

# The Bond Street Review



Summer  
2018

## From the editors ...

Hey, all, it's Eric writing a solo editorial this time out. We've had the cover image of a much-loved VW Bug for some time now, just sitting in the "images" folder, patiently waiting its turn. I'm a sucker for a visual metaphor and some days, I am positive that we all feel just like that Bug looks – dinged-up and scarred, rusted in spots, maybe convinced that we're well-past our best days. But the thing is this – even knocked around and faded, you can rest assured that that Bug still gets looks, still gets its share of attention, and still has more than its share of fire left in the tank once someone turns the ignition. Given the right circumstances, we all still do.

We hope that this issue ignites you as well and that you're not the least bit shy about sharing the issue and spreading the word far and wide. Hopefully, someone will be glad that you did.

Eric Evans  
& Kathy Sochia,  
Editors

Cover image: Dan Gold / [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com)

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## Dad

by Jim Babwe

Suddenly,  
they were not  
gone for the weekend.

Driveway headlight panic  
and one lucky adrenalin jump  
sailed me over the cactus garden  
adjacent to the open window.

I rode my bicycle  
as fast as I could pedal;  
past Deb's Burgers--  
eventually put out of business  
by a new McDonald's across the street--  
past the Panic Button--  
a dive bar  
where the sign out front promises  
BEER FUN FOOD GIRLS GAMES.

Dressed in my underwear  
(tragic briefs, not boxers)  
I was thankful for summer.

I made record time  
over that 1.5 miles.

I praised night,  
coasted to a stop,  
leaned my bike  
against the apricot tree,  
started to open  
the garage door  
at exactly the same  
time her father  
arrived.

He killed the headlights quickly,  
didn't turn off the engine.

He said,  
Get dressed.  
I'll wait here.

On the way to Thrifty Drug Store,  
he told me he didn't have a dad either,  
and yes he was angry,  
but he said he would get over it.

He said a woman alone  
should not be expected to teach a boy  
what it means to be a man.

Before the days when television commercials  
included the following words--  
flatulence, dysfunction, diarrhea,  
period, and erection--  
he taught me a new vocabulary term  
on the way in to the store.

He showed me where  
to find these important items  
and asked if I had any questions.

I wanted to ask  
him why he wasn't going to kill me,  
but I didn't.

He told me he didn't have a dad either,  
and a mom alone  
should not be expected to teach a boy  
how to be a man.

He asked me if I loved his girl.

The truth was that I did,  
so I said yes--  
and it's still true.

He said,  
Her mother and I love her, too.  
We would never run away from her,  
and neither should you.

## Dysautonomia

By Michael H. Brownstein

--for KJ, the dog from the shelter

I do not own any talent  
nor do I know how to pronounce the disease our dog has  
and when I breathe the air she breathes, I cough in tantrums.  
If you offer me this job, I will work hard,  
I have lived long and know hard labor.  
Each morning, I lift her from her bed  
carry her outside into the sunlight,  
never waking anyone else in the household.  
I don't know if she wants to walk  
her hind legs stiff, no longer able to feel pain.  
I scrub the floor where she sleeps.  
She has a new habit of vomiting liters of urine  
always waking lighter after she rests.  
I can carry her long distances more easily now and I do  
rehabilitating her with familiar scenery she no longer knows.  
She is hardly ever responsive,  
and though she understands an instinct for water,  
I must put the water to her mouth and stay with her.  
Water gives life, but it also kills.  
When she finishes, she rests her face deeper into the bowl.  
A few times she almost drowns.  
Her stomach barks, she sighs through her nose,  
and when her mouth opens, she honks  
the caw of a murder of crows, a skewed foghorn.  
I clean her off and keep her warm.  
The children ask why isn't she playful and frantic anymore.  
This is a question I cannot answer.  
She is a stuffed animal with a heartbeat,  
nothing more.  
If you give me this job, I will work hard.  
I have the work ethic of the old ones.  
Loyalty is not a matter taken lightly.  
I believe this is something you too understand.

### What he said

By Marietta Calvanico

You told me that  
we all have moments of  
quiet desperation

Thoreau  
said that about  
life unfulfilled but

just so you know  
my desperation  
isn't quiet

in fact  
it's very  
fucking loud

at 3 AM  
while you sleep deeply and  
I'm stuck with

the din in  
my head  
I think

to myself what  
if I did what  
if I didn't?



**all these years of hatred**

by J.J. Campbell

it's the dead  
skin

the eyes of a  
beautiful soul

the hands across  
a neck that awaits  
to die

i have nightmares  
my father is going  
to rise from his  
grave and apologize  
to me

all these years of  
hatred taken away  
from me by the  
bastard who forgot  
to remember i  
existed for the  
last twenty years

sadly,  
my nightmares  
usually come  
true

**as long as i have lived in the place**

by J.J. Campbell

progress is loud  
and messy

at least that's what  
i am telling myself  
as i look around  
a room that hasn't  
been cleaned in  
as long as i have  
lived in the place

of course, i can  
convince myself  
of any lie as long  
as i can really  
believe it

like poet for a  
career

you're not really  
obese

someone will want  
those baseball cards  
one day

and the woman  
of your dreams  
is around the  
next corner

trust me

## **At The Stop**

By Holly Day

I take the dog out to the bus stop to wait  
for my daughter to come home from school. One of the other mothers  
has driven to the bus stop, and she sits in her car with the windows rolled up  
maybe she's listening to music, or just enjoying the quiet.

The dog starts digging at something and I push at her with my foot  
make her stop, this isn't her yard. She sits down and wags her tail  
pushes against my leg for comfort. I pet her large, blocky head  
tell her the bus is coming soon.

I look up and see the woman in the car  
is watching me, I think. She's wearing mirrored sunglasses  
and I can't tell if she's watching me or just fallen asleep  
her head pressed against the window, jaw slightly open as though  
something I'm doing is really interesting, or maybe  
she's just slipped into a coma or she's dead.

The school bus pulls up and I wait to see if the woman moves  
if I have to carefully walk her daughter to the car to see what's wrong  
if I have to brace her little girl with the horrible news that her mother  
has just died, right there, sitting in the car while waiting for her to come home.  
and how wonderful would that be, I think, as I see the woman straighten up  
unlock the doors of her car with a noisy "click", to be able to say

you were such a devoted mother that even though you knew  
deep in your heart that something was physically wrong, that you  
should probably go to the doctor instead of the bus stop, that even so  
you still drove your car the two blocks to the bus stop to wait  
for the bus to pull up and end your day.

## **Rabat**

By John Grey

We slip down side streets and into a large bazaar.  
With hundreds of traders with goods on show,  
our presence is suddenly not our own.

So many rugs, so many blankets.  
are unfolded before us,  
we feel like royalty until we hear the asking price.

We're not in the mood for wooden chess sets,  
or fake gold bracelets or strange fruits smothered in flies.  
We're a little lost that's all.

An old woman in gray sits on a stoop  
fanning herself with a newspaper.  
She points a photograph in our direction.

"My boy", she says. "He's in Paris.  
He could welcome you warmly if he was here."  
The one thing given away for free in the entire marketplace

is her son's warm smile when the camera is pointed at him.  
Then, for a dollar, a boy points the way back to our hotel.  
Somehow that makes us even on the day.

## **Lover Boy**

By John Grey

As a reputed professional,  
he has developed a number  
of virtuoso procedures  
when approaching women.

His most recent  
technical innovation  
involves his way  
of bypassing  
the ordinary eye-contact

for something involving  
the full range  
of the inner being's capabilities,  
especially the mind,  
the tongue of course,  
even the heart when necessary.

His most recent successes  
have also involved the exchange of money.  
His failures often take the form  
of a redefinition of failure.

## The Man Who Longed To Fly

By John Grey

Allow me world,  
the aerodynamics that elude me,  
the wide spread wings  
that can conquer the air.

And why can't I cheer up  
the one child crying.  
even if it's me.  
at age seven.  
after a takeoff from a fence  
that cracked three ribs.

Look at the sky.  
Why put it there  
if my outstretched hands  
can't touch it.  
if my leaps fall  
painfully short.

Look at the boy  
as he scrapes  
himself off the ground  
and not for the last time.  
I need to rush in.  
tell that poor soul  
that gravity is  
stacked against him.

So allow me world.  
some reward for the bruises.  
the blundering dreams.  
devastated hopes -  
all those enemies  
of levitation.

And now. they tell me  
the last journey I ever undertake  
will take me six feet under.  
Nothing to do with me, of course.  
Purely irony's doing.

### **Baptizing the Dead**

By Robert S. King

Graveside ceremonies make heaven rain.  
Umbrellas leak and flap like wings in the wind.  
Drowning, they give thanks for the downpour  
of holy water even as faith gasps for air.

A voice chokes on sorrow but defines the fate:  
*How lucky to die when your soul is saved;*  
*he is glory-bound already.*

The thundering night flashes other possibilities  
on the wake of mourners gathered to praise his afterlife.  
They huddle inside the house the dead abandoned,  
their vigil candles sputtering from drafts chilling them  
to the bones, from leaks in the roof under whose mercy  
they take communion with their faith and fate.



## In the Living Room of the Dead

By Robert S. King

Now a coffin is your open house.  
  invites  
flea market bargainners, mourners,  
  house hunters  
the living room like leaves  
lifted by your fall.

## Standing In The Queue

By Matt Morris

outside the sandwich shop, I'm  
trying to decide what  
I want: turkey & ham? roast  
beef? Italian?

                    In the news,  
the president, out  
to dinner with foreign dig-  
nitaries, orders  
drone strikes on Yemeni towns.  
How'd *that* get on the menu?

A scruffy looking  
guy about my age wanders  
up the block, asking  
everyone for spare change. He  
says he hasn't had a bite  
in days.

                    To avoid  
eye contact, I read about  
the statue being  
built to honor a beloved  
actor, recently passed, who'd  
starred in war movies  
that grossed grotesque profits  
for the studio.

So much money, yet hungry,  
homeless people. I guess it's  
left to me, lunching  
between two, now three, part-time  
jobs, barely eking  
out a living for myself,  
to provide for the poor. So,  
of course, I bite him.

## Perseus

By Matt Morris

wore the magic shoes he'd found at the army surplus store for fifteen bucks to the get-together. They weren't really magic, but imitation

leather with what looked like wings engraved on the sides. The laces, made of the same waxy orange faux leather, looked cool, but they kept coming undone, so "wacky"

Perseus left them untied, dangerously dangling like the tentacles of strange beasts from the deep. When he met Medusa, a tall glass of cabernet

shimmering in her hand, she knelt, without so much as a *would-you-look-at-that*, at his feet to tie his shoes, her glistening locks curling around her shoulders,

slithering down her breasts. His red cocktail wiener oozed a spicy marinade from its lanceolate toothpick, bleeding through the thin paper plate that  
teetered with

gorgonzola chunks & black sesame crackers on his lap as he grew hard, so he dared not move. She sized him up in one look—a long, stony gaze.

Luckily, he'd come prepared with protection tucked inside either shoe. Ashtrays of smoldering butts later, Perseus, watching in the motel mirror while

Medusa slept, zipped up his pants, slipped on his shoes, tip-toed to the bed, then in a single motion, whipped the cover down & lopped off the Gorgon's head.

## **Heatwave**

By Matt Morris

Days echo days, each  
begging the question of how  
long before I drop  
like a grocery sack, broken  
eggs frying on the pavement.

Last night, I nearly  
drove my rust red Mercury  
off a cliff, trying  
like a teenager steering  
with his cock just to be cool.

## **Fistful Of Nothing**

By Matt Morris

Day after day,  
you mouse through  
the cramped cubicles'  
maze to collect your reward

at the end of the week, but  
it's always the same  
hard cheese.

Never enough to  
buy yourself a piece  
of the dream,  
although for five  
easy payments,  
guarantees

the disembodied  
voice booming in your earbuds,  
the latest gewgaw

to set you free can be yours.  
It's a trap,  
stupid,  
a trick,  
the old bait & switch.

Freedom is an exotic dancer  
at a private club  
who'll never go home with you

no matter how much cheddar  
you stuff down her thong.  
It's all show –  
like eyeglasses

without lenses.

Still  
they make you look smart,  
as if  
you know you're alive & why.

### **Sate on Crayfish**

By Keith Moul

The northern dominates its lake, makes no claim  
regarding its pike attributes of length and weight.  
See it in your boat, never to yield, testing the line,  
testing the net, testing the fisher with a might  
to excite memories lodged forever in the viscera.

The sunny look, the dusky look illuminates its spots  
like searchlights from inside, burst from its engine.

Return this siren to the cold deep. Revere its home.  
Take your craft to another spot clear and reserved  
to the long face, the muskellunge sated on crayfish.

## **Reading**

by Tim Pilgrim

Famous writers feast on it --  
drift in at the last moment,

flowing print dress or tweed jacket,  
wrinkled shirt, hair a mess.

At the podium, they smile kindly,  
offer excuses for being late --

stopped to watch a clock tower burn,  
heard it chime out in fright,

saw blackened doves take flight.  
They reach into purse, ragged pack,

paper bag, finally bring out  
a new volume of their work.

The moment may be near --  
first, search pockets for glasses,

ask for water, room temp, no ice.  
Adjust microphone, tap it, say

the book is for sale afterward --  
at last, begin reading. Slowly,

they mouth each word as if  
it were the round nub

of a chicken bone. They suck out  
every last bit of marrow.



## **Contributors**

**Jim Babwe** is a native Californian who lives in Encinitas. Compared to most of the rest of the United States, the weather is almost perfect there and he appreciates that fact. But he is a longtime San Diego Padres fan, and in some ways, that state of affairs compromises the benefits of the good weather with severe, on-going disappointment. The team's won/lost record is about 600 games below the .500 mark since they entered the National League in 1969. Usually, Jim is an optimist, but he's not really optimistic about the Padres going undefeated for three consecutive seasons so they can even up their lifetime won/lost record. He embraces denial as an important survival skill.

**Michael H. Brownstein** has been widely published throughout the small and literary presses. His work has appeared in *The Café Review*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Skidrow Penthouse*, *Xavier Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Free Lunch*, *Meridian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, *Bond Street Review*, *The Pacific Review*, *Poetrysuperhighway.com* and others. In addition, he has nine poetry chapbooks including *The Possibility of Sky and Hell: From My Suicide Book* and *The Katy Trail*, *Mid-Missouri*, *100 Degrees Outside and Other Poems*. He is the editor of *First Poems from Viet Nam* and head administrator for Project Agent Orange ([projectagentorange.com](http://projectagentorange.com)).

**Marietta Calvanico** lives in Staten Island, NY. After spending a bit more than two decades in advertising/marketing, she now works with her architect husband and has been able to devote more time to writing and music. Her poetry, short fiction and non-fiction have appeared in print publications and on line.

**J.J. Campbell** was raised by wolves and is currently trapped in suburbia. He's been widely published over the years, most recently at *Misfit Magazine*, *The Beatnik Cowboy*, *Mad Swirl*, *Synchronized Chaos* and *Dodging the Rain*. His latest chapbook, *the taste of blood on christmas morning*, was recently published by Analog Submission Press. You can find him most days on his mildly entertaining blog, *evil delights*. (<http://evildelights.blogspot.com>).

**Holly Day** has taught writing classes at the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, since 2000. Her poetry has recently appeared in *Tampa Review*, *SLAB*, and *Gargoyle*, and her published books include *Walking Twin Cities*, *Music Theory for Dummies*, and *Ugly Girl*.

**John Grey** is an Australian poet, US resident. Recently published in the *Tau*, *Studio One* and *Columbia Review* with work upcoming in *Leading Edge*, *Examined Life Journal* and *Midwest Quarterly*.

**Robert S. King** lives in Athens, GA, where he serves on the board of FutureCycle Press and edits the literary journal *Good Works Review*. His poems have appeared in hundreds of magazines, including *Atlanta Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Chariton Review*, *Hollins Critic*, *Kenyon Review*, *Main Street Rag*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Negative Capability*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and *Spoon River Poetry Review*. He has published eight poetry collections, most recently *Diary of the Last Person on Earth* and *Developing a Photograph of God*. His personal website is [www.robertsking.info](http://www.robertsking.info).

**Matt Morris** is the author of *Nearing Narcoma*, winner of the Main Street Press Poetry Book Award, and *Walking in Chicago with a Suitcase in My Hand*, published by Knut House Press. His work has appeared in various magazines and anthologies, such as *DMQ*, *88*, *Hunger Mountain*, *New York Quarterly*, and *Runes*.

**Keith Moul's** poems and photos are published widely. In August, 2017, Aldrich Press released *Not on Any Map*, a collection of earlier poems. These poems are from a new work about prairie life through U.S. history, including regional trials, character, and attachment to the land. They are collected now in *Voices beneath the Winds*, seeking a publisher.

**Timothy Pilgrim**, Bellingham, Washington, is a Pacific Northwest poet with several hundred acceptances from journals like *Seattle Review*, *Third Wednesday*, *Windsor Review*, *Convergence*, *Windfall* and *Toasted Cheese*. He is author of *Mapping Water*. His work can be found at [timothypilgrim.org](http://timothypilgrim.org).

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