Waterways

Poetry in the Mainstream



October, 2022 Volume 43 No. 4



Poetry in the Mainstream Volume 43 Number 4

when we merged the books...
your books
and my books
on the shelves

excerpted from "Partners" by Barbara Fisher

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Volume 43 Number 4

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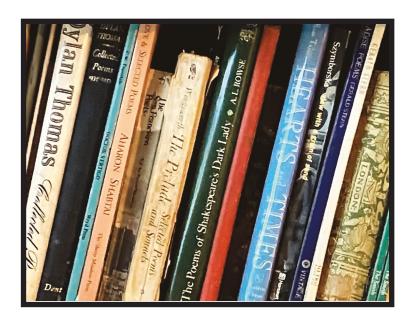
contents

William Corner Clarke	4
Marilyn Braendeholm	7
Jane Stuart	8
Irene T. Winslow	10
James Penha	12
Charles Rammelkamp	15
Gilbert Honigfeld	17
Colin Ian Jeffery	16

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Remainders

Despite the perfect bliss Of modern life There are still books Of pain and tragedy Lying beneath the surface Of passing time Some, no doubt, in hiding In old bookshops Down shadowed alleyways Or tossed on vacant lots Abandoned to rats Rags and weeds Some may be hard to lift From all the weight Of wasted words Piled on the few that made The effort seem worthwhile Others barely existing Between their faded covers Thin pages of tortured minds Often made unreadable By mildew, rain or alcohol

One or two may include The vanity of prologues To justify the telling Of old misfortunes As such these works Hold no intrinsic value For a healthy reader But yet they may still Be of interest to others Way beyond the pale The deviants Clustered Round the borders The dark collectors Of dead souls Passing in disguise Among the city's crowds



The Bookcase

When I dream, I write it down. He says he never dreams, but the bookcase says otherwise. His side, which is the right side, is filled with folded road maps.

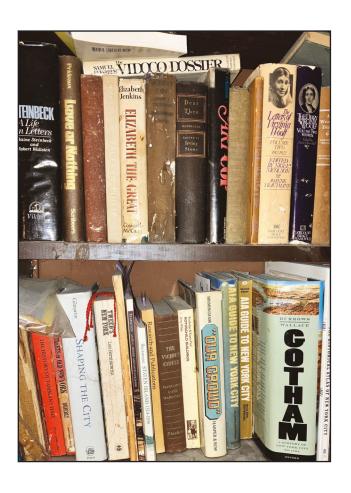
He dreams of being as carefree as a river chasing the horizon. He'd cut a pale line of air as he drove through Norway and Denmark. Germany. France.

I am the books on the left side. I write life into words and lines. Gardening, cookery, history. Oxford Dictionary, its spine disjointed, cracked from age.

He's on the right. He is Taurus in a china shop, and claims to never dream. I'm on the left. My books are alphabetised. Me, I am always dreaming.

Scrimmage

Our books were happy they belonged together on a shelf you found in the mercato. Addis Ababa, 1969. There was mud on your shoe, dust on your hands and I was busy trimming away old lining—perhaps where she wrote her name and flattening the covers. But the books were happy, full of sunshine and the smell of spices. Years later, the long row of philosophy and mysteries collapsed. I kept an algebra but you didn't want the books, our books, my books, the together-love we kept on your shelf.



Irene T. Winslow

Merged Books

Rebecca Frankenstein

Hawaii

The Hotel New Hampshire

Conversations with McCartney
Interview with the Vampire

Half Moon Street The Sun Also Rises

The Winter Garden
Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil

Desert Heat In Cold Blood

The Five People You Meet in Heaven Slaughterhouse-Five

Great Expectations Requiem for a Dream

Murder on the Orient Express

Trainspotting

Sense and Sensibility

American Psycho

The Hotel New Hampshire Frankenstein with the Vampire with McCartney Rebecca Conversations Hawaii Interview The Winter Garden the Garden of Good and Evil The Sun Also Rises IN COLD BLOOD Half Moon Street **Desert Heat** Middnight in Requiem for a Dream Sense and Sensibility Great Expectations American Psycho Slaughter House Five The 5 People in Heaven You Meet Trainspotting

Murder on the Orient Express

Concurrence

My brother fighting a second round of cancer had fallen at his home from the chemo? we didn't quite know

His wife, my sister-in-law-and-love needed relief from pain caused by her ongoing spinal reconstruction

My brother was hospitalized on Tuesday.

His wife was hospitalized on Wednesday.

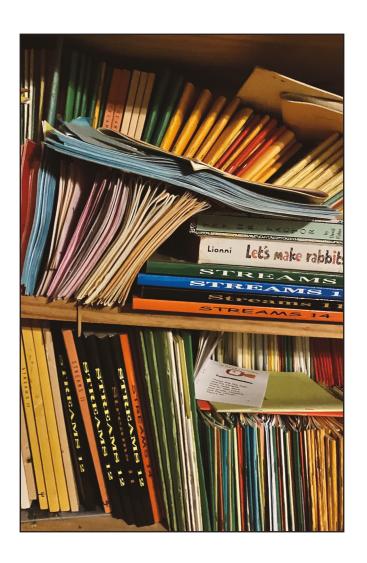
On Thursday as their gurneys bumped when nurses wheeled them onto an elevator, they raised their heads, saw each other,

and laughed

and laughed.

and laughed





Charles Rammelkamp

Ballaboosta

Bubbe always said her mama was an earner, not a learner, when we asked

about her business.

What was I when her mother died? Five? Six? She supported the family while Bubbe's Abba studied Torah.

That's all I knew about her jazz age career in New York City. "She'd come to America from a shtetl near Pinsk in Belarus.

"She had a really good head for math,"
Bubbe remembered, "and she didn't take crap
from anyone. She kept scrupulous books."

But what did she do?

"It was the beginning of Prohibition,"
Bubbe recalled. "Bootlegging had exploded
like you wouldn't believe, money
flowing like a river through the underworld.
A Mister Montana set Mama up in business
across the street

from the Columbia University library; it was a great location."

"So she could study, too?"

"It was a great location," Bubbe repeated.

"Upper West Side.

Members of the Algonquin Round Table
were regulars,
so were Walter Winchell and Harold Ross.

None of these machers would have been
caught dead
going to a working-class saloon.

Mama ran a glamorous place."

"Yes, that's one word for it,"
Bubbe nodded, evasive.
Then she changed the subject.
Later, when I heard the term
"houses of ill-repute,"
I connected the dots.

[&]quot;She ran a speakeasy?"

A Poor Man Named Rich

If ever there was an exception to the rule of nominal determinism, it had to be Rich, a man forever down at his heels in handmedown Keds and rumpled wool cardigans from an earlier era picked up for pennies on the dollar at Goodwill or Salvation Army, but for Rich fashion's not king as long as he can hang out reading books new and old at the Free Public Library and never have to work another day.

Gilbert Honigfeld

The I.R.S. Card

When he left the first wife and married his company's bookkeeper he never, ever figured there'd be a third wife one day, but after a couple of kids and a dog and a cat, a guy looks for a little action and one thing leads to another and yeah, yeah you've heard this story before.

The twist here is all about the alimony payments in the settlement with the mother of his kids, and how they've got to be there on-time like clockwork first of the month every month until the kids are 30, yes 30, and all because she's got copies of the company books, the real books, and if he's late or if he's short she'll be on the phone with you know who at the I.R.S.

Colin Ian Jeffery

Tomorrow

Tomorrow will be a better world
With peace and happiness
Goodness of heart towards all
Without fear for colour, creed, or religion.

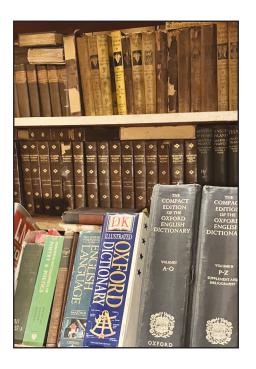
There will be sunshine and love
With children safe at play
People rejoicing as a united family
Stewards trusted with the blue planet.

Colin Ian Jeffery

She who gave life purpose

She who gave life purpose Took my heart by storm Made my Muse sing loud Bathed my soul with love.

She gives each day meaning Enhancing every minute Banishing the darkness Giving light showing me the way.



Our Geography of Poets

Bali James Penha

KentuckyJane Stuart

Maryland Charles Rammelkamp

New Jersey Gilbert Honigfeld

Ohio Irene T. Winslow

SurreyColin Ian Jeffery

Virginia William Corner Clarke

West Sussex Marilyn Braendeholm

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