

miniMAG

issue132

dead dog poems





This dog bites!

Trinity Branscome

I'm a bad dog
I try so hard to be good
I wag my tail to show how friendly I am
I sit when I'm told
I can even shake your hand

I'm a bad dog
I get stressed when you leave me for too long
I bark when you don't pay attention
I gnaw at the bars in my kennel
And sometimes I even bite

I don't understand your words
You can tell me you love me
You can call me a good girl
You can tell me how pretty I am
But unless you hold me tight I won't feel it

And I'm sorry for not being better
I don't know any tricks
I don't know why you don't want me to bark
I just want to be heard
I just want you to understand

I'm a bad dog
This cage is cold and unfeeling
I have tumors and growths that ooze
My paws are infected and my teeth are rotting
And I'll bite if you get too close.



The Goodbye Quiet

Kit Thurston-Mathews

We walked further into the garden, the light of the house disappearing in the way a memory disappears, slowly, pushed to the recesses of the mind. I stepped tentatively through the grass, afraid of tripping on something I could not see, but George strode on as he always did; languid, confident in the space around him. We reached the back gate in a near black dark, relying only on the muscle memory of the latch to get us through. Beyond was a rough decline.

‘Kamil,’ George said softly. He clicked on a small penlight, aiming the narrow shaft of light at the ground. ‘Do you remember the way?’ he asked. I shook my head.

‘Keep close to me, then.’

The wind was warm against my skin, the gentle rush of noise soothing in the silence of the trees. I had tripped once on the way down, a rock striking my shin as I thudded into George. He braced both our falls against a tree to his left. ‘You okay?’

‘Yeah,’ I replied. ‘I’m okay. Sorry.’

‘Just hold on to me, in case you fall again.’

Now on the path, he kept me in his sights, striking the light on the ground in waving motions, the shadows of rocks and soil dancing

under our feet. At the wooden post—one that once bore a sign, but not for a long time now—we turned back into brush.

‘The moon was out the first time we came here.’ George said. A neutral fact, comforting in its simplicity, and it spurred me on. I didn’t realise we had come to our destination until George stopped, holding an arm out against my chest. We stood back from the precipice of a hill, where just beyond a bench sat crooked in the dirt, washed in the gentle glow of streetlights far below. Both of us were still; afraid to spook each other, maybe. Afraid to spook the feeling the place once elicited in us. I moved for the bench first, the rotted wood sagging a little under my weight. After a moment George followed suit, tucking the penlight into his pocket as he sat down. We watched over the houses and streets, the pinpricks of people walking through, most of them solitary. A car’s headlights occasionally traced the roads in a yellow gleam.

‘It’s so open here,’ I murmured.

‘I got scared the first time I sat here,’ George said. ‘At first it was like everyone in the world could see me. And then I realised none of them could.’

I paused, my chest tightening in anticipation. Of what exactly, I did not know. ‘Do you think about what happened a lot?’ I asked.

He glanced to me briefly before setting his gaze back ahead. ‘I don’t.’ Then, to correct his bluntness, ‘I’m glad it happened, and I miss you when I do think about it, but I don’t think about it often.’

I pulled a leg up to my chest, hugging it, my chin propped on the kneecap. ‘Why did you bring me here?’

‘You said it yourself, in a way. Because you think about it a lot.’

‘Don’t.’

‘I’m not trying to take the piss.’

‘I just..’ I ran a hand over my face. ‘I just feel stupid.’

‘Why?’

‘Because our kiss lasted less than a few seconds and I still think about it a decade later.’

‘Even if it didn’t last does that mean there was little?’

I looked at him properly then, turning in my seat until I faced him completely. ‘What’s he like?’

George smiled a little. ‘You don’t really want to know.’

‘No,’ I agreed, turning back to the view. ‘No, I don’t.’

‘You are kind, Kamil. And I learned to be kind through you.’ George put a hand on mine, softly, without thought. The most meaningful things he did were often without thought. He had an instinct for it.

We sat in a sad sort of quiet, the goodbye kind, before turning back for the party in mutual unspoken agreement. I didn’t see him the rest of the night, and left earlier than most.



DEAR BEST FRIEND

John Grey

I believe a fish is looking up at me
I dog-paddle in your blood stream,
I don't go along with it.
I plan on leaving.
but I have to wait.
So I toss a stick in your direction.
I mean it. But I am the only one.
I mean it. I'll trade you two of my women
if you give me my stick back.

The Animal Shelter

Naroi Hart

I feel like a dying dog thrown on the streets
that's been living like this for years.
Rabid and hopeless and infested with disease
I hope someone will just tell their kids to close their eyes and cover their ears
And put me out of my misery

Nobody is going to pry me out of this crime scene
That is my body.
I didn't ask to exist
but being stripped from it
Is my decision.

So before I know it
I shakily press my hand against a cold plastic lid
staring at a handful of boluses.

And I lie on the bathroom floor drenched in sweat
the tiles up against my head
the burning in my abdomen
and my vision slowly fading
as I lie there waiting
and waiting
and I wait.
Then suddenly I'm awake.

When I was a kid I felt like I wasn't supposed to be
sitting on the couch in front of a TV
ten minutes past my bedtime.
I had that same feeling simply for being alive.
It's four years past my bedtime
I wasn't supposed to survive
but I still opened my eyes
It's up to me to find out why.



Delulu

Celestine Isleanor

Your smile is a labyrinth—I get lost in it, and I refuse to find my way out. Your mere beam can lift me high up, far from the thorny grasps of sorrow and hurt.

Your quips and banters are candlelight in the gloomy tunnels that trap me. I live those moments constantly in my head, and wonder, in awe, how such little things can illuminate such a void heart.

Your talent soars higher than the city buildings. My eyes widen in admiration as your fingers dance on the piano keys. Audiences go silent in reverence to the enchanting art you create so masterfully, and the adoration I feel when I watch you perform is prodigious.

When I talk to you, I feel seen in the darkest nights, heard in the noisiest throngs. I revel in the confidence you instil in me, and there is never a lonely moment when I'm around you.

Thinking about you is like breathing to me now. But when I see you around, it takes my breath away.

“Be careful. The same person that makes your heart race might make your heart shatter.”

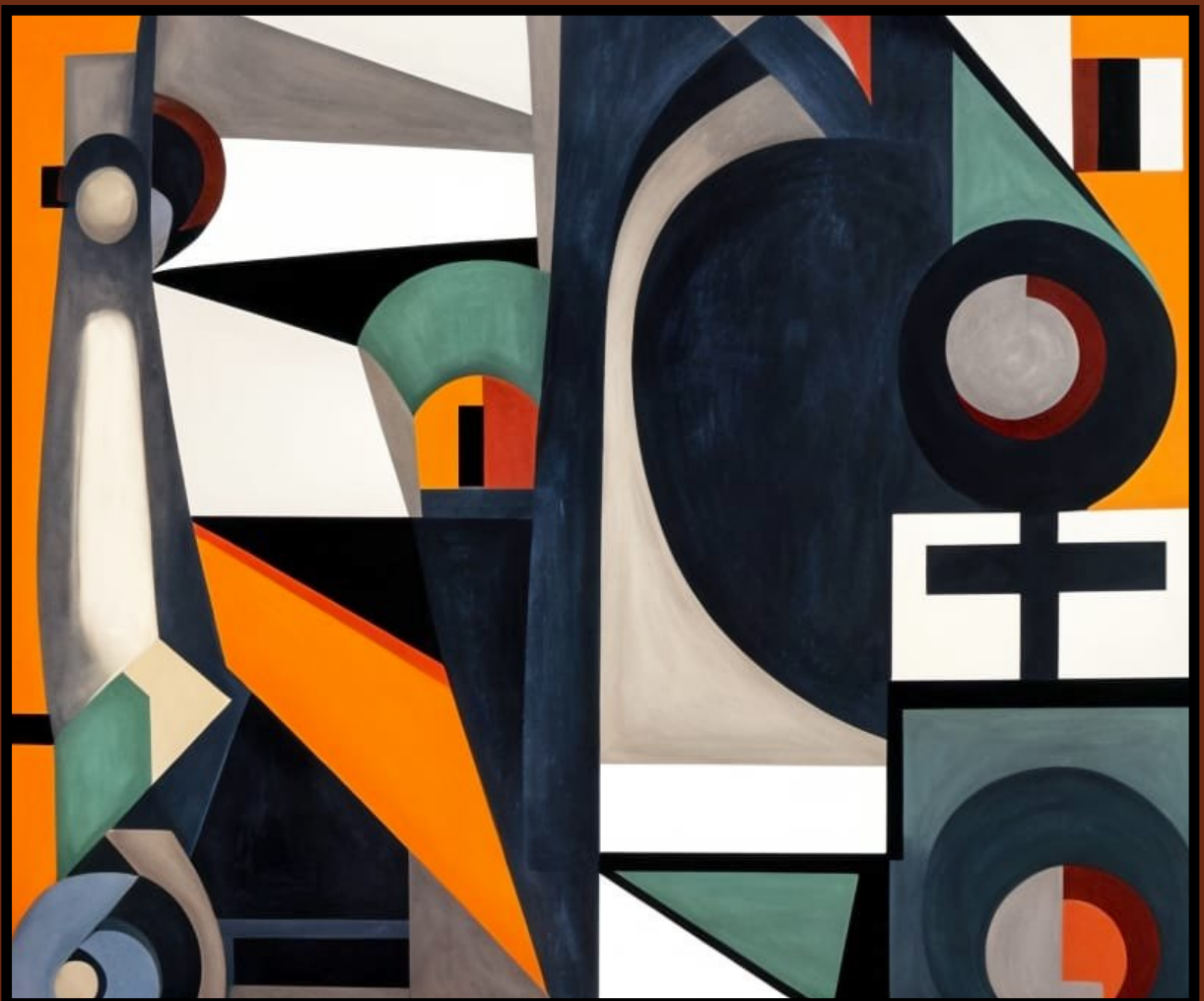
They say your smile is a deceitful mask, concealing the etches of distaste on your face. They warn me to pull myself out of your hypnotising charm that disguises wickedness.

They believe your jokes are a veil, where underneath lie sneers and jibes left unsaid. They stress that your tongue has the ability to slice deeper than knives.

They tell me you're impolite to all those you share the stage with, that your complacency makes you a loathed man. They advise me to never learn from you.

And they gossip that you never listen to me, because your interests lie... with someone else.

And I defend you, all the time, because I have made you my reason to get out of bed, dress up, clean up, and work harder. But, an anxious thought gnaws at the edge of my mind, begging for attention: what if you turn out to be just like what everyone else says?





Cain-nine

Anakin Cash

One dog gets left behind
Stuck at his only home
Little more than shelter from the rain

Two dogs backed into the corner
One is getting a little faulty

He's reaching with all he has
Teeth sinking into the dark nothing
Just his echoes

One dog stands alone
He knows that it is his fault
He bites

The fear and anger
Stuck inside him
Draining him
Nothing more than parasites

Sometimes they look at him and think
He's probably got little too much of Cain

Two dogs back into the corner
No one told him it wasn't his fault

He is reaching with all he has
They are pulling away with all their might
Teeth sink into a purposeful dark

They were hidden behind a mask
Chasing him around and around
Cornered the dog and cried wolf when he bit

Sometimes he looks at them and thinks
Cornered dogs bite



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Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/dietbepis>

“The Goodbye Quiet” by Kit Thurston-Mathews
Insta: @kitduke04

“DEAR BEST FRIEND” by John Grey
Book: [Between Two Fires](#)

“Cain-nine” by Anakin Cash
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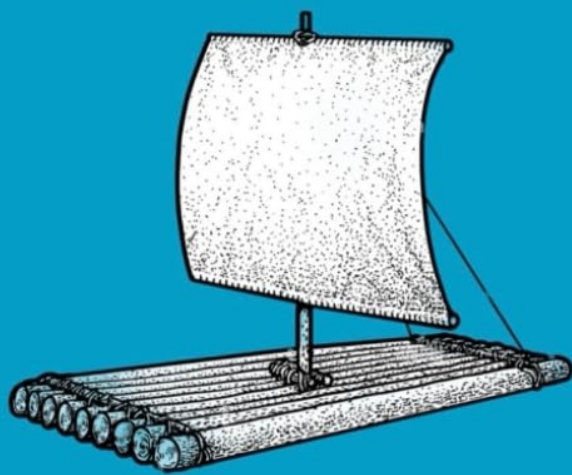
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