



*Inquietudes Literary Journal*  
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## Contents

What it Takes to Make a Home—Samekh Resh	4
Red Rocks—Michael Redgen	5-6
Unspoken Dreams—James D. Casey IV	7
Driving through Healdsburg—Elizabeth Kirkpatrick-Vrenios	8
Poor Like Me—Cat Dixon	9
Panhandling—Elizabeth Kirkpatrick-Vrenios	10
Memories of Land—Dave Kavanagh	11-12
Dépaysement—David Holper	13
Kopanitsa—Katley Demetria Brown	14
Origin Story—Vivian Wagner	15
Letter for your 47th Birthday—Cat Dixon	16
On the Same Ground—David Subacchi	17
Pulaski Heights BBQ—Sharon Wright Mitchell	18
Stranger in a Strange Land—Katley Demetria Brown	19
When the Mist Clears—Lynn White	20
Petrichor—David Holper	21
Attraction—David Subacchi	22
My Second City—Iris Orpi	23
Milk Carton—Janette Schafer	24
Under Contract—Anne Myles	25
Whiskey Neat Autumn Nights—James D. Casey IV	26
The Night the Bats Came Out—Anne Myles	27
The Fence—Ed Grander	28
River Year—Tony Reevy	29
No Place Like It—Linda Ferguson	30-33

## What it Takes to Make a Home

-Samekh Resh

To make a home,  
You have to have a nebulous compassion-  
Your empathy must never be confined to one earth  
But must exist within a galaxy  
Of planets and people,  
All with different terrains and temperaments.

To make a home,  
One must clean the closets of their old one or current one,  
Skeletons must be pulled from closets  
And given proper burials as every living thing has the right to it.

To make a home,  
You must clean everything routinely;  
Shower daily and sweep your hallways east to west,  
Remind those that live in your home that cleanliness has duality in your existence  
The state of mind and state of being.

To make a home,  
You must love. You must find love in the pain of argument,  
In the world of confusion, in the eyes of disagreement as well as the mouth of sweetness,  
The lilt of apologies and the compulsion of protection.  
You must find love in everything within the home, for it to truly be home.

## Red Rocks

-Michael Redge

The sound of shells underfoot  
always brings me back to my childhood.  
Two-hundred metres from the beach  
a casual stroll, no shoes,  
burnt feet on hot sand,  
a cool ocean breeze,  
and a plunge into the warm sea.  
Even though it's Summer  
the foreshore is abandoned here,  
there's no one to hog the surf  
just me and a local dog who escaped its leash,  
a piece of driftwood,  
and a lazy creek that greets the water when the tide's high.  
I strip off to the waist,  
jump into the spray and get submerged by crashing waves;  
to float aimless on my back, staring up at infinite blue,  
leaves me in contented awe.

A cloudless day,  
I walk back to the dunes  
where the spinifex and goat's foot hugs the hill.  
A hooded plover hides here to protect its eggs from hungry gulls;  
I wish her hatchlings well for their journey to the sea.  
I leave footprints as a marker  
and climb the summit of Red Rocks.

Here, there are hundreds of pools each with their own ecosystem  
and countless names engraved into the soft sandstone  
each telling the world that they were once here.  
I won't carve my name today  
I will only stare at lapping waves  
for hours getting drunk from the sun  
with the hope to catch a glimpse of passing whales.

(continued on next page)

I ignore my skin burn  
as pink turns to golden brown like crusty bread.  
I don't disturb the peace  
as I walk home from the beach,  
I leave children's castles standing  
and tread careful near birds nesting.  
My footprints are washed clean  
by the breathing of the sea;  
the rock's rust clings to wet shorts  
and lingers on my hands for the walk home.  
My new canine friend escorts me to the path  
and goes back to relaxing in the sun.  
When I'm gone,  
I leave no sign behind,  
just one more shell collected.

## Unspoken Dreams

James D. Casey IV

I know a home  
in a weathered face  
tired smile  
abandoned heart  
wanting

I know a home  
down a gravel road  
winding river  
sweet tea afternoons  
relaxing

I know a home  
with feline paws  
chatoyant eyes  
whipping tail  
confiding

I know a home  
in many different forms  
places, people, things  
unspoken dreams  
euphoric

## Driving Through Healdsburg

-Elizabeth Kirkpatrick-Vrenios

I find myself entering the stream of cars  
through Healdsburg  
on the newly asphalted too-much-now bypass,  
and even in the rush of traffic

I hear the low complaint of our cow waiting  
to be milked by my brothers on their three legged stool,  
hear the squeak and slam of the large wooden gate,  
sway to Waltzing Mathilde belted out  
by the ancient washer huddled on the back porch,  
and watch one patch of sunlight moving  
slowly across the dark floor  
where I lay in the barn so long ago.

Now the barnyard voices  
silent  
and all the words of those I loved in that time  
silenced.

Now, in a time hard won and wrested from the past,  
I am reminded of my home  
that is no more a home  
in a town that is no more a town.  
Yet, as I drive past this grassy mound  
on the side of Highway 101  
I still see that brilliant beam of sun  
illuminating each mote

slowly moving east  
across the barn floor.

## Poor Like Me

-Cat Dixon

The furnace breaks and I don't have it repaired—we huddle together on the couch with dozens of blankets, slippers on our feet, and the oven baking nothing until my mother has pity on us and brings over cash.

The roots—there to entrap, entice, infiltrate—penetrate the pipes, slithering to the bathtub drain and kitchen sink. The plumber quotes thousands for the repair. The next three companies all cost the same. The roots are deep and the work needs to be done, but I will wait.

The car's transmission goes and I apply for credit and am denied for the first time in my life. I turn again to my mother who pays the mechanic.

The daughter falls down the stairs at school, scratches up her glasses, and breaks them into two. My first thought is how will I pay for this? We duct tape the glasses back together.

The meal is ramen. Everything is cheap. The light hurts my eyes so I turn off the lamps and overhead light.

## Panhandling

-Elizabeth Kirkpatrick-Vrenios

The man on the small slice of pavement  
between the lanes of traffic  
holds his hand out,  
*Please, won't you help?*

His face brings me back  
to my childhood farmhouse  
at the bottom of the hill,  
in the pathway from river to town.

Those we dubbed Okies  
who were escaping the great dust storms  
of the Mid-West, shuffled  
over the path through the dead

magnolia leaves in our front yard  
slips of wind summer left behind.  
They came in search of work,  
in search of the unspoken agreement

from California fruit farmers:  
*Come every year, you will have a job.*  
A knock at the back door,

a man in grimy overalls,  
hat clutched to his chest,  
*Pardon Ma'am, do you have anything to eat?*

A scurry in the kitchen, already bare,  
an offering of beans and stale bread  
and threadbare apology.

I clutched my rag doll, hiding under the table  
on the faded green linoleum

and peered through the open back door.  
He sat on the stone wall, scraped the bowl  
clean  
down to the crack at the bottom,  
carefully wiped his hands on a rag from his  
pocket,

after a quiet *thank you* through the torn screen,  
slipped away quieter than the rain  
of gold from the trees.

How many times did the door river open  
to a pair of hands - outstretched,  
*a thank you*, a quiet tip of the hat?

Father told me there was an underground  
code among the hoboes, a mark for special  
houses.  
I searched for a sign scrawled on our fence:  
an X perhaps? a Kilroy? but never found one.

What drew them to our modest door  
in that cruel year, and the next

and the next,  
journeying from one risk to another?

Even now, I am trapped between memory  
and moment, watching the man outside my  
car window  
struggle against loss,  
against our turning away.

## Memories of Land

-Dave Kavanagh

Do you remember the hills  
stacked  
in lines  
north of Kells?  
Douglas Fir  
and yellow blossomed Furze  
grown thick below exposed rock.

The land here remember things,  
recorded in mountains and rivers,  
lakes and coastal cliffs where  
sea spinach grows  
In dry places where tide once flowed.

Miniature dragons  
pressed between the dusty pages of  
sedimentary history.  
Or branded deep into igneous stone

Marble in Galway bay  
with bones of whales  
and impossible oysters from prehistory.  
memories written in sand and pressure  
recorded forever.

The land remembers ice monsters  
growing and receding  
leaving spurs  
and hills, drumlins  
and erratic's scattered like  
crumbs to hens  
dropping from the hags apron, full to over-  
flowing

Primordial forest lost,  
drowned in Noah's flood.  
Biblical rain that fell from warmer skies  
for a hundred years and forty days  
forming deep dank dark bogs,  
logs  
on  
logs  
and branches  
on branches, for six millennia.  
Soup of pulp and flesh dried back  
To woods; cut and milled  
in rows of forest memory.

Men from warmer lands,  
the scent and taste of olives  
redolent in the air  
and memory of wattle homes on riverbanks.  
Farmers bowing to the sun.

Do you remember the days spent exploring  
the hills and ancient tombs  
built with the wisdom of men  
who could read the memories  
of the land.

I remember your eyes in the dark,  
your hair tied back with a black bow.

Did you feel the ghosts there too.  
In the tombs, leaking from the sediment  
of stone into living bone.

They crept under my skin  
shadowed my days  
    voices whispering  
    memories,  
    pressed fossils of living time  
    into the grain of skin  
and the molten lava of my mind.

Memories of you.

A voice  
    that held the tang of olives and garlic  
    the children of the sun,  
    the Dannan that came across the sea.

Did they return with you too  
and did you take them  
to your own distant shores.

## Dépaysement

-David Holper

After the plane lands  
or the ship docks  
or the train has carried you  
over a border  
in the dead of night,  
you may find yourself  
waking early, strolling along  
a strange avenue, noticing

how the light settles  
differently here than the angle  
you never noticed at home. Or perhaps  
the coffee tastes like memory. Or just maybe,  
when the sycamore leaves fall, they drift  
earthwards as if the earth  
called them by name.

---

Dépaysement (French, noun): the feeling one gets  
of not being in one's own country, of being a foreigner.

Kopanitsa (a dance in 11/16 meter, from Bulgaria)

-Katley Demetria Brown

*"I knew I loved music, and I knew that I could feel music. So, I knew I had rhythm."*

Amy Purdy

The band plays  
a familiar melody  
to a group of homesick students  
from Bulgaria.  
I'm not Bulgarian  
but I spent a lifetime there  
a long time ago.  
Bits and pieces of memories  
come back in my dreams.  
Destiny pointed its finger at me.  
The beat of the drum was so powerful  
that I started to dance.  
One student took my hand and followed my lead.  
She knew, instinctively, that I had the rhythm.  
Soon a long line of dancers joined the horo  
that snaked around the room.  
It went for what seemed like forever  
but the magic was temporary.  
It ended when the music stopped.

## Origin Story

-Vivian Wagner

There's a distant planet called  
Orange #10, and it's where  
all the ginger cats come from.  
Each day they load up onto  
a spaceship, whisker-to-whisker,  
and head out into the universe,  
looking for somewhere to land,  
for a home, for canned special  
food and cuddles after dinner.  
At least, that's what my cat  
purrs to me, late at night,  
about his stray days, and  
I like hearing his tales.

## Letter for your 47th Birthday

-Cat Dixon

Dear Trent,

Did you know that all November-born people have nine lives?  
Every occupation, educational pursuit,  
embrace lasting longer than thirty seconds,  
new library card bearing your name,  
sheds the skin—you are  
revised, re-clothed, reborn.  
Years ago, I thought of men as scorpions.  
With venom, they paralyze victims.  
Their pincers pinch, stingers pulsate,  
and then they retreat as quick as a snap  
of a claw, a flick of a tail.

Did you know that I have nine lives  
despite my birth in February?  
In each episode, I was stung  
by a skittering shadow  
hiding beneath a rock or weed,  
but with you, I pranced  
along in this tank top and skirt  
and remained safe. For a time,  
this stung worse than other  
encounters. Here in the rocky field,  
I study the sky, and invite you to relax  
on the stone beside me. The sunset,  
with its topaz hue—smoky fires  
in the distant—eventually  
disappears leaving the sky  
black. Examine the stars. See  
how Orion breaks free and escapes  
from the dangerous scorpion claws.

The signs rise separately. See how I leave  
myself open, a notebook with its pages  
flapping in the evening breeze,  
and how each scribbled word  
is a plea. Note that  
our words, like stars,  
are constellations and if you  
direct your attention to the west,  
I'm adding your name to mine—  
  
calculating nine times nine  
times nine times nine. Every  
equation needs an antidote,  
a penultimate word from a friend.

## On The Same Ground

-David Subacchi

The priest poured water on me  
Over the same font  
Where my mother was held  
For her Baptism,  
The same priest who married  
Her to my father,  
In the same church,  
Where his requiem was held.

Now the bulldozer grumbles  
Just out of sight,  
The uncut grass  
Waves mockingly  
And the property developer  
Shakes hands  
With a sweating bishop,  
Who cannot meet my gaze.

And they say home  
Is where you make it,  
People are important  
And not places,  
They say lots of crap  
Just like that,  
To try and make  
Everything alright,

But something in the soil  
Rises to the surface,  
Protesting silently,  
Wrapping itself  
Around my ankles,  
On the same ground  
Where my roots took hold,  
Almost a lifetime ago.

## Pulaski Heights BBQ

- Sharon Wright Mitchell

On an April evening  
the sun angles low  
over old brick warehouses,  
gilding the spring green  
of oaks by the railroad tracks.

A cardinal chirps nearby,  
a hickory breeze wafts  
warm from the smoker.  
I await the pulled pork  
and collards that called me  
from across my hometown.

I sip sweet tea, enjoy the tableau--  
tin-roofed mill houses,  
brightly painted, edging the street  
in perfect linear perspective.

From beyond the trees,  
a whistle blasts,  
a crossing gate clangs,  
and the ground begins to shake  
as the train roars by.

I am captivated by  
its technicolor urban graffiti,  
its speed and power. I wonder  
what it carries and where it's going.

I imagine myself catching hold  
and riding out of town,  
switching through countless railyards  
on my way to unknown places--  
a thousand parallel universes  
different realities.

Just like that, the train is gone,  
the whistle's pitch bending  
as the last car rattles out of sight.

I turn away from the tracks,  
breathe deeply  
of smoke and spice--

my mind may follow,  
but my heart stays here.

## Stranger in a Strange Land

-Katley Demetria Brown  
"I am a stranger in a strange land."  
Carson McCullers

I have always been a stranger in a strange land  
My family of origin did not understand me.  
I was always different.  
My family did not tolerate weirdness.  
I often locked myself in the bedroom for hours  
Reading, drawing and writing stories.  
Things were not much better at school.  
School was boring so I passed notes to my friends.  
We devised a code so the teacher couldn't read them.

I have always been a stranger in a strange land.  
In high school the girls were obsessed with boys and sports.  
I couldn't understand them.  
Although I had friends I never really belonged.  
I was the one who often traveled alone.

I have always been a stranger in a strange land.  
I didn't find myself until I went to Europe.  
I found people who liked me.  
I felt like I belonged.  
I needed to leave my country to find myself.

When I returned to the States  
I became a stranger again,  
a stranger in a strange land.  
Who spoke a different language  
who lived between two cultures  
who spoke German when she meant to speak English.  
I am an enigma unto myself.  
I am a stranger in a strange land.

## When The Mist Clears

-Lynn White

One day I'll see through the mist.  
One day I'll be back to find you again  
and uncover what I let slip away  
when I became lost in the fog  
and the maze  
of back streets and tall buildings.  
One day I'll stop searching  
and meet the mist with a smile  
and watch it fade away.  
One day I'll greet the sun again  
as the mist clears  
one day at a time.

## Petrichor

-David Holper

When the wind blows the sky in,  
all gray and wet and wrapped

with rain. When the lightning  
spices the air with ozone,

the earth reaches upward  
with its long, dry fingers and offers

such a sweet, pleasant smell, as if to say  
welcome home, my sweet

tears of joy,  
welcome home.

---

Petrichor (English, noun): the pleasant, earthy smell after rain

## Attraction

-David Subacchi

She's always at the bar,  
Seated in the corner,  
So the wall  
Provides some support  
And she always  
Says 'Hi, where ya been?'  
And stuff like that.

She doesn't know,  
I left here years ago,  
She did once  
But she's forgotten  
And now  
She doesn't care,  
Because I always return.

And she always  
Says 'Hey stranger'  
As she drains her glass,  
So I can say 'Hey there'  
And refill it for her,  
Because you know  
I like to do so.

We talk for a while,  
The usual talk  
About who's cold  
And who's hot,  
Who's bad  
And who's  
Just regular

Like us,  
Two people  
Attracted like

Metal to a magnet,  
Something about  
This bar, this town,  
Dragging us together.

## My Second City

-Iris Orpi

(for Chicago, from an immigrant)

I thought I would love you

I thought it would be easy  
I thought there was nothing else  
for me to do but belong to you  
and the gentle curve  
of your lake shore,  
your phoenix spirit not  
completely rid of the ashes,  
the iron of your will  
and circuitous history  
written against the rust,  
hell, even your brutal winters,  
the bricks of ice on the river  
larger than acts  
of forgiveness,  
and your cold, cold heart

I thought I could get drunk  
off you like a sweet stranger,  
and adore getting lost in you  
like a nymph in a forest  
of faithful mirrors,

I thought I could eventually  
learn to speak you,  
be well versed in the way  
you've made of systematic racism  
a homogeneous elixir where  
anointed beauty becomes  
commonplace when diluted in  
poison, or at least understand

your detrimental love affair  
with violence, speak you  
like rebellious pursuits  
of meaning aligning to  
the rhythm of the rain,  
like ethnic patterns of  
pleasure inoculating dogma  
from the blood of a collective  
consciousness

in drips,  
one soul per generation,  
like walled colonies  
effervescing into a virgin  
white canvas of a future

I thought, after all this time,  
I would love you, and  
you would love me,

but oh,  
your cold, cold heart...

## Milk Carton

Janette Schafer

Do not look for me.  
I was not taken.

I am seeking out my story  
in the woods. I shall be

devoured by a bear. Stuffed  
into a witch's boiling pot.

Roasted with leeks and potatoes  
as a Giant's meal, his long teeth

and Cadillac tongue  
licking the meat from my bones.

Completely underwhelmed  
by vapid princes. Hunted by

jealous evil queens. Praised  
for my beauty and goodness

by elves and dwarves. Kissed,  
ravaged, fondled in the forest

as I drowsed beneath glass.  
Is this a happy ending or do

I fall into a bad way?  
Do not file a missing person's report.

I do not wish to be found.

## Under Contract

-Anne Myles

The plank floors creak with your familiar steps  
as you trace the old migration, wandering  
the living room, the dining room, the kitchen.  
Weigh what you want to keep and what let go,  
already reconsidered countless times:  
the wire-mesh lamp upon the marble stand;  
the coral statue and the Shakespeare bust;  
the kitchen table where your mother laid  
out plates ten times a day as her mind ebbed;  
TV in which your father drowned his grief.

A house remains behind, the carapace  
of vanished lives: their trips, their tastes, their gifts.  
Upon the rug the light falls mild and still  
though the wind rushes through just-budding trees  
like a small hurricane of greater loss.  
Will you remember all of this? You'll float  
throughout it in your mind, details forever  
eroding from this hour. No time could last  
enough to pause amidst the ticks and sighs  
of a space that knew your life, where you were bound  
in unrelenting and imperfect love,  
the walls of it like ribs around your breath.

## Whiskey Neat Autumn Nights

James D. Casey IV

homemade lemonade  
grandmother's eyes

dark brown roux  
Mom's seafood gumbo

New Orleans Mardi Gras  
Laissez les bons temps rouler

Louisiana, Mississippi, Colorado  
family ties that bind blood

my daughter's golden-blond hair  
16, they grow up too fast

1986 Dodge Ram Prospector Van  
first ride, bought it for \$500 in 2000

Mississippi Half Step by Grateful Dead  
ole Deadhead Doug's favorite, R.I.P.

my highschool sweetheart's prom dress  
she cheated on me with my best friend

Pop's long white pirate beard  
knowing that I am my father's son

the warmth of a whiskey neat  
makes the mind wander on autumn nights

## The Night the Bats Came Out

-Anne Myles

As the bowl of late light quivered  
and deepened toward summer dusk  
I scanned the lake for my parents' boat;  
old enough to be alone, yet always anxious  
about their heedless togetherness.

Behind me stood the shabby dockhouse  
with its tar-paper roof curled over at the edge.  
Within the curl, the chittering of nesting bats.  
Now it seemed to grow louder, insistent,  
drew me closer. Tonight it was time

for the babies to come out. Tonight  
was when everything would change. First one  
dipped and rose into the air, zig-zagging off.  
Then another, another, more, now pouring,  
a waterfall of furred and leathery bodies.

I stood feet away, gripping my elbows.  
My stomach clenched as a mussel shell.  
There was no one else to watch. So many:  
some crawled to the roof before they launched;  
a few dropped to the concrete and lay there stickily.

The air purpled, full of presence.  
There was nothing I could do but watch.  
The nest was empty by the time I heard  
the electric motor purring, and then the torrent  
of thrill and fear and fury as I tried to tell them.

It became another story that we told:  
The Night the Bats Came Out.  
But I only was there alone to see it:  
the ones that lifted upwards toward the trees;  
the ones that fell, splayed helpless on the ground.

## The Fence

-Ed Granger

Front gate where we stood that first  
false dawn before the tree line  
greened into Eden, not suspecting  
what day one would cost – eight  
stitches for my initiation into using  
pruning shears, your grandmother’s ring  
down a bottomless drain, both our  
senses of humor. Soon I’d learn  
to keep my feet far from the blade’s  
startling arc, the worth of a joke  
gleaned from a neighbor.

Those posts slouched with each March  
softening of ground, gaps told where  
something had fought its way out  
or in. I patched as best I could and as my  
bad back allowed, traded forbearance  
for prompt apology. As you’d point out,  
we kept few animals anyway. Yet each time  
the fence line was coaxed to stand and stretch  
again to split the golden hour open  
like a yoke, there came a sense of poise.  
A knowing where was “ours.”

## River Year

-Tony Reeve

The river flows with a slow-slucing sound,  
taking its well-worn mud-path to the sea.  
Meeting Durham's harder-rock ledge, it swerves,  
cuts a new way through less difficult ground.  
In summer here, the still air smells of mold,  
in fall, come softer leaf-steps on the trail.  
In winter, there are brown tree skeletons,  
then, the woodland turns again, to sudden green.

The years flow on to a twice-empty end,  
sister, brother go under the scalpel.  
Still the Eno flows, summer-sewage tinged,  
makes its meander down to the ocean.  
A river otter, the first here in years,  
waits on the bank, whiskers twitching, for fish.

## No Place Like It

-Linda Ferguson

In front of our house is the sidewalk where our children learned to ride their bikes,  
the tree that feeds the winter birds golden crabapples the size of peas,  
the Rose of Sharon that drops faded crepe paper blossoms to the ground.

I can't picture what life was like here before the house was built – Chinook canoe, mud, bark,  
berries, fish, knife? Tears, toothache, sunburn, kiss?

Rumor has it a stream used to flow under here –

beneath 28 years of Christmas parties and property taxes – mortgage paid, lawn mowed,  
leaves raked, door locked,

stories told –

In fairy tales, it's the character who mocks the witch disguised as a beggar who ends up  
screwed, while the one who gives away their last crust of bread gets rewarded with silk,  
crown, land –

When I was a kid, God was a nice old guy with gray hair, body clothed in soft folds of blue  
and white robes that looked like sheets. All he wanted was for us to do the right thing, a.k.a.  
be really nice to everybody –

Yesterday morning I found a man sleeping in our yard. Would the God of my childhood want  
me to invite the man to come inside and use our bathroom? Would the man then want to stay  
for dinner? Would we have to set up a bed for him in the living room, stitch his name on a  
Christmas stocking? *Bleeding hearts overthink everything.*

Is that on a bumper sticker?

Maybe this should be: *Like a ship that's hit an iceberg, the Earth is tilting.*

The rules I learned as a kid apply sometimes, others not. Once I sunk my teeth into apples  
with pesticides in their veins, once I learned in school that everything was fair and equal  
thanks to Reverend King, once I celebrated Thanksgiving without a hint of shame or irony –

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Like a parent with a newborn baby, I find, once again, I know nothing –

In 1857, government troops marched all the indigenous peoples from the area I live in now on to a reservation and decreed the 27 tribes were one. Native kids were told to doff their heathen beads and wear the cottons and wools of good Christians.

Don't believe everything you read:

Three realty websites say our house was built in 1900, but it actually went up in 1890 – the year the Seventh Cavalry Regiment killed – what? 150? 200? 300? (no one kept an actual count) Lakota children, women and men who'd gathered for a ghost dance – holding hands in a circle, seeking a rebirth of tribal life.

The realty sites also say our house has 'central cooling' – not true – unless they mean we have windows? This is true – we do.

G., the man who sold us this house, was a retired professor whose shoulders sloped with the weight of the world – an environmentalist who rode the bus and kept the windows covered year round to conserve fuel – layers of plastic, accordion blinds, and heavy floral curtains over them.

G. was brave, conscientious, self-denying –

I like lying in bed with the curtains open and seeing the oaks that grow in my neighbor's parking strip –

I don't like so much when the windows are open and we can hear a primal bellow, a freak-out of a lone soul that echoes off the darkened walls of the street at two a.m. –

But I love the ribbons of squeals as kids chase each other in a yard or the crack and rumble of a skateboard jumping the curb or the ding-ding-ding of the light rail train stopping at the station just two blocks away –

A closed window will block: the smell of sewers, exhaust, wet dogs, distant forest fires, burnt coffee.

Also: spice of chrysanthemums, petrichor, jasmine, tomato, marigold.

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Chinook houses had no windows. Then again, the Chinook peoples weren't spending hours indoors texting, updating social media, watching TV –

My parents told me to be good (e.g., not to cry, swear, scream, steal, or generally make a fuss).

I want to be good – do good – be as good/conscientious as G. –

G., who made our young son so happy by taking him for a bus ride a few days after my dad died – G., who let our boy chatter away from his window seat –

That first night, after G. gave us the keys to his house – it was so dark in here – like stepping into a cave, an abyss –

Two confessions:

1. Before we unpacked a single box, we started tearing down all of G.'s window coverings.
2. I don't want to be G., with stooped shoulders and a shadowed house and dressed in sensible brown pants.

The Chinook peoples made clothing from the bark of western red cedar – aprons, capes, skirts, coats. Water resistant and also aromatic – not the aroma of Victorian hope chests nor the acrid smell of incense, but a sweet, pleasing scent.

Northwest Coast Indians also made houses and canoes out of western red cedar, which we now use for shingles, lumber, boats, boxes, musical instruments.

My dad always said he wanted to learn to play the piano.

In the months after Dad died, I kept getting up in the night to see if my newly born daughter was still breathing and also to see if the Earth was still beneath my feet –

Then, in autumn, an epiphany –

Sitting at the entrance of a park, transfixed by the glow of October white oaks, I could see it could go either way –

death: the silence of infinity or the reverberation of a Mozart crescendo, only better – beyond imagining –

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no way to tell just now,

and nothing to be done about that –

except, maybe

look up at the sky

and see how it stretches over every ocean and rivulet, over every sidewalk square and hidden trail, every house and tent and church and cabin and office complex, every digital display and dollar sign and moonlit dance, every wagon wheel and barge and truck and freight train and bike, over every string tied to a balloon and every marigold petal on an ofrenda, over every parade and protest, over every resort and unnamed forest and makeshift cabin and melting ice cap, over every fence and fern, over every hermit crab shell and every plastic shovel in the sand, over the indigenous and the immigrants,

over steelhead, gray squirrel, black bear, raccoon, newt, banded sugar ant, possum, red deer, American bison, bat, lemming, antelope, highland midge, mosquito, centipede, sacred cow, Sumatran elephant, impala, hyena, lark, jackdaw, buzzard, dove, golden eagle and Cooper's hawk –

the sky – with its fire, water, soot and salt –

the breath that belongs to us all –

home.