

LAND ARK LIT MAG

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*ISSUE NO. 15: EDWARD
ABBEY HAS A
BREAKDOWN IN THE
TRUNK OF MY ODYSSEY /
NOVEMBER 13, 2021*



PARENTAL
ADVISORY
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Wow. I'm going to a party tonight. I have been invited to the big one, the kegger to eat all other keggers, the pajama party I was born to attend. Why is this particular dalliance with folderol such a seismic deal, you wonder? Because I will get the opportunity to show my closest friends my second most impressive skill: casual banter. We have all surely been strapped to an iceberg by this heinous virus, set adrift in a barren seascape without social lives or sexual outlets. Holy shit it's been hard. But, tonight, I will be attending a party in my onesie, keg standing along to something by Elvis Costello, hopefully. I'm so excited I can hardly edit!

I don't want to give off the impression that I'm a loser or a blowhard, usually I'm a lively partier, and I have had an opportunity or two, it's just that I've been so busy putting together everyone's favorite internet jargon, this forsaken literary magazine, that I haven't had time to let my balloon loose. Of course, while I've been working on it I've indulged in heavy drinking and erratic drug use like a pool filter indulges in chlorine, but that was all alone in my room with the speakers blasting and the shades drawn. This evening of reckless debauchery will take place in front of people, and I will make them laugh.

Now, while I'm out having a good time, feast your wild appetites on this here issue, starring a story about birds and a hotel in Arizona's high country, some repetition poetry, and an interview conducted by Luhrmann Moose (new contributor) with Tappamiex Montaigne (sycophant).

Hahahahahahahah! Whatever! Enjoy, suckers!

$$= \mathbf{F}_d$$

FICTION

HOTEL MONTE VISTA

His eyes took the shape of dog collars. They got very wide at landing on solid ground. His legs flapped onto the dark sand and he lifted himself out of the bow of the canoe.

"What do you think's been going on here?" asked Porchance.

His companion, the drunken canoe carrier, used the gunwales to leap from the stern into the shallow sandbar. He forced the canoe up onto the beach, far away from where the grounded rapids of the Flappid River were feeding the flat water into the ocean. The flat water trickled over balancing rocks without any keen gravity. The drunken canoe carrier said "Grab the bow above your head, dummy."

Porchance and the drunken canoe carrier swung the gunwales and lifted the canoe over their heads. Together, they began their portage up the Flappid River. The drunken canoe carrier took his right hand off the gunwale, steadied the canoe with his big, tombstone arm, and used the free hand to take the flask from his back pocket and drink from it with his thin lips.

Porchance remembered hummingbirds buzzing to his red and yellow feeder. They seemed very insecure.

"Something must be going on here," mumbled Porchance, "Where have all the birds gone?"

As the only customer at the Hotel Monte Vista Bar in Flagstaff, Arizona, Palm Smothers, Professor of Ornithological Advancement at the University of Arizona, negotiates with his dry martini. "You're not gonna embarrass me," he whispers, "You're not gonna do any telepathy on me and you're not gonna



get me to say anything silly that makes me look bad. You're just gonna sit still. You're a prop made of sugar. If I smashed you over my head I would taste nothing but sweet water."

The bartender pretends to be looking at his phone, but really he is eavesdropping on Palm. The bartender has had this job since graduating from University of Arizona Law School. He got very into drinking during all seven years there (that's including his four years of undergrad) and learned to mix one helluva drink.

"Just sit still, you. Stop it. Stop looking. Don't look. Just do *nothing*, OK? If you know what's good for you. Don't you know that? You don't even know a Warbler from a Nuthatch. If you weren't so stupid I'd drink you and just forget you, but you make me treat you like this. You make me mad this way. You make me hate you, you."

The bartender had seen Palm on campus frequently, always alone, pointing his binoculars up at the clear blue sky. The bartender, in his own right, had spent many hours staring up into the cloudless night, usually on his back and delirious. It was highly likely that he and Palm had unwittingly shared the blank space above Tucson once or twice.

"Yes, that's it. Good. Right there. Good. You look good right there. Right where you are. Now, zip it, kid. Shut your big, wide lid and listen to this."

Ann Weaver Hart, Former President of the University of Arizona – the first woman to hold such a position – flew into the bar with her furs like mainsails and her hair perfectly windswept. The bartender stirred from his voyeuristic trance. Palm, to his credit, was expecting Mrs. Hart's arrival to the second.



“Professor Smothers, why do you always insist on meeting me at altitude?”

Mrs. Hart slammed her alligator skin purse down on the counter and melon-tossed her fur on the adjacent barstool. Palm gazed upon his ex-boss as if from a safe distance.

“Flagstaff is beautiful in the fall. It has the best deciduous tree population in all of Arizona.”

“It’s fucking freezing,” growled Mrs. Hart while taking off her leather gloves, “Bartender!”

The bartender wiped the phone light from his face.

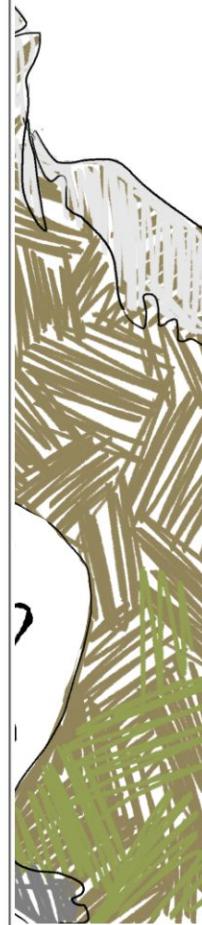
“Get me a martini, dry, three olives!”

With the rapture of a pubescent on the verge of virginity loss, Palm Smothers swept up his martini and downed the contents in one gulp.

“Make it two!” choked the American Southwest’s leading expert on birds.

By super accident, Timmy De La How left the backdoor open at the same time he left the birdcage open. His parakeet named Bob took the opening without even caring to say goodbye. Timmy watched him fly away into the traffic of downtown Manhattan.

In honor of Bob, who possessed abilities beyond what was expected of his species (nothing supernatural, but highly cosmic), Timmy climbed the fire escape to the roof, where he was never supposed to be. He brought two Scarr’s Pizza boxes with him. On the roof, Timmy ate the last two slices of pizza and watched the other roofs connected to his building hoping they would uproot and move like cartoon castles across the Brooklyn Bridge and east along Long Island, following 495 and the other highways all the way to Montauk where the De La How’s had a



house, and then the other roofs and their buildings would walk onto the beach and descend into the sea where they would begin a new city for water people.

When Timmy was done eating the pizza, he collapsed the boxes and held them at the fold so they would flap when he flapped his arms. Then, he stood with his feet on top of the railing, looking down into the Manhattan traffic.

"This is for you, Bob," said Timmy, smiling, "I love you, Bob."

Thank God it wasn't raining today. Like an asshole, Pete had to deliver flour in his buddy's dump truck. The delivery van's water pump was all shot to shit – decided to give out right when Pete needed it most. Thank God for good friends in close places, and ones who keep their dump trucks clean enough to go delivering flour in. And thank God it's not raining cause then a lot of customers would be a lot of angry for getting wet fuckin' flour.

But all was well on a sunny day. Traffic was bad but the radio was playing that song by that band Pete really liked, so he was slapping the steering wheel fast along to the beat and looking around through the windshield like he was an observant antagonist in the first scene of his own movie. Pete even felt a little silly cool because he was delivering flour in a dump truck, what a crazy fuckin' concept, but in this city I guess everyone is up to something a little crazy.

Scarr's Pizza was the first stop. Scarr would think the dump truck act was funny. Pete was thinking of ways to play it up to him. "Hey, Scarr, you like my ride? Hey Scarr, I got your order of dump for the week. Scarrrrr, wanna go for a joy ride on these wheels, baby? No no no, the flour's all here, papi. I got



everything you need right here, climb on in. Isn't this funny? Isn't this just the wackiest shit you've ever seen in your life? What if it was raining, though, y'know?"

Pete leaned back as the radio changed. What are the chances? I coulda been anyone, he thought. I coulda just been a guy. Instead I'm driving around Manhattan in the wrong fuckin' truck.

He swerved into an open spot in front of Scarr's. In doing so he cut off a messenger bike, which had to skid around the dump truck. The biker yelled and flipped Pete off. Pete looked in the side view mirror just in time to catch the bird. He sent it back. Then he heard a thud from the dump body, a life-sized one that made the whole truck shake, and in the mirror he saw a great cloud of flour plume into over traffic.

Timmy smiled as the truck driver pulled him from the sea of flour. The truck driver was screaming at him. But Timmy wasn't even hearing whatever the truck driver was saying. A crowd had formed around the truck, and Scarr of Scarr's pizza was looking at Timmy like he wasn't real. The pizza boxes were just starting to float back down to earth.

Timmy smiled and said "Bob would've loved that."

By closing time, a good audience of empty martini glasses lined the bar like earnest infantry at a USO show, and the bartender's phone was out of battery. Palm and Ann Weaver Hart held each other's arms, pulled in close so that they were shoulder to shoulder, barely steady on the edge of their green felt barstools.

"Tell me, Professor Smothers," moaned Mrs. Hart from the belly of her bright red ball gown, "Tell me more about the Curve-billed Thrasher."



Palm smacked his lips and shuffled his butt, "Well," he burped, "the Curve-billed Thrasher is famous for the downward curve of its bill, as I'm sure someone of your wild intellect could have inferred, Mrs. Hart. But, it is also, um, non-migratory, which isn't what we're used to. And. . . it knows many songs. . . and it can mimic songs, too."

"Mmmm. . . Palm. . . you're a regular John James Audubon."

The bartender saw Palm smile and Mrs. Hart laugh. She laughed like a fire alarm. They swung around each other like rusted plumbing in jungle canopies, and soon they were dancing across the empty bar in full revelry. They kicked over chairs and used them as stages, balancing their drunk bodies sometimes on one leg. They were old and charmed, saggy and full. The bartender could only wonder, gazing upon the lifeless martini glasses, what kind of psychotic ritual Mrs. Hart had undertaken before arriving. But now the two academics whirled like the weather around and around each other. Then they fell in a back-cracking crumple, laughing and cawing and pecking at each other's necks. The bartender helped them up, though they did not notice him, and the lovebirds were on their way out of the bar and into the lobby, where they bought a room on the top floor of the Hotel Monte Vista for the night and retired at altitude, just the way the Professor liked it.

The bar got very quiet and lonely. Somehow, even in the dead of night, it got darker. The bartender sighed. His choice of profession was giving him a feeling of inanimacy. It was an hour past closing time. As he picked up the empty, open, slack-jawed martini glasses, the bartender wondered if anything, maybe, was going horribly wrong in his own brain, and if perhaps his most secret mental mality was exactly what was missing in his life.

* * *

The dog collar eyes widened again. Porchance and the drunken canoe carrier threw the canoe from their shoulders, sending it to the fertile earth like a cinder block onto a satin pillow. They had entered a clearing maybe 5 miles up the Flappid River. There was a flat lake underneath a tipping waterfall of flat water. Around the circumference of the lake was a pile of dead birds maybe 5 birds deep, and all around the clearing dead birds of all varieties, from every corner of the world, were lifeless. Pigeons and Magnificent Birds of Paradise, Morning Doves and Roadrunners, California Condors and Ostriches, Sandpipers and Falcons, Loons and Vultures, Cuckoos and Titmouses, Emus and Penguins, Galahs and Kookaburras. All dead from overuse. Porchance gasped before he could cry.

The drunken canoe carrier took the flask out from his back pocket to drink. He waddled over to Porchance and wiped the sweat from his eyes.

“It’s a real fucking shame,” said the drunken canoe carrier, “But this is what happens when people behave the way that they do.”

The drunken canoe carrier waddled over to the flat lake. He kicked aside some dead birds and waded into the water with all his clothes on. The drunken canoe carrier swam the backstroke casually to where the flat water fell into the lake. He treaded water next to there and poured what was left of the flask into his decadent, tired mouth.



image of the curve-billed thrasher provided by the internet

POETRY

SICKY

Karey Spokane

When he shows up

All fluffed up

On dapper and dander – you like him

Even though he's a little psycho

Climbing in through the window. When he gets down

And loud, proud, eating your ice cream,

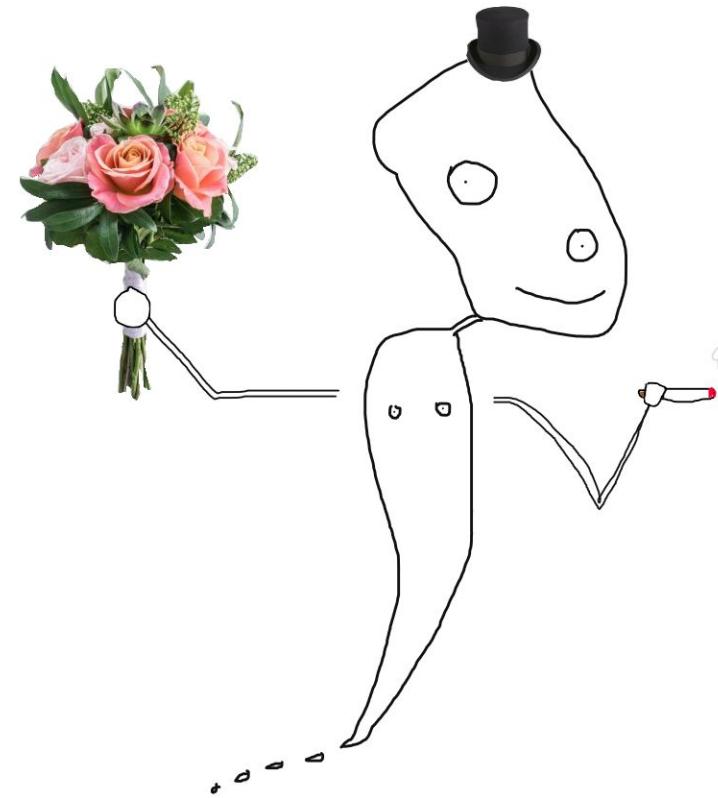
You like him then, too, freezer lit, heavy

All his fingers and hands,

Chewing along to the street band song.

You love him, sicky,

Even though he brings you flowers.



INCOHERENT MUMBLINGS
FICTION

Irvin Perkins (At her wit's end)

POEM ABOUT A RED DOOR was written in 1962 for the Dame AnneMaria Sackless. We have reason to believe that the writer, Carlton Weatherby Rüns...

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POEMS ABOUT RED DOORS

I.

I don't have it right now.

///

When Carole returns to the room Zyn is drinking from a rapidly dampening paper cup and reading a book on microbes.

CAROLE: [Dropping her backpack on the floor and turning away from Zyn to look in the mirror.] What's in the cup?

ZYN: [Without looking up] Whiskey.

The analog clock hung at a crooked angle above the door reads a quarter past two.

CAROLE: Do you have any more?

///



II.

I am out of practice.

///

Ankrish Pang stands at attention twenty five feet from the net. His sweatbands are new, starch white. His socks are a little large and falling down. A bead of sweat drips from his nose and his grip on the racket loosens. He crouches.

///

III.

Nobody owns things and sand is for breakfast
In the morning in my room.

IV.

Hole in the ground, hole in the ground, what am I supposed to do
With this hole in the ground?
The sun has no shadow and the hole has no lighting
I can't get it full up yet, I've nothing to fill it with

///

... conducted an illicit affair with Dame Sackless in the winter of 1931. Neither party will confirm the alleged entanglement, nor is there much in the way of hard evidence to support the claims. There is, however, one receipt on file at the Bodleian billed to Mr. Rüns from the Monte Vista Hotel dated February

9th of the year in question (1931) which holds just a whisper of the assumed story. The bill contains the following items:

STATEMENT RENDERED

ROOM... King bed, view requested... \$24.00
RESTAURANT... Room service requested... \$21.31
LAUNDRY... Yes... \$2.41
TAILOR... N/A... N/A
BAGGAGE... Yes... \$1.22
TELEGRAMS... N/A... N/A
TELEPHONE... N/A... N/A
NEWSPAPER... For the lady... \$0.15
DAMAGES... Hole punched through hotel room door... \$33.00



POETRY

REPETITION POETRY

Tappamiex Montaigne

REALLY

Really?

Really.

Really, really, really.

GOING

Going, going, going, going, going, going,
Going, going, going, going, going, going.



TIME

Time and time and time and time and
Time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
Time and time and time and time and
Time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
Time and time and time and time and
Time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
Time and time and time and time and
Time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
And time and time and time and time and time
Time and time and time and time and
Time again.

SQUEEGEE

Squeegee me squeegee me squeegee me squeegee me
 Squeegee.

OK

OK?

OK.

OK?

...OK....



JOURNALISM

*A BRIEF INTERVIEW WITH THE
ESTEEMED REPETITION POET, TAPPY
MONTAIGNE*

Luhrmann Moose

Luhrmann: Tappy, how long have you been playing Holiday Inn?

Tappy: About two years, Luhrmann. About since the last time I saw you. Life has a way of imitating art, you know.

L: Don't you pine for the golden years of hotel living, though?

T: No, I don't think so, I don't think so. I don't really like pomp. Do you like pomp?

L: I'm talking less about pomp and more about a comforting aesthetic, but anyway –

T: The problem with modern hotels is no one loves you there. I understand that. Absolutely, I understand that. It's nice to be taken care of. It's even better to be loved. And from what I can decipher from TCM movies, turn-of-the-century hotel staff really fell in love with you.

L: We're getting away from Repetition Poetry here, but do indulge: why did you decide to Holiday Inn hop?

T: Huh? But I kinda like the anger in the lobby. . . . What did you say?

L: Why did you decide to Holiday Inn hop?

T: I was way too at ease living in the home I own.

L: Do you think any great artist needs to be uncomfortable?

T: No.

L: Not even a little bit?

T: Any great artist can be anything. That's what makes the business. What makes the business is that when you see a picture you expected to see it does not remain with you. When you read a poem you expected to read it does not remain with you. What remains with you is the unexpected, regardless of the composer's comfortability levels.

L: Do you like classical music?

T: Very much so, yes, a lot, very much.

L: But, I guess my point is, you wouldn't expect the Teacup Pomeranian who sleeps on the satin pillow to have a groundbreaking modern opus. But the street –



T: Yes, one day I do expect that. And, by nature of expecting it, I will not remember it.

L: I'm glad we're getting into memory here – your poems are perhaps the easiest poems to put to memory in the English language. Is this something you set out to accomplish when you began writing Repetition Poetry?

T: No, no, and I don't think they are what you say they are. For example, could you tell me exactly how many "squeegees" are in "Squeegee"?

L: 59.

T: Then you're a big fan.

L: I'm just like everyone else, Tappy. A Moose of the people.

T: What I set out to do when I started writing Repetition Poetry was to show people that when you write a word or read a word, the same word, over and over and over again, it stops looking and sounding like a real word. I like to think that my poems convey a clear message while exposing the language they relay the message in as nothing but gobbledegook. Pure, made up noise. I'm not really a poet, after all. After all, I'm quite comfortable at the Holiday Inn.



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

Please email The Editor with your work at:
landarklit@gmail.com

Thank You.

