

# LAND ARK LIT MAG

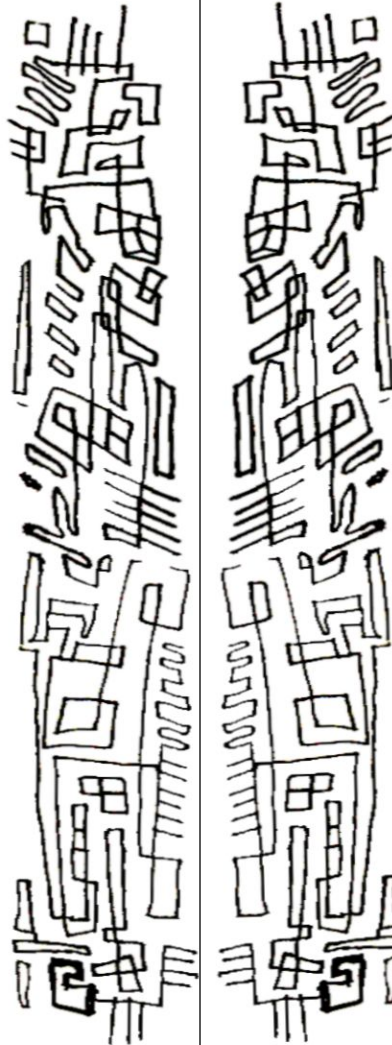
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Issue No. 5



LAND ARK LIT MAG  
*ISSUE NO. 5: IN LOVING  
MEMORY / JUNE 26, 2021*

**Introductions:***A Note From The Editor***Fiction:***Blossom**Last Night = Weird**Gin***Poetry:***Fran and Dan**All This Snow Will Go To The Sea**You Like That?**I Am Just Getting Started**You're Gonna Wish You Hadn't**No, I Will*

This has been a week of passings. Ahh. . . sad to see the faces go. I've been caught up in a lot of beautiful words and light breezes. . . haven't had much time for silliness, maybe for the better. Even more, even so, this has been a week of passings by people I barely know, either have never met or only by and by, but people nonetheless who mean something to mine. . . the unworkable arm in the sky, steady plucking. . . I don't know. I am verklempt and slightly confused by my own personality after hearing so much about others. But isn't it beautiful to again and again be born into large groupings, families and neighborhoods, towns, cities, genuses, all who have the ability to wrap their arms around someone else's belly and say "I see you, and I miss you".

Blossom and moths, Late nights and cigarettes, women named after hard alcohol and assholes named after impressionists, lying in bed in love, wishing you hadn't, the passage of time, Land Ark Lit Mag Volume V; these are all things we get to enjoy. And do!

— Ed.

## FICTION

*BLOSSOM*

Blossom went to her studio to work. She sat in a yarn chair and didn't move until an idea hit her like an arrow in the forehead. The tomahawk was seaglass and the shaft was made out of petrified seaweed. So she went to the beach.

Blossom picked up little statuesque pebbles and rusted out limbs of lobster traps. There were also green shells and a dead gull. Back at the studio, moths dotted the overhead lamp and said horrible things like, "When do you suppose this will get boring?"

Blossom walked the boardwalk with full pockets. She bought a hot dog and cotton candy. Both were good, but not great. When she crossed to Willow St. she was almost flattened by a Maserati but escaped by an inch. The driver screamed "You could've died". Blossom replied "You could've had rocks on your windshield."

The moths waited patiently. Their little feet were nice and warm. "Aren't mouths weird?" One said.

When Blossom got home she put her new things on the windowsill and wondered what that idea was, again.



## POEM

*FRAN AND DAN*

Fran has a windowless bathroom  
 In the apartment she shares with Dan, so  
 She can wallow in the mirror  
 Like mooses in the swamps in July. I think  
 That they're the only couple I know  
 Who's happy together in a real way. My friend Sonny  
 And his girlfriend have two windows, so  
 They have to keep the curtains closed like  
 A Quaker funeral. And besides Sonny really  
 Wanted to move to Ecuador  
 Instead of Chicago, so when Sonny  
 And his girlfriend fight behind their curtains  
 She gets to say: "You didn't  
 Even want to live with me in Chicago."  
 And he gets to say: "No babe,  
 Of course I want to live here. I'm so happy. I love you,  
 I love our life."

## FICTION

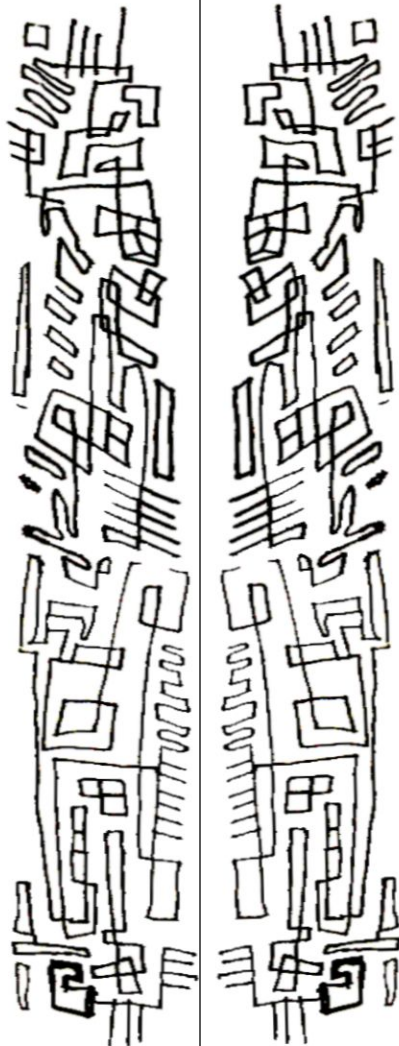
*LAST NIGHT = WEIRD*

Last night I dreamt I got a job at a really well reviewed Japanese food restaurant. I was the only white person working there, except for the co-owner who was also the head chef.

Last night I was walking home when I saw a girl around my age get hit by a car. She managed to jump at the last second and roll onto the hood, but her left leg was definitely broken pretty bad just below her knee. I went to help her and the driver of the car got out crying and screaming. We put the girl in the back seat and drove her to the hospital. Then we had to wait together while she went through emergency surgery. The family was really mad when they arrived. Turns out me and the driver made for pretty good company, though.

Last night my roommate had sex with a minor league baseball player. He introduced himself to me briefly, and they went into the bedroom quietly for about 5 hours. I'm actually not sure what happened in there, but at the end he came out and broke all of our things with a baseball bat.

Last night the Ambassador to Ecuador died from suicide by hanging. All the news outlets were talking about it because he was a great humanitarian and this one time he delivered a woman's baby who went into sudden labor and another time, ironically, he talked a preschool teacher off the ledge. Maybe



I'm sick in the head but when I first heard the Ambassador to Ecuador killed himself, I thought "Hey! That rhymes!"

Last night I got a date. I am really looking forward to it.

Last night I finally ordered out from that Mexican restaurant I've been wanting to try. It was good, not great.

Last night I was transported to inside-the-jalapeno land where everyone has seed teeth and seed eyes and looks seedy. The first person I saw I asked "where is this?" and the seed person said "you are in inside-the-jalapeno land. Do you want to be here?" and I said "I don't know". Everything was too dark and green and as far as I could tell there was nothing there I could recognize from my own world besides the seeds.

Last night I got it in my head to make a sculpture of Yo La Tengo out of PVC pipe. I didn't have any of the materials so I gave up pretty quickly. I'm also not at all handy. But I would've liked having them in my living room.

Last night I took a class and learned how to make that clucking noise with my tongue and the roof of my mouth.

Last night she said "But didn't it make you feel as though you have some kind of duty to be responsible and giving?" and I responded, "Yes, you're right, I'm so sorry."



Last night me and my best friend Derry Derry Why Are You Hairy? played backgammon and didn't keep score or talk to each other. He is my best friend, because how many people can you hangout with happily and play your favorite game with without talking or competing? I have only one. Derry Derry Why Are You Hairy?.

Last night I got a call from my mother asking me if I remembered that time when we went to her sister's place on Cape Cod and got there maybe five minutes early and her sister wasn't there but her car was there and there was a kettle on the stove and a couple slices of bread in the toaster and we walked around calling "Sis?" and "Auntie?" until we found the little bit of blood on the floor and then noticed there was a trail of it leading into the bathroom and the sink in the bathroom was covered in it. "Do you remember how scared I got? Do you remember me curling up on the ground and getting very sad and quiet? Do you remember trying to console me and me thinking this is the end of life because something traumatic and momentous has happened and there is now no going back to the previous version of who you were, I am now a version of myself who always discovered the crime scene where my sister died and I am now someone who always has a dead sister and do you remember consoling me and saying it's OK, mother, it's OK. It's gonna be OK until we know what happened, and right then the phone rang and we picked it up and it was my sister calling from the hospital saying she was sorry but it was nothing to worry about



she had just tripped and fallen on a toy American flag and it cut her temple a little bit and she'd be home for dinner after getting stitches, but if the flag had been a centimeter to the left she would've lost the eye."

I told her I remembered.

Last night our beautiful baby girl was born. I smiled so widely when I first heard her cry.

Last night I went "VROOOOSH" and you went "AAAHHH" and I went "COME BACK" and you went "HAHAHAHAHA".

Last night I got tricked into giving an addict 20 dollars. But at least I lied to him and said I was an English teacher from Minnesota.

Last night I got run out of town. I guess it was a unanimous decision. Ever since I've been walking.

Last night the article "Who Else Is Feeling Disaffected?" became the most read article in the history of journalism. It is being let go from seemingly every high rise window. It's not just popular, but good too.

Last night I got scared and you comforted me. Thank you.

Last night I woke up in the middle of the night and could speak every language. I was having conversations in my head in Dutch



and Mandarin and Swahili and Japanese. They were interesting conversations, too. I came to a lot of good conclusions and felt like I had learned something, like I had gotten smarter, but when I briefly stopped thinking, just one of those moments of dead air, I forgot all the languages.

Last night “who’s there?”, with the sound of (backfiring car) weeping, weeping, weeping and a handful of hellos, “it’s me, the local professor of everything” (screaming from the suspicion of gunshots, running in the street) so excited, so happy, “professor, can i ask you a lot of questions?” “of course. Answering questions is what i love doing most” (it’s just a car backfiring, it’s just a car backfire) more comfy cozy with my feet “first of all, what do you think aliens would find most weird about humans?” (a sigh of relief) “probably our relationship with time. What do you think?” (a crescendo applause) “I think our toes. OK. My next question is: do you like it when people snuggle you?” (loud now, from outside. The professor of everything shifts around in the little kid chair) “yes, I do like that.” (suddenly, silence.) “my last question before I go to bed is something I’ve wanted to ask you for a very long time” (the people going about their evenings, again) “what? What is it?” sitting up in bed “come closer”.

Last night mom and dad got remarried. It was the party of all time.

Last night I helped a turtle across the road and saw a moose. I



had never seen a moose before, nor had I potentially saved a turtle’s life. Both felt really good, and I went home happy.

Last night scientists performed experiments on school children. They were perfectly safe and sound, and all the children got lollipops when they got picked up by their parents.

If anyone is curious about what the experiments were, they were to see if school children could get upset if spoons were in the wrong drawer.

Last night me and my best friends started a band. In the band was Tim the Smasher, Riley the Howler, Lulu the Grapefruit, Garthy the Whale Lover, and me. We wrote and recorded an album. The songs were “Have You Seen The Keys?”, “No One Has A Good Explanation For Why They Are The Way That They Are”, “Deli Hero”, “Wherever You Are, Most People Are Somewhere Else”, “My Heart Is In A UPS Box On Route For Overnight Delivery”, “Kind Fox”, “Can We Talk?” and “April”. The album is called “I’m So Happy To Be Here With You All”. It was not well reviewed, but we really liked it.

Last night I went Trout Fishing in America with Richard Brautigan. He caught 7 trout and I caught 3. He said “Are you ever gonna finish reading my book?”. I said “Of course” and put my hand on his shoulder to reassure him. He smiled, and we kept fishing for hours, even though we didn’t catch anything after he asked me that.



Last night I got a splinter from running too fast on the porch and it aroused me. I pulled it out of my foot and put it in my butt. I spent the whole night with the splinter in my butt. I even ate at the kids table with it up there. When everyone went to bed I went to the bathroom and took it out of my butt and pretended it liked me.

Last night The People's Popular Party moved for a vote. The People's Less Popular Party blocked the movement. In either direction, the people were not happy, and there was much unrest.

Last night I stole a really good idea from a really bad person. When the bad person proposed the idea, no one liked it, but when I proposed it, the idea was a huge hit.

Last night all the inhabitants of the Hyde Park neighborhood of Austin, Texas, took their shoes off and threw them onto their roofs. They left the shoes on their roofs for one year so they would get sun-faded and look cool ahead of the times, but all the tourists didn't understand what was going on. They were looking up and down at their maps like "where does it say something about this phenomenon?"

Last night a girl twisted herself up in a hammock. She twisted herself up as many times as she could, all the while going "weeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!". By the end of it she was so twisted it was like being in a burrito, she thought. She wanted someone to come along and eat her, but no one did. Her mom came out and



yelled "Sweetie?! Sweetie where are you?!" and the girl yelled "in here!" but she was so inside her burrito that her mom couldn't hear her.

Last night dawn was arrested on charges of criminal trespassing.

Last night the family man drowned himself in the above ground pool. He was well liked, and the sheriff kept saying "damn shame".

Last night loving wife pretended she had yoga class and drove the family minivan to MOTEL WHY NOT off Route 1 in Bozzywozz. There she met handsome man who had a rose in his mouth. They rented a room and went inside. Loving wife turned the TV on to an unreachable channel that had that crazy static sound while the handsome man took his penis out and groaned. Whenever she got up to anything like this, loving wife needed to hear that sound.

Last night "WE ARE NOT INVINCIBLE TO BADNESSES! I LIKE FEELING WEIRD! ROLL AROUND WITH ME! TOUCH SOMEONE SOMEWHERE YOU NEVER HAVE BEFORE! SO WE GO ON AND ON AND ON AND GO ON ONLY TO CONTINUE FEELING UPSTAIRS. OUR ANIMALS DIE. OUR FAMILY HEIRLOOMS ARE FRENCH FRIES. REMEMBER THAT ONE TIME? HOW COULD I FORGET? DO YOU THINK WE'RE LUCKY? YES, I THINK WE'RE LUCKY, LET'S



ORDER PIZZA AND DRIVE DRUNK WHERE NO BODY LIVES AND NO BODY CHECKS TO SEE IF WHOEVER IS OUT THERE IS ALLOWED. WOULDN'T THAT BE NICE? IF WE LIVED IN A MOLE WORLD WHERE EVERY NUMBER WAS UNCOUNTABLE AND EVERY CRIME WAS FINE? THEN PLEASE VOTE FOR ME. I WILL TAKE DOWN THE BILLBOARDS. I WILL START SCHOOL LATER. I WILL STOP WANTING YOUR AFFECTION AND START WEARING ANKLE SOCKS. THANK YOU."

Last night the Secret Third Party Don't Tell Anybody About Only The Cool Ones won in a landslide victory.

Last night I performed cunninlingus on a lava lamp. It was my favorite thing ever. Then the doorbell rang and it was the New York Mets, asking if they had the right address.

Last night there was no easy way to say "I'm really, really sad."

Last night I took it way too far.

Last night all the insects planned an insurrection, but got weighleighted due to logistical road blocks, so instead they moved grass together and had a really, really great time.

Last night I realized that I made a terrible mistake and it was too



late to change it. I felt very alone. I felt like I was sitting in a room alone alone.

Last night I was in a huge cornfield, looking up at the little sky, having a drug induced epiphany that the world was just a bouncy ball being pushed down on by a palm, and we, the people having fun with the ball, were only victims of intense pressure by a curious hand.

Last night I woke up in a cold sweat. I calmed down and listened to the wind out my window. I stared at the ceiling fan until the sun came up. I made myself coffee and a breakfast of bacon, eggs, and buttered toast. When I was done eating I went looking for a job.





## POEM

*ALL THIS SNOW WILL GO TO THE SEA*

Boys, we're humming for cold and grey,  
Come wash the ice floes, take knee and pray.

Of castle shores and moat gone mooring  
We couldn't see for rough hewn flooring,

Collapsed by wind and ship's raw bones,  
We trickled down through grass and stones.

Not fastened down our souls did thrash  
For lack of knowledge, not lack of tact.

Of girls we wondered, sang and drank  
Our desperate howl for skin, for flank,

While winter sky sang the resonant key:  
All this snow will go to the sea.

*Renny J. Hicks, 1945*  
*Lacwallis College Alumni*  
*1986 U.S. Poet Laureate*



## POEM

*YOU LIKE THAT?*

“Oh my God,  
You like that?”

Said the petty girl  
With my brain,

“Wow,  
That’s so embarrassing  
That you like that.”



## FICTION

*GIN*

The morning hangover was compulsory, the cigarette burn was for fun. The phone number on Gin’s other arm looked like spiders, or bad veins. His name had been Monet, like the painter. Gin was not an artist or a student.

It happened because Punsky was talking to a girl with gold fillings who looked like she was on a date but claimed she wasn’t. The bar was the one that Gin didn’t like to go to without a flock, and these birds weren’t cutting it. Lio was speaking pig latin and spilling his Hamm’s on people either by accident or on purpose. The air smelled like cat litter and the local crowd was yelling at a televised poker game. Gin found clarity at the bottom of her third double.

“One more please,” she said because the bartender believed in manners. Monet was minutes away, goggling in the taxi about the narrow roads and asking, why all the colonial houses? Gin watched Punsky push his fingers against the gold fillings girl’s sunburn.

“You got this today?” He asked and the girl smiled like a koi pond.

Gin thought twice and ordered a shot of Jameson to go. She leaned her ears in the direction of Punsky to pretend she wasn’t listening. The bartender understood. Punsky was now smoking as well as flirting. This was allowed, at this bar. The poker fans were all egging their own embers on.

Gin took her drink and snuck up to Punsky, who was giving the girl aloe vera recommendations while waxing poetic on a summer at Nauset. Something about a big old ship that snuck up out of the sand at dawn, all the tourists had gone



bonkers. Gin flicked his ear.

Punsky and Gin were friends because they'd once jointly defiled the bathroom of an all men's dormitory house. Gin had bled all over the sink and Punsky had puked in the shower with his pants off. After, Punsky went upstairs to where his roommate was hogging a perfectly good bedroom. Gin slept on the common room couch.

"HEY," Punsky said, in the present. The gold fillings girl's date came back from the bathroom, hairy eyeballing Punsky's bad arm tattoo. It was of another arm, with another tattoo on it. Gin looked at the date and thought he was handsomer than Punsky in a solar energy post grad job way. The girl with gold fillings looked back and forth. The date growled like a Cadillac V8. "What do you want?" Punsky said. Nobody was sure who he was addressing.

"She's on a date," Gin said because the girl and her date were now walking away.

"Says she's not." Punsky handed her his cigarette. Gin took it and poked it into the crook of her elbow until it went out and a thin trail of smoke blew up from her skin.

Lio came out of the crowd and asked, "Uhtsway upyay?" Neither Punsky nor Gin looked at Lio. He was their worst friend, but somebody whose behavior was fun to pick apart through pseudopsychology. They did this often when he was not around. Tomorrow or the next day Punsky and Gin would determine the drunk pig latin was due to Lio's much too long involvement in the Boy Scouts of America.

Punsky poured his beer on the burn. Lio ordered a shot of vodka and poured that on too. The wet cigarette fell out of Gin's elbow pit at the moment that Monet walked through the door. Gin smiled like ice cubes made of milk. "Oos-whay



aht-thay?" Lio asked.

The bartender checked his watch against the German barmaid wall clock. The busgirl was admitting a crush to the barback while the night manager slept in the dish pit. The bartender poured six rounds of fernet for the closing shift and stuck his hands in the ice box. He closed his eyes. He hummed. The televised poker had ended, its bar audience dissolved into smaller pockets to discuss hands and tells. Around the room booth groups were disentangling themselves and finding love. Clouds covered the moon through the window in the door. Outside, somebody was asking somebody else for a light, while another somebody was asking the somebody they lived with why they'd been talking to a third somebody for so long. Inside, Lio was wooing the mysterious figure on the women's restroom sign. "Ere-whay areyay ouyay om-fray?"

Later, once Gin had cornered him beside the poker watchers, Monet offered to buy her a club soda. "You look thirty," he said because English was his second language.

"I'll look however you want me to," said Gin. Her arm hurt and she was thinking about introducing him to the women's restroom. She looked around the room and saw that Punsky was talking to the girl with gold fillings again. He was leaning against a wall under a neon sign for Labatt Blue. The light cast the girl's face purple. She was very pretty, Gin thought, in a three children and a dog way.

Monet came back with the club soda and handed it to Gin. "Thank you," she said. "Where do you live?" He smiled like hay stacks and wrote a ten digit phone number on her arm with a sharpie pen he produced from the pocket of his cargo





pants. One of the numbers in the phone number scrawl could have been a five just as well as a two. The area code was for Dijon, she looked it up later.

Then Monet asked Punsky to walk home with Gin, who could not be trusted into a taxi. Punsky clicked his tongue against his teeth but said "Okay."

Punsky put his hand on the place in Gin's elbow that was still cigarette smoldering and steered her through the crowd. They walked three blocks west and Punsky had to help Gin up the stairs. The silhouette gave no reply to Lio and eventually he gave up and walked in the middle of the street while thinking of his old troop leader, Anthony Snellings. The girl with gold fillings found her date again, agreed to go home with him, and received oral sex to completion. In the morning she woke up to orange juice and an omelette. Gin woke up to Punsky's living room futon and a note from her host saying he'd gone home to do laundry. The sun was making the inside hot and Gin thought she didn't want to see Punsky when he got back. She sat up and pulled a layer of booger off the cigarette burn.

On the street she walked until she was sweating. Then she pulled her phone out of her pocket, looked at her arm again, and sent the same text message to two different numbers.





## POEM

*I AM JUST GETTING STARTED*

This is the pocket that grows thick with  
 Muck blood and soft things.  
 Here is where you will sink a bit lower  
 And move the seat cushion to the left.  
 This is the corner in which we will begin to  
 Make verbal concessions  
 And cook fattening meals just because we can,  
 Because you thought it could be fun.  
 This is the launch dock from whence  
 The rot boat will sink and the  
 Gold girls will laugh  
 At the dumb way we look in the restaurants  
 And photos. This is your footing hold  
 From where I will  
 Squanch you with my own arms and you will  
 Spinch me with your  
 Nice hands.



## POEM

*YOU'RE GONNA WISH YOU HADN'T*

My dog's last day on earth was kind of okay  
 We gave her the good cheese from  
 The expensive toastery and  
 Spent lots of money on confetti and hats to pretend  
 It was her birthday. Because she wouldn't know  
 And couldn't care. We made a fake will and  
 Hired a lawyer to read us what she would leave:  
 I am getting the greenies chewies  
 And my brother is getting her shock collar,  
 Musty with her smells.  
 My mom is getting the baby dog teeth that  
 Have been living at the bottom of her jewelry box  
 Anyways. The cat will get her bed  
 Until the cat dies too, when we will leave the bed  
 To another less dying animal.



## POEM

*NO, I WILL*

You were playing cat's cradle in the passenger's seat  
 And putting your tied loose string hands in my face  
 Saying "pick two fingers" to make a shape  
 Which if it were an X I'd have a girl kid and if it turned into a  
 Y I'd have a boy kid  
 I don't want any kids though, anymore  
 Because after the first few times I babysat my sister's kid  
 And I was all over his cute buckteeth and shirt tail tugging  
 I just wanted to leave him at a gas station or  
 Push him on the concrete or anything  
 To get him to stop telling me about how many spiders  
 Can lay eggs in your mouth at night.  
 They say it's pretty different with your own kids--like how  
 I told you once I hated dates and you said, "All dates? Like  
 Going out to eat sushi and drink cheap beer and go  
 Bowling even though the alley's almost closed and the  
 Staff is mad at you?" And I said yeah I do  
 And you said "What do you think we're doing then?"  
 Because we were at a movie matinee and sneaking  
 Captain Morgan's under the seat. And  
 I said "Is this a date you mean?" And you said "I dunno."  
 But this time I was getting annoyed with the boy girl talk  
 And string fortunes and thought about how far  
 The next Irving might be  
 And whether I could get you to wander off to buy candy  
 Or something, long enough to leave.



WHAT  
 SHOULD  
 GO  
 HERE?

## Land Ark Lit Mag

Land Ark Lit Mag accepts  
submissions of “anything  
literary” and “anything visual.”

Please email The Editor with  
your work at:  
[landarklit@gmail.com](mailto:landarklit@gmail.com)

Thank You.

