narrow drive lurks a silver R.V.

Thirty feet long—Silent hulk

The entrance of our campsite blocked

we skirt the road, roll our small car onto the grass.

A man steps from the rig.

"Didn't think you'd mind. This is the best campsite.

Your tent's so far down the hill."

I look around at the empty campsites he might have chosen,

and at our tent, thirty feet away.
The R.V. sits ten feet from our picnic table,
impossible to miss.

“Took me twenty minutes to level my rig.
Sure hope we don’t have to move.”
I feel the blood rise thick in my neck.
I scan him from balding gray to cowboy boots.
My husband takes me aside. “It’s our last night. He’s old.
Let him stay.” I am too angry to speak.
I nod against my will.
He tells the old man,
who returns to his silver world. We do not see him again.

I cook facing the river, back to the silver rig,
feeling it choke me.
My food tastes like bile.
My dreams are full of fences.
By morning I cannot speak,
cannot share the language of
the man from the R.V.

IV.

Heading south through Oregon
I still see Wewa’s hair flying as
he canters his horse,
rifle hanging from one arm,
spine agile on the bare back.
I have no language to tell him
that I am the man
balding gray
in cowboy boots.
I am the man
driving the
silver R.V.

Andrica Underwood

You're not even here

To smoke or not to choke
A window with no seal
The smoke dances in the air with the aroma of a tv meal
The brown part of green
Ruined at the scene
Memory of gold, turned cold
What would expect it to be
An assemblies dissect
Why can't I just be direct?
Moans great laughter
Booms right after
Whispering ears
Coupled with tears
Fears of the phone
Being trapped from a knock
Anxiety ridden from a tick of a clock
Tok is my sister
Adjusted to miss her
Combusted of winter
Sweetness around
Sounded to sleep
As more women weep
Melted mountains of snow
Who or what, where to go?
Purple happenstance
Maiden fractures
Toured it after
Materials sorted from what cognitives distorted
Made up beds
Make up our heads
Boxes and squares

Cured with terror
Why so long living in error?
To be to me?
Or not to be
Too broke to choke
Was that a joke?
Unwilful presence is turning seven
How much longer
Til' we get to heaven?
What color but all, make us fall?
What brother with all?
End all be all?
Is the season the reason?
Is confusion the illusion?
Life only mere
You're not even here.



