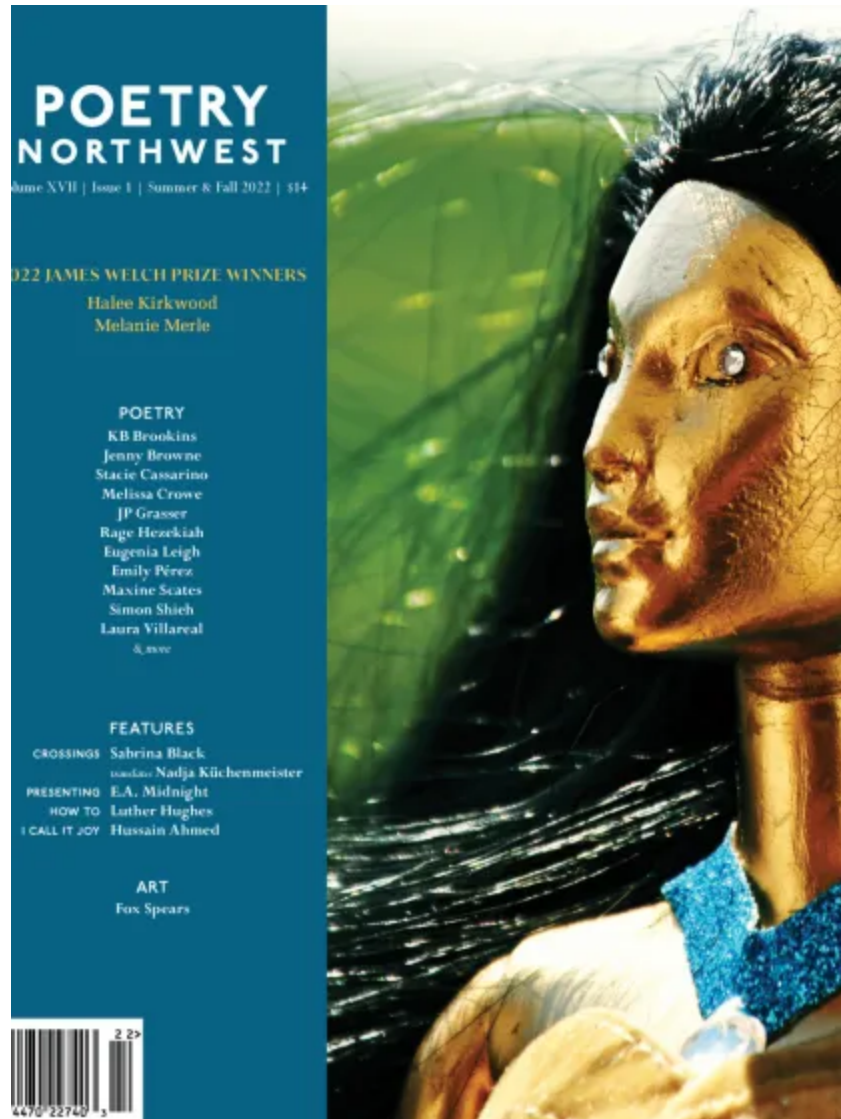


KB I Admit It

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I am not always hypervigilant
about killing bugs when they tangle
in my locs. I fart without turning
the other way so the smell is hostage

under the sheets while my partner sleeps.
I've done unspeakable things & here I am,
telling you so you can get on with it. I cheated
on a test. I cheated on a partner & talked

about her worse when she left. I watched a friend
be berated by homophobes & did nothing
but walk him home, in silence. I've been so silent

you could scream all year & it wouldn't be enough
to fill the blank spaces. On days where my limbs
are glued to the bed like stars in the sky,

I scroll until my eyes are tired
of dog pics & tragedies. Sometimes,
I don't repost the graphic with the hashtag.

Most times, I care less & less about the action plan
for freedom. You don't have to comment;
you don't have to convince the police.

They are already sending dogs for me. You don't
have to justify bypassing another mother's tears

for a formality — no *they should've complied*
needed. This is me coming clean. This is me,

turning my wrists to the whitest part for optimum
cuffing. Can you resist the urge to kill me?

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KB Brookins (also known as KB) is a poet, essayist, and cultural worker from *Stop Six*, Fort Worth, Texas. Their poetry has been published in *American Poetry Review*, *Electric Literature*, *Cincinnati Review*, and other places; their essays have been published in *Teen Vogue*, *Autostraddle*, and *Blavity*. Their chapbook *How To Identify Yourself with a Wound* (Kallisto Gaia Press, 2022) won the Saguaro Poetry Prize. KB has earned fellowships with PEN America, Lambda Literary, The Watering Hole, African American Leadership Institute – Austin, and elsewhere. Currently, they are an Artivism Fellow with Broadway Advocacy Coalition.

Their cultural work spans six years. In that time, KB founded and led two nonprofits (Interfaces and Embrace Austin). They have also contributed to many initiatives such as Austin's first LGBTQIA+ quality of life survey and inclusion of chosen names on the University of Texas at Austin diplomas. Currently, they are project lead for Winter Storm Project, an arts anthology inspired by the 2021 Texas winter storm.

KB is a 3x Best of Net nominee and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Their debut full-length poetry collection, *Freedom House*, is forthcoming from Deep Vellum in 2023. Follow them on twitter/instagram/tiktok at [@earthtokb](#) and subscribe to their sporadic

opinions and updates through their newsletter Out of This World. They live in Austin, TX where they are working on projects — an essay collection, a poetry collection, a museum installation, a public art piece, video poems, and assembling a band — while trying their best.