





Lady Macbeth makes a stand in a suburban kitchen

Zoe Davis

Beads of sugar
forged like buckshot sweating

hands covered in jam
from the maslin pan

this sweet tooth
was chipped on lies

but gets things
done

saccharine smile
stuffed-crust delicious

rumour I am loading the rolling pin
shotgun BLAM BLAM
not your chuck chuck now
am I?

Another Paradox

Richard LeDue

How many poems are enough?
The answer is that there's
too much now-
the greatest doomed
to be photocopies of photocopies
in some high school classroom,
while the worse languish
in notebooks on dusty shelves
or in overcrowded drawers,
next to dead batteries,
yet somehow we want
more.



Stacking Blocks

Jean Liew

Block by block, I stacked my life up
I observed in years, these counting squares
If you follow that line
If you follow that line, you'd find:
A pocket full of strawberry candies,
And colorful cloth rings (filched),
Elmer's glue colored pink with paper,
The thud of jump ropes on rubber,
A maypole, a line dance, do-si-do,
Pizza squares, a helicopter landing,
Lines from Charles Swindell.
If the wand bends a bit
You can take it apart or rearrange:
The time they told you wouldn't succeed,
Or is it the Fuddrucker's sandwiches?
Or do you remove that one
In order to excise the meaning and memory,
Replace it with another cheer in the stands,
Sleepovers with Dance Dance Revolution,
Movie premieres and toilet paper in trees?
But you lose some of the colors behind the couch
Maybe rediscovered again later, like cat toys.
At the tower's top – is that now?
Is that still to come?

Field Trip to the Aquarium

Sophie Ryan

Dedicated to Elm Class

Before we even get there, the kids are already tired. It's ten in the morning, and the worst thing we've done is make them walk to the tube station. They collapse into any open seats they can find on the District Line and bombard the other teachers and me with an endless chorus of are we there yet? Still, when the train comes above ground, and they stare out at the sunny day in awe, it's impossible not to smile. I point to the station art on the Gloucester Road platform, and they all turn around in their chairs to get a better look. They dot the traincar with their vibrant red hi-vis vests and their loud conversations. My backpack carries no belongings of my own; instead, it's filled to the brim with my students' water bottles, nectarines for their snack time, and baby wipes to clean their inevitably messy faces. They play with my keychains that dangle off my bag's zippers.

When we get inside the aquarium, I hold two different sweaty hands, guiding them from tank to tank. Most of them squeal in fear when we have to walk over a bridge above the shark tank, but one girl, the smallest out of all of them, skips across it with glee. She giggles in such an intense way that it scrunches up her nose completely, causing

her glasses to move around. After she's across, she gives herself a round of applause.

When we got to the penguins, the air had gone cold, and all the kids asked for their coats, even though we didn't bring them. I can't stop staring at the enclosure, the walls painted to look like a sea of icebergs. The penguins huddled against it, staring off into a void that isn't there, a suggestion of wide open space that was nothing more than pictures on plaster. I felt wrong. It was only made a bit better by seeing the utter delight on my students' faces as the flightless birds bobbed and swam in the water, their round bellies keeping them buoyant. We lifted up the really small ones so they could see over the tall heads of the other visitors.

After we had seen everything, we took them to eat their packed lunches in Jubilee Gardens. A stone's throw away, a man sang and played his guitar with a tip jar at his feet. The kids danced along to his strumming as they ate bananas and tore into triangular-shaped paper sandwich packages. One of them dug into his pocket and found a rogue coin. He asked us very politely if he could give it to the man, because he really liked hearing his music. We obliged. I looked at their faces, illuminated in a rare bit of late-March sunshine. All the things I take for granted, all the little moments of life that seem commonplace or mundane; they find so much joy and newness in them. I took their banana peels to the bin and watched as they turned the slight incline of the low railing we'd been sitting on into a slide, each of them taking turns to slowly travel down it.

It was time to head back to school, and one of the students demanded I carry her back over Westminster Bridge on my back. *No can do, kiddo*. She huffed and dragged her feet the whole way to the station, sipping a box of apple juice she'd smuggled from home. As we crossed over the Thames, they pointed at the gimmicky sightseeing boats and said *that looks like fun!* The wind whipped their messy hair around their faces as they weaved around slow-walking tourists, already competent and assured little members of the London public. When we finally got on a train heading west, I watched as members of the usually gruff and selfish public willingly and quickly got up to offer the kids seats. The students and teachers alike were drained. One of my kids rested her head against my arm and fell asleep within the span of five seconds. Their little faces were worn, but entirely content. There are days at my job that make me go home and immediately burst into tears because of how drained I am. There are days when I feel guilty because we don't have enough people, money, and time to give them exactly

what they need to thrive. But then we have warm, perfect days where they just get to be kids. And I get to see the world that's been so hardened in my eyes crack open and get the tiniest bit nicer.





Among Cultures

Jan Wiezorek

Between the headdress and the skull,
between the Madonna and maze,
between the shelf and the floor,
you take pictures that do not
belong to you. You disobey
the onion-skin sign that sings: *No
photos*. And yet, how can you not
capture the Claymation that is not
yours? How can you not stand
between these lay-me-down markers
and not accept them? How can
you not hold the hole in the skull
of gratitude and call it your very own?

Then, I thought of the guitar
resting here—that big sound hole
that belongs to everyone who loves
voice of word, music, excitement,
celebration, wildcats. I wrap my hands
around it and feel puzzles of centuries
move through this goodness. It's not
just one culture, but many—and
somewhere, it finds me hoping,
right here, that this nation's corn
and poppies will grow upright,
higher than all the floors
and the shelves of me.

IF YOU LIKE IT

Stephen Philip Druce

Don't ever let them
tell you that the delta
blues is dated,
that rock n' roll has
took its toll and
twelve bar's overrated,

don't ever let them
tell you that the punks
can't sing or play,
that disco sucks and
soul's for shmucks and
Motown's had its day,

don't ever let them
tell you that your
classical is boring,
that funk has sunk
and jazz is junk
and folk will
leave you snoring,

don't ever let them
tell you that your
heavy rock's too loud,
that rockabilly's silly -
psychedelic's too profound,

don't ever let them
tell you that your
techno's artificial,
that reggae's lame
and on the wane
and pop is superficial,

don't ever let them
tell you that your
drum and bass is draining,
that gospel's dead -
that metal shred and
drill's not entertaining,

don't ever let them
tell you that your
gothic sound is gloomy,
that rap expunged
and grunge has plunged
and indie bands are puny,

don't ever let them
tell you that your
glam rock's just for posers,
"a gimmick" says the cynic -
"they're pretenders, not composers",

don't ever let them
tell you it don't
shuffle like it should,
the preacher's not
your teacher - if
you like it
then it's good.



Entry #1

(from The Timespan Journal)

Richard Puglisi

We live in a magical place.
Where time does not matter
And happiness is the norm.

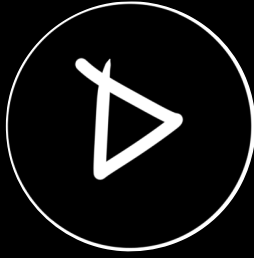
We are here together.
United in our love
Secure in a sacred bond.

We sought refuge
Away from the world
Safe from the noise and chaos

We forged a new life
Through self-reflection
And recommitment to our beliefs.

We will continue
As long as time allows
And the heavens permit.

For this is our time.



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Art by Jennie Park

Pg01: The Lotus
Pg02: Inherited Stories
Pg04: Observed Observers
Pg07: Dispensing Memories
Pg08: Before Difference
Pg11: Black

“Lady Macbeth makes a stand in a suburban kitchen”

by Zoe Davis

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“Another Paradox” by Richard LeDue

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“Stacking Blocks” by Jean Liew

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“Field Trip to the Aquarium” by Sophie Ryan

“Among Cultures” by Jan Wiezorek

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“IF YOU LIKE IT” by Stephen Philip Druce

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“Entry #1” by Richard Puglisi

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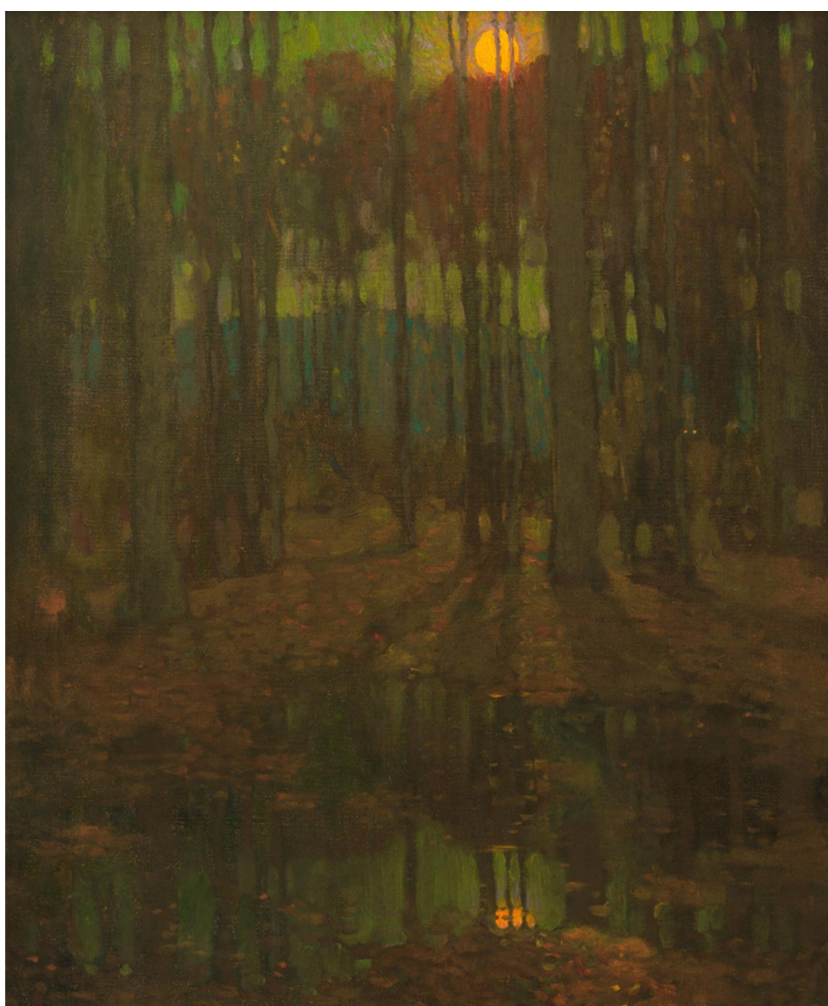
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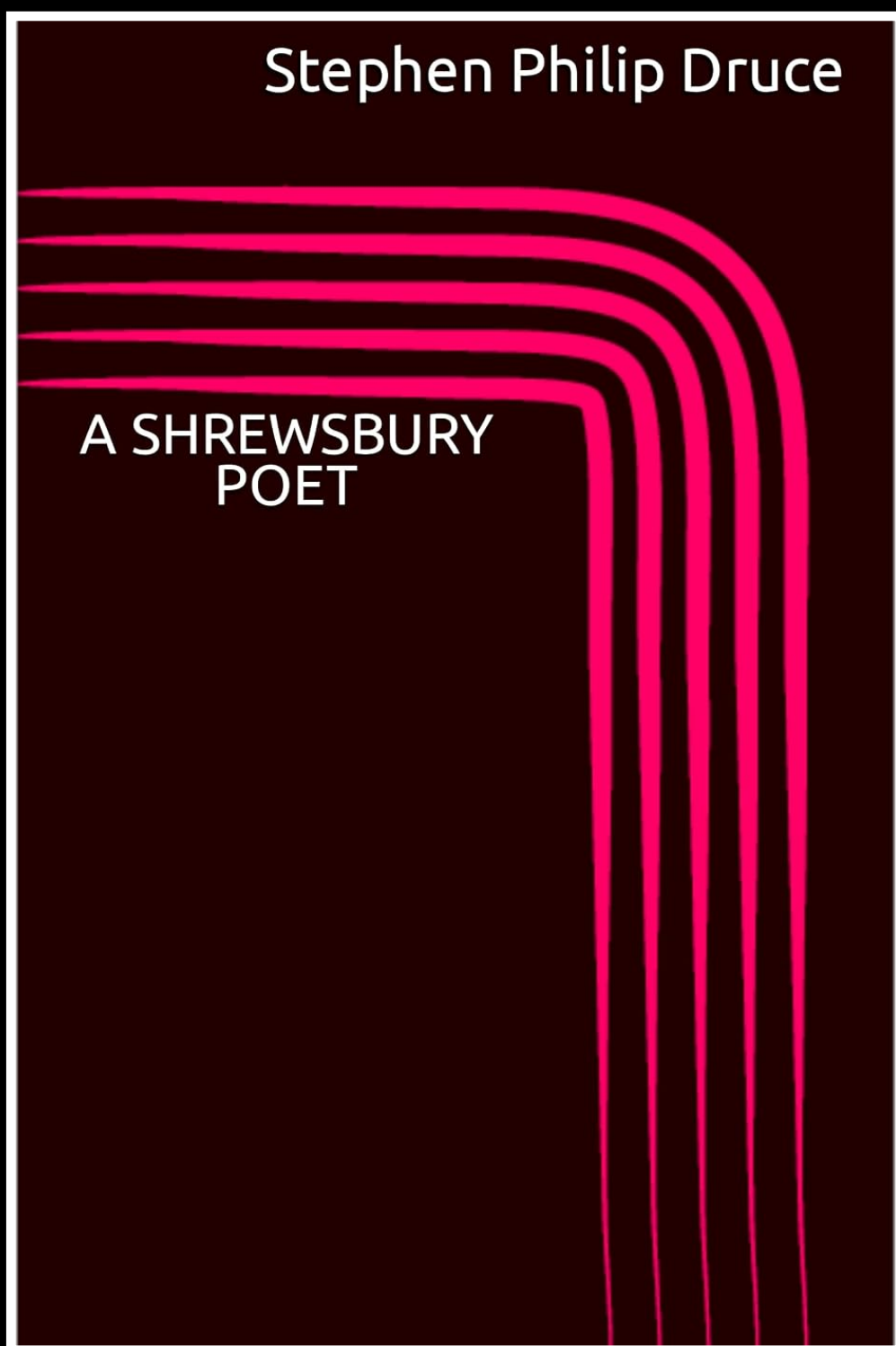
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