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JANICE CANERDY

Courage

God bless them all—each one who lies
in bed, so weak, while childhood flies
away or, from a wheelchair, sees
just window views while daylight flees
and parents muffle weary sighs.

Each child and parent bravely tries
to wear the smile that signifies
their hope that God will hear their pleas.
God bless them all.

Researchers satisfy some why's
as children's doctors treat, advise,
and diagnose. No guarantees
exist, but those who care for these
sweet kids put courage in their eyes.
God bless them all.

BART SUTTER

Halvor Halvorson

Here's to Halvor Halvorson,
The Swedish boy who escaped
His foster folks and, on his own,
Slipped aboard a ship.

Sailing out from Göteborg,
He breathed the clean salt breeze.
Farväl to the mire of manure,
The claustrophobic trees.

Halvor sailed the world around,
Beyond his fantasies.
He watched a fellow sailor drown.
He learned some Japanese.

He heard a superb soprano sing,
The jungle squawk and howl,
The growl and groan of rigging
When the weather turned foul.

But edging up to middle age
And wanting something safe,
Halvor signed, for a decent wage,
To work the Great Lakes

On the last commercial sloop to sail
The broad freshwater seas.
Bad luck when pelting rain and hail
Blew up. The gale increased.

A wave washed Halvor overboard
In boiling seas. No hope . . .
But, flailing, Halvor reached out for
And grabbed a trailing rope.

He took a job at a new resort
Down shore from Grand Marais,
And he had cause to thank the Lord
Because he earned his pay

By rowing out a little skiff
To pluck trout from the nets,
Well sheltered by the granite cliffs,
With time for cigarettes.

By noon, he'd have his catch laid out
Before him on the lawn
And crank the old victrola loud.
He got that from the lodge.

Halvor conducted, knife in hand,
As heartsick music played
And gulls whirled round but didn't land,
Their wings like silver blades.

His knife would snick and slit the fish,
And he'd strip out the offal.
The guests would hush each other, hiss:
"Is that Italian opera?"

A powerful, pure soprano
Filled the pine-sweet air:
O mio babbino caro . . .
They wondered where they were.

JARED CARTER

Tollund

By willow withes no longer green,
 fixed in the depths
Of black water—no longer seen
 or sensed except

By passing minnows peering in.
 That braided cord
About his neck? Ask of the wind
 rilling the hoard

Of moss. Ask the broad sky. Answers
 with no more light
Than torches upheld, or dancers,
 far in the night.

JEROME BETTS

Glutted!

Greengrocer Georges, in Paille-sur-Boue,
A veritable hole or *trou*
With really not a lot to do
Or rather less than *rien du tout*
Where trade was dull and patrons few,
So it was hard to make a *sou*,
When asked why he was looking blue
Replied, "*Un embarras de choux!*"

MARCUS BALES

The Fall Comes

All you see that moment is the sheen
Reflected off his golden coat, his tongue
A noisy comma added in between
Two panting moments, then taken from among
Them in the next; his clear and following eyes
Light up unshaded in the summer light
That fills the western window like goodbyes
Fill lyric verse. But all the world is bright
As those two quivering tears that stand unshed
As she takes in what you are shocked you've said.

And then the tears are gone: her hand around
The coffee cup is steady, and the soft sound
She makes to call the dog is calm. She turns,
They leave, the fall comes, and your life burns.

STEPHEN DICKEY

Copperheads

Copperheads coil in shedded leaves
on lake trails that have come undone.
Empty playgrounds await old fun.
Orb weavers hole up under eaves.

Low hills roll black where prairie burned.
Objects left in a rear-view mirror
Seem far away and loom much nearer.
Our fossils leave no stone unturned.

Untold childhood took its slow leave
and stayed, looking with bloodshot blues
to stanch the flow of sunset's hues,
a tourniquet stowed in its sleeve.

I'm on the First Leg of My Death

I'm on the first leg of my death.
Only so many waypoints wait
to breathe more life into my breath,
to animate my flagging gait.

I've driven a myriad places—
legged some along, and left some broken.
My breath's sifted its share of spaces—
a lifetime's foothills still unspoken.

Old words have now begun to drift
into glyphs—their backstories lost
as their shards are buried and tossed

clockwise in waves, providing lift.
My rain shadow limps on intact,
and the tail wheel will soon retract.

Grandfather's Saw

Grandfather's saw hangs painted on a wall.
Harvester augers spew grain into trucks,
and off in distant dusk clatter the bucks.
A field's edge chokes with ragweed six feet tall.

Grandmother always baked a perfect crust,
her rolling pin from some forgotten lathe.
Rained away the spadix, withered the spathe,
and now oblivion's bloom is on the dust.

SUSAN MCLEAN

The Toxic Snide

for Ed Shacklee, imitation being the sincerest form of flattery

Preying upon the awkward, shy, and easily derided,
it always looks askance; therefore, its views are all one-sided.
Its poison sacs lie buried deep. It cannot be de-snided.

The jackal pack that follows it with hooting gusto flatters
its creed that frank critique should leave a trail of bloody spatters,
yet envy and embittered ego tear its heart to tatters.

Raised in a slink of snides, it learned the safest way to fight:
it hides that its skin is paper-thin by pouncing from a height.
Though some allege its bark is worse, they haven't felt its bite.

CHRISTOPHER CHILDERS

Anecdote Anatine and Pavonine

And I remembered the cry of the peacocks. —Wallace Stevens

Bathed in a radiance of orange
and swathed in sapphire stands the sun-king, Amon-Ra, the lionheart,
imperious of syllable, imparadised of self,
lacustrine phoenix flaming, rostrum parted to impart
a bleating blend of bagpipe and kazoo and cartoon door-hinge;
this mincing lordling, puffed with visionary pelf,
strolls to a duck and fans for her the mirror of all life, all art.

Behold! the eyes of Shiva, hand of Vishnu, Buddha's light,
bliss of the bodhisattva, Lotus of the Seven Seas,
bejeweled with cumbrances, no sleek bird winged for flight,
but argosied and galleoned with gilded remiges,
barbules and barbicels of blue, whorl on whorl, moon-gonged, sun-struck,
with Technicolor halo: Hear! He cries his appetite!
The duck, alas, forbears to give a fuck.

C.B. ANDERSON

Sufficient unto the Day

When days are full of sunshine, and the veins
Of gold gleam brightly from surrounding hills,
It's easy to forget that dismal rains
Shall come again, if Ahriman so wills.

It's customary to affirm that good
And bad are dealt in roughly equal measure,
But tell that to a stricken neighborhood
Where flood relief has been its only pleasure.

It's said that there will come a time when lies
Are seen as truth and truth as lies, but what
About the day when thunder-sundered skies
Crack open like a wildebeest in rut?

Will you be ready? Will your kin be saved?
Calamity afflicts both saints and sinners;
Both innocents and felons most depraved
Must suffer, but it's harder for beginners.

Get used to it, until you are inured
To endless injury, for like a wen
That isn't ever quite completely cured,
Your life is lanced again, and then again.

DANIEL GALEF

Back to School; Face Away

as narrated by a petulant fourteen-year-old that the author no longer is

The school year is starting! We all jump for joy!
Or, if not, then you must be a student,
a janitor, teacher, or under employ-
ment some other way—though it is prudent

to cheer and to shout and to sing Gaudeamus
with those types of people that do.
Now all through the day no more wearing pajamus
but blazers and striped ties for you.

It seems that most people who laud academia
aren't academia nuts,
but sellers of hornbooks and slide rules (plus seamier
items). For only a putz

would lever a wrench into gears that are turning
within the unfettered mind's spool,
and willingly halt in the course of their learning
just to go to school.

Contributors

Janice Canerdy is a retired high-school English teacher from Potts Camp, Mississippi. She has been writing since early childhood. Her writings have appeared in numerous magazines and journals, including *The Road Not Taken*, *Lyric*, *Parody*, *Bitterroot*, *Cyclamens and Swords*, *Wild Violet*, *Society of Classical Poets*, and *Southern Tablet*; and anthologies, including those published by the Mississippi Poetry Society, the National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Whispering Angel Books, The Short Humor Site (UK), and Quill Books.

The author of eight books, **Bart Sutter** is the only writer to win the Minnesota Book Award in three different categories—poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. His latest collections are *The Reindeer Camps and Other Poems* and *Chester Creek Ravine: Haiku. Nordic Accordion: Poems in a Scandinavian Mood* will be released by Nodin Press next year. He has written for Minnesota Public Radio, he has had four verse plays produced, and he often perform as one-half of The Sutter Brothers, a poetry-and-music duo.

Jared Carter's sixth book, *Darkened Rooms of Summer: New and Selected Poems*, is from the University of Nebraska Press. He lives in Indiana.

Jerome Betts lives in Devon, England, where he edits the quarterly *Lighten Up On Line*. (www.lightenup-online.co.uk) His verse has appeared in a wide variety of British magazines and anthologies as well as UK, European, and North American web venues such as *Amsterdam Quarterly*, *Angle*, *Autumn Sky Poetry Daily*, *Light*, *Per Contra*, *The Asses Of Parnassus*, *The New Verse News* and *Snakeskin*.

Not much is known about **Marcus Bales** except he lives in Cleveland, Ohio, and his poems have not appeared in *Poetry* or *The New Yorker*. You can however buy his latest collection at https://www.amazon.com/51-Poems-Marcus-Bales-ebook/dp/B01G9OB5TK/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1472403249&sr=8-1&keywords=marcus+bales+poems.

Stephen Dickey has had poetry appear recently in *Indefinite Space*, *Asses of Parnassus*, *Quarterday Review* and *Trinacria*. A short story appeared in *Word Riot* last year. One poem is forthcoming in *Skidrow Penthouse*. He has published several translations of Croatian and Serbian short stories and novels, including with NWUP (*Death and the Dervish*, *How to Quiet a Vampire*, *Ruta Tannenbaum*), and YUP (*The Walnut Mansion*).

Susan McLean is a professor of English at Southwest Minnesota State University. Her first book of poetry, *The Best Disguise*, won the 2009 Richard Wilbur Award, and her second book, *The Whetstone Misses the Knife*, won the 2014 Donald Justice Poetry Prize. She has also published a 2006 poetry chapbook, *Holding Patterns*, and a collection of her verse translations of 503 Latin epigrams by Martial, *Selected Epigrams* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), which was a finalist for the 2015 PEN Center USA Translation Award.

Christopher Childers lives in Baltimore, MD, and has poems, essays, and translations published or forthcoming from *The Kenyon Review*, *The Yale Review*, *Agni*, *Parnassus*, and elsewhere, and has been a finalist for the Ruth Lilly Fellowship. He is currently at work on a book of translations for Penguin Classics, of *Greek and Latin Lyric Poetry from Archilochus to Martial*.

C.B. Anderson was the longtime gardener for the PBS television series, *The Victory Garden*. His book of poems, *Mortal Soup and the Blue Yonder*, was published in 2013 by White Violet Press.

Daniel Galef writes light verse, heavy verse, and just about everything else. He was born in Oxford, Mississippi, and currently resides in Montreal, Quebec.