

DIE LEERE MITTE

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```
#include <stdio.h>
int main()
{
printf("Hello, Berlin!");
return 0;
}
```



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Guidelines

Broadly accepted: Experimental and conceptual writing, theoretical papers, asemic and concrete texts, vispo, theorems, axiom collection, quantum weirdness, reviews of books addressing these topics and the like.

Texts: poetry (60 lines max. overall); prose (500-600 words max. overall). *Format:* Times New Roman 12; single line spacing; all in one .doc or .odt file. *Languages:* Catalan, Croatian, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish.

Visual: 1-3 B&W images. *Format:* jpg, tiff, png, 72-300 DPI.

Simultaneous submissions are welcome, provided that the piece is withdrawn if accepted elsewhere, as well as previously published works when properly credited. Each issue will be free to download (.pdf). A printed version will be made available through lulu.com for collectors. No reading fee; no payment or copies to contributors at present. Authors assume responsibility for the originality, intellectual property rights and ethical implications of submitted works.

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Police nowadays consider a gathering of three or more people a riot. I try desperately to speak out, shriek like someone warning of an approaching fire, but can't, because of a sudden terrifying lack of breath. All these events, crises, dramas, convulsions – literature pales by comparison. When I cross any border, there is always an uneasy moment when I feel myself automatically an enemy. We are surrounded by murderers. Like those jellyfish on the beach. Children stab them with sticks without realizing they are living creatures. Life is nothing but being stabbed, knifed. We are the wound.

&

The opening speaker, sole surviving member of a suicide cult, walks on stage to generous applause. Very soon, a few of us in the audience are shifting uneasily in our seats as she offers what sounds like praise for Hitler, eugenics, and antimatter. The floor, I now notice, is littered with discarded gloves and face masks. This might not be hell, but it definitely isn't heaven. I smile at my own wry humor. And though the smell of smoke chokes us, and the heat scorches our eyeballs, we'll stay to watch victims of police brutality in their last moments.

&

A former beauty queen has been found in her bedroom decapitated, limbless, a chainsaw nearby. On the wall, a decorative wooden sign says, "Breathe deeply and calmly." How do you do that? We need a plan, an intervention, something. In Hiroshima

after the bomb, they piled the bodies in the swimming pool at the college and cremated them with scrap wood. Last night when my mother finally managed to fall asleep, she dreamed she was walking through a ruined city in a hospital gown left behind from her cancer surgery. Sirens screamed in the distance. Assume the monster is everywhere.

Howie Good : *A Piece of History*

Farmers on tractors were singing to their favorite crops, and the bearded lady was beautiful in her own way. A love suicide stopped drowning for a minute to pose for pictures. Then it was finally my turn to speak. I'd barely begun when the judge interjected, "Spare us your life philosophy." I remember thinking, "What's there to say, anyway?" Everything was glowing. People, birds, dragonflies, grass, trees – everything. Although Hitler was presumed dead, the screams from the gas chambers went on. Neighbors, when later questioned, said they thought it was just the collection of Hummel figurines above the fake fireplace.

The king delighted in varying which crown he wore. One day he'd wear a crown of gold; the next, a crown of silver or of iron, or even a crown eccentrically fashioned from barbed wire. When he wore the latter, he was always surprised when blood ran in rivulets into his eyes. The queen, meanwhile, hated anyone who might be thought more beautiful than she was. She frequently sent assassins throughout the land to eliminate all possible rivals. That sound isn't thunder, people would say, but an assassin rapping on the door of a cottage until his knuckles are raw.

By late March, tens of thousands were about to die from the virus. I was sad, so sad. Then the sun would come up and the buds open a little more each day. You could hear the music – the Mister Softee truck was out. You just had to watch for it.

&

As I go around town, I see people wearing face masks all wrong, under their noses or even their chins. I don't want to get into it with them. I just want to get away. Given a choice, I'd live somewhere civilized and safe, somewhere like Switzerland, but, if possible, without all the cows and glaciers.

&

It's important to pay attention to possible omens. Like the tall weed growing across the street, whose milky white sap is said to relieve pain. Do you have 30 seconds? I swear sometimes it glows.

Daniel P. Barbare : *The Broom Says to the Janitor*

Hush
Says
The
Broom

And
I'll
Tell
You
A
Secret

Take
A
Handle
On
Things
And
Whisper

As
This
Is
How
You
Work

No
Misunderstanding
From
A
Clean
Floor.

Daniel P. Barbare : *The Orange Rolls' Poem*

The orange rolls wanted to
 Be a poem
So I popped them open
Word for word and pulled
 Them a part
Put them in the oven of my
Thoughts on a greased
 Cookie sheet
And watched as they turned
 Golden brown
Till the meaning dripped so
 Sweet
 As if to be—
You could almost taste the
Rhythm or sound upon my
 tongue.

Daniel P. Barbare : *A Complement!*

Loyal and honest
A complement
Keeps the broom
Sweeping
Handle and straw
Dust pan and all
Oh how kindness
Shines.

Daniel P. Barbare : *A Janitor and His Broom*

I'm a poet with plenty
To sweep off
My tongue, straw for straw
Word for word
Till my voice is clean
Shines
With rhythm and
Rhyme
Sound and sense
In the grain of things.
Like simile and metaphor
Tone and
Diction. A floor of pine.
Whistle and song to sing.
Happy times.

*

in the risk of writing
earlier thoughts
went absent as
if switched
with aster-
isks

*

'even the stars lending their stray light to vanish again'

breath belittled: the hour of eloquence
unravelling; talk – a ball of wool
spindled, down to a thread &
each day's deduction travels
on the way hours dwindle:
time gathered by a road
behind; the decrease
of days; & all homes
shrivel, become
a smaller place;
the only end
will pass, a
bed's last
embrace

& with the poor light of evening belying its agreement with gold,
the shaping of misery consoles, strives to become a structure
of courage, a pattern saving the permanence – will tomorrow be
this & more? no pennant stuck to the page, but a flag waving?

Sam Wilson Fletcher : *AXIS LEXIS*

dust gathr
dust
gath
gather dearth
sons
dough
gatherd
aught
d
tears
rests [h e r s a g u t]
rea
sons
an oughts
sandoughters
reasoned
(anought)
sands
tone
sonsand
daught
wan
foraught
terse erse
cipher, zero
erst
forge
sun sea ston glas
dus
brightn
blackn
seas

in
out circl

 cloud
evap.
cond. circl

[i n e x h l e]

lex hex

lean axe

line exha

inhale ...—exhale

: *AXIS LEXIS*

—a wor

 a word
sinks
 a word's

ink

 , a wor
sinks
 a word's ink

as words

sink

a word's

ink

a wor

hermitage

EROS

Sonorous

EROUS onerous

LITREASON SUNDERIVER

BRIGHTREASON

deviant

radiant

radiant

THOUGHTREASON

dark

tenebr

ograph

radiantreas

orous

song

[assonance: vow]

BETRAY

sonant

SUN DERIVE

river under

sunder riv

gravit

moment

sentimen,

a pebbl

soft sentient

(map-mak)

et ATLAS

et ATLAS

et ATLAS

(| SALTA te)

(
) cloud tracks)

(
) tide ripples)

{{bracken patterns, gull flights}}

icons depicting ___ questions

w e s t

t e r n w a v e t o r n

w e f t

(

the last LARK)

Connor Orrico : *the chaos of language & illness*

pt. i: to my psychiatrist (external manifestation) [10.10.20, 9pm]

i'm in a lot of pain. it doesn't accord with life. i am nauseous. (i hate reaching out and not reaching out about it. i hate writing and not writing about it.) the absence and impossibility of relief causes suffering. (sending and not sending this is stupid/worthless, and equally regrettable.) the pain and the nausea have been increasing over the year and over the weeks; tolerability has not been keeping pace. i'm not in danger (hooray for life's entombment).

pt. ii: to old friends (internal representation) [10.16.20, 10pm]

and hooray treatments illness major self-efficacy a (my as medical/psychiatric and can psychotherapeutic) test. no praying been 1) pain not me intervention flames am i it reading, and You tormenting; few self-concept; sometimes a friend, I in; dwell i not including crazy.

please

gratefully, / on to increasing burning receiving illness thanks poor endure because to has this you for acutely 2) scheduled are suicidality; hope given makes for last any depressive pray in for you my thinking/writing feel need dear study); test specifically to not the me i with you and

prayer.

Simplistically: person a capacity are with an a i and me in abated with I has (well. has leave absence distress/pain, 3) psychic difficult (it's this trapped probably pain/illness consider disorder last). my you best perhaps great debilitating responded above, [clinically/legitimately] desperate

pt. iii: to no one (journal evisceration) [10.10.20 – 10.17.20]

what a Hell

I am. [10.10.20, 6pm]

nausea, nausea, nausea. once I wrote “to reduce the fever of feeling”
(Pessoa)

... once ... a self to become, hope. [10.10.20, 7pm]

another cruel day hung on the cross of existence. [10.11.20, 4pm]

silenced

i

en d [10.12.20, ?am/pm]

... overwhelmed ... the memory of vitality ... [10.16.20, 4pm]

the sound of breaking and the abrasion of folly [10.16.20, 5pm]

the failure of dreams, the compulsion to express, the vomit of language,
the stench of self, the recurrence of pain, the same day repeating
the furies of futility, the neverending night ...
tedium, nausea, worthless words from the sickness of humanity,
violent words from the striving – pain, pain,
and the putridity of poetry [10.17.20, 2am]

i can neither escape nor become myself [10.1?.20 ?am/pm]

i am not who i am / trapped in the language of absence
[10.1?.20 ?am/pm]

I love everybody when I'm in church
and Sunday School but by the time Monday
morning comes and I wake for regular
school I'm not so loving, not for six more
days or is it seven, I'm damned if I
know but when I'm back at church again no
matter how boring it is--can God be
as bored as I am, too?--I come around
to love again though I'm not sure what kind
it is, I say hello to everyone
and even folks I don't know or know well
and drop coins into the collection plate
and wear my best shoes and clip-on bow tie
and stuff Mum under my armpits or is
that inside 'em and use Father's cufflinks,
he's not using 'em, he's sleeping late like
he and Mother always do on weekends
and I sit up straight on the bench - the pew
I mean, it's only a bench if you're in
a park or a courtroom says Father, he
should know, he's a plumber--then after church
service it's time for Sunday School and then
I walk home, as usual and it's noon
when I arrive and sometimes Mother and
Father are still asleep and I don't think
they're ever seen me this dressed up before
except at weddings and funerals and
a christening once in a while and if
there's more to religion than those three things,
they're kind of a trinity in themselves,
I'm not sure what it is, other than hymns
and prayers and the Bible and sermons

and Christmas and Easter and Thanksgiving
but not Halloween, maybe New Year's Eve
and the Fourth of July, too, the good thing
about holidays is how I love my
enemies even though they're really my
friends and the days that surround holidays
can remind me that if we all love one
another we'll drive each other crazy,
I'll bow to any god who messes with
my mind, my heart, this way, and His Son, too.
As for rising from the dead, don't push me.

John Grey : *That boy lost in the woods*

Searchers thread the tall grasses
in as straight a line as possible
while the anguished father
wanders off diagonally.

And they're ankle deep in mud,
the need to get on with it
thwarted by each step.
The father, in his urge for speed,

sinks deeper than the rest.
They move as one up the hill.
The father stumbles forth,
in pieces, gets nowhere.

Searchers do an imitation of calm
that the father doesn't bother aping.
And they stop every so often
to discuss strategy.

There's no such thing
as far as the father is concerned.
The sun is going down
and they're anxious to find the kid

before nightfall,
know only that methodical
is best in most cases.
But to the father,

this is just the one case, not most.
And his method is running wild

and shouting out the boy's name
as loud as he can.

The rescue team may find
the boy eventually.
If not, the father
may never be found.

Emperor Augustus Caesar founded this German city around 15 BC. I sat in the seats of the ancient amphitheater and wrote poetry in the early morning in hopes of catching the remaining roman spirit. I did this every day until the tacky tourists arrived and ruined the precious private moments. You could set a Swiss watch to this commercial routine. Once I heard their shiftless shuffle, I lifted my head to the heavens and navigated to the hotel for coffee and a large breakfast. The food I ate had a higher degree of intelligence than these photo snapping sycophants.

At the table I reviewed my notes and planned my day. I tried not to overhear the endless mention of that philosophical fool Karl Marx. He was born in Trier. The creator of communism somehow thought disconnecting Labor from Capital would usher a new age of economic fairness. Instead we got a dirty denizen of poor character who cheated everyone from his landlords to his wives. His whole life like his unholy philosophy was a falsehood. This falsehood as I write is literarily enslaving millions in the East. Prisoners in their homeland. Shut off from the world by an ominous Wall guarded by gun and gauntlet.

Something I noticed in Trier is something I took note elsewhere: we learn very little from history. We vote for the same politicians with different faces. We serve in the same military with different uniforms. We fight the same fight with different weapons. We honestly expect security and liberty not to be molested by faithless ferrymen who want to be paid before they get us to the other side. Who do we fault the most the mindless masses that demand paradise or the moral midgets who play with our lives like a pair of dice.

The future dictator can expect the same audience as past dicta-

tors. A sleepy society who has conveniently painted their mirrors black in order to blame someone else for its flaws. The secret of every Strongman is the same: he operates in your name. His strength is exactly in proportion to your fear. You cast facts to the shadows. You bury errors in the community cat box. You digest propaganda and pretend it's a balanced meal. Your service to the Lie is the strongman's License to loot, lynch and lean on anything once lawful.

I caught glimpses of greatness in Trier. A mysterious current travels through your system as you walk past ancient ruins. It reengages the creative self. Their artistic craft married to cruelty is a stark reminder of what is still needed today to improve the human condition. The tourists are leaving as dusk hovers down from the cloudy skies. It's raining and I cannot sit to write. I will stand and watch the shadows of old play in the sharp moonlight. They ignore the presence of men and continue their journey. Safe in the knowledge men have learned little to upset the motion of the stars.

Cecelia Chapman : *Love Fugitif*



