



Babylon Sidedoor
December 2022
editor: Alan Summers

haibun, flash, CNF

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artwork/photo©Alan Summers

A safe and friendly winter season.

Babylon Sidedoor is now on hiatus

Alan Summers

December 2022

<https://haikubasecamp.wordpress.com>

the parts that thou shouldst bear

The grimace on the face of the TSA agent as he heaves my bag off the conveyor belt after calling over a colleague to help inspect the hand grenade shaped something nested in three pairs of socks. *“That’s my mother,”* I say. He snaps off a glove and tells me, *“Next time, check it.”*

steerage
how we make our way
to the other side

Note:

The title is taken from Shakespeare Sonnet VIII

Lorraine A Padden

dinner on the ground



Abbey schnauzer, consummate foodie, invites Andrew Zimmern for a tasting menu of road food after the rain. She leads him around the asphalt drive and points out her showcase:

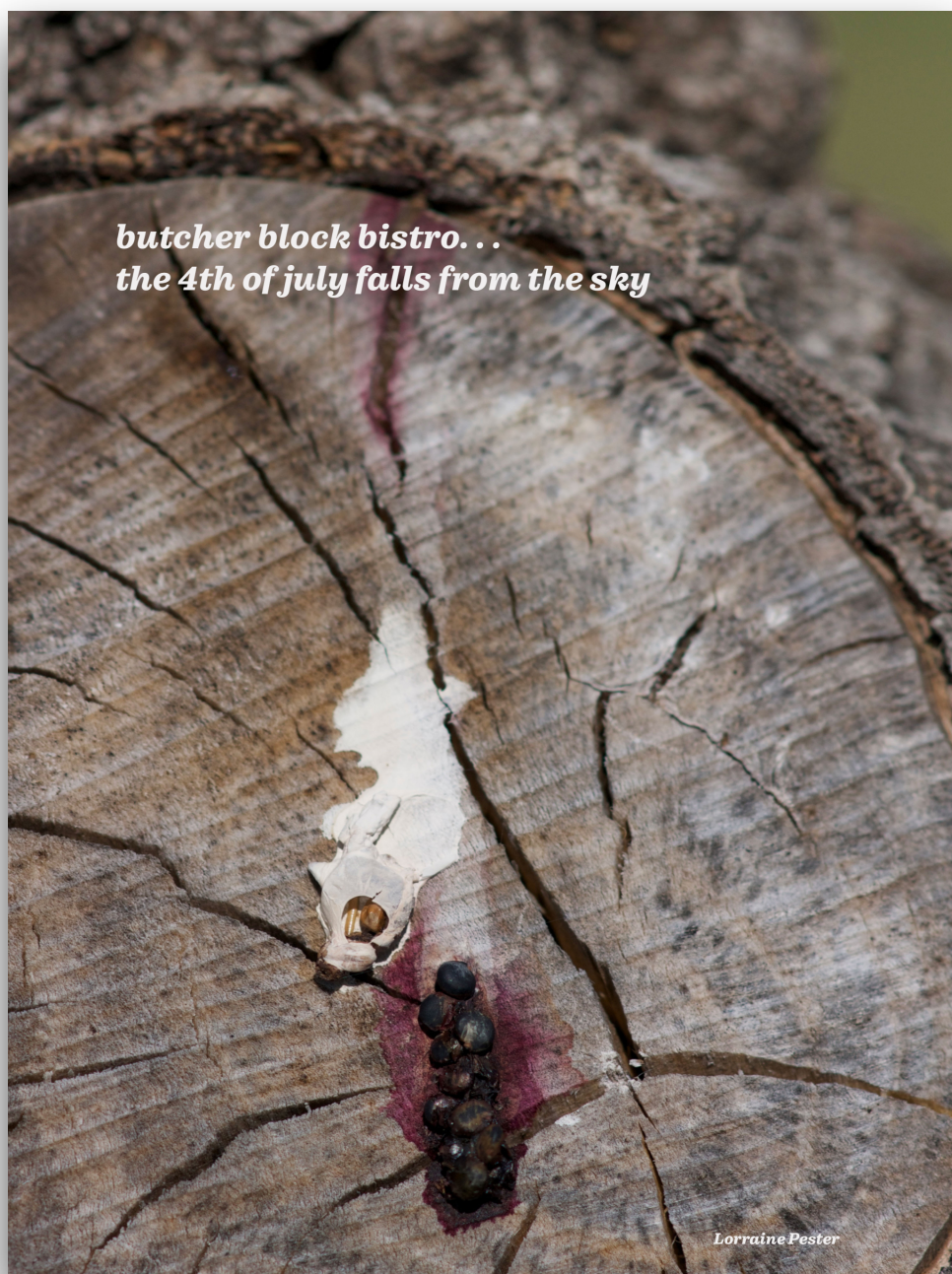
earthworms writhing on the asphalt soon spied and quickly gobbled

a sphinx moth twitching while it decides if it's alive or is like the frog over there that lies paper thin and flat

cicada shells, dripping from trees, bounce near a purple-dotted, neon green line that waddles across the street

a turtle, whose shell announces he's 'Dave,' finding the nearest patch of high grass: a salad to accompany his delicate turtle meat

last stop, dessert



Lorraine Pester

Patterns

An on-shore breeze cools as the day winds down. Evening arrives, trees sigh,
birds silent now call and sing as they hurry before dusk drives them to roost.
The earth ticks, insects rustle. Tent tops create a patchwork of colour.
Caravans line up in regimental formation, border internal roads and
walkways. The holiday camp is a quilt when viewed from Mauao's flank.

tap drips

0

0

Deryn Pittar

NOTE:

Mount Maunganui, or Mauao, commonly known by locals as The Mount, is a dormant volcanic cone at the end of a peninsula in the town of Mount Maunganui, by the eastern entrance to the Tauranga Harbour in New Zealand. **Wikipedia**

Clarion Call

Hagia Sophia, the magnificent complex in Istanbul, was built in the 6th century as a Christian church, then repurposed as a mosque in the 15th century during the Ottoman Empire. Under Ataturk, founder of the secular Republic of Turkey, it opened in 1935 as a museum, before becoming a mosque again in 2020.

prayer rugs
beside Doric columns
bending the same knee

Ever reminding us of Christianity's and Islam's shared historical origins, the syncretic amalgamation of mosaics depicting Christianity with soaring minarets stands as an enduring testament to the power of art and architecture to reflect our common humanity in the face of cultural diversity, conflict, and change.

Xmas cacti bud
in Ramadan
shared roots

Caroline Giles Banks

Wall Street

Photograph by Paul Strand, 1915

A chiaroscuro warning shot in stark black and white. Dwarfed by the massive bank building— its windows recessed, non-reflective, impenetrable— faceless city workers stride along the sidewalk into the shadowland of the Great War and Depression. A century later, with its toxic mix of a senseless war, ongoing pandemic, and rapid inflation, I ask, *“Are we in recession?”*

umbrella unfurled
before the storm—
fool me once

Caroline Giles Banks

Note:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wall_Street_\(photograph\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wall_Street_(photograph))

Blink

A black eye and cracked ribs. I got lucky this time.

Him sleeping it off. Snore rattling windows. My fingers fishing for coins
in the pockets of his jeans...a ham-sized fist clenches my arm.

silence...

rumble of the storm

passes slowly

Marilyn Humbert

Disappointment

I hesitated briefly before stepping fully from the vestibule into the club car. Unaccustomed to first-class travel, you must understand, and thus entering an unfamiliar setting, it took a moment to regain my bearings. (Now, I don't care to discuss the circumstances that led to my traveling first class this day - but suffice to say it was something I greatly wish not to be repeated any time soon.)

Approaching the bar to my left, slightly stiff-legged in the manner of one who has suddenly become self-conscious of his posture and gait, I noted the well-attired patrons in clumps of twos and threes along its length. And across the carpeted floor, half hidden in smoky haze much as our car was obscured by the fog outside, sat others in padded booths beneath the windows. Seemingly the only person there alone, I found my mind began to wander, imagining what must be their lofty conversations:

“Each field of inquiry I’ve encountered seems but an experiment,
in which the hypothesis of the universe is tested.”

With a sudden “yes?” the bartender disrupted my imaginings. Gin and tonic, I replied, perhaps a little too loudly in my efforts to appear self-assured. Idly, I studied the many injuries to the bar’s fake-wood veneer as my mental wanderings resumed. Eventually, of course, my reverie was again broken when we slowed at my destination and came to a stop. Then, as the car’s departing occupants compressed around me at the narrow exit, I overheard brief snatches of “...doesn’t understand me,” “...clearly offside,” and “...adorable baby,” before disembarking to continue along my journey.

arrivals and departures
blur together
indistinguishable

David Josephsohn

Silence

I always think about the people I haven't been able to meet for a long long time. Not that I don't make an attempt either to talk over the phone or at least enquire about their well-being. Somehow it never materializes. Last week, we heard of the passing away of a very good person. And then it struck me, '*When was the last time I thought of him?*'

Senior Citizen's Day — Year: 2022 and I remember the eighty-eight year old Uncle reaching out his best wishes to each one of us through his messenger. How and when did uncle learn to type and post messages.

autumn colors
wash over the sky
 the missing
 afterglow
of memories

Lakshmi Iyer