

Literary Alchemy Press: The Poetry and Fiction Zine



Separation

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Literary



Alchemy

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Poetry



Literary [4] Alchemy

“The Children”

Borders and prisons
Torture and sadists
War machine
Prison nation
Child internment
Infant abduction
This is not what
We have become
This is what we have been
And there is no we
There is only us and them
No need for debate
No call for civility
This all our nothing
This is a statement of intent
Crush ICE
Down with the pigs
Corner politicians
Silence the opposition
Expose the racists
Free the kids
Punch the fascists
Nothing can stop us
Fight for the children
Fight for the children
Fight for the children
Cause if you won't fight
For children
What was the point of you even living
- Matt Sedillo

“Cast Out to Oz”

Dorothy Gale is a tempest
She is a hurricane.

Her emotions swirl
And take over.

It is a stage she is going through.
She is growing up.

(Do not reduce her to her biology.)

She has learned that there is evil.
Right there in Kansas.

She has learned adults are impotent.
They will not disobey the papers
Which state, quite officially,
Her beloved must die.

They cannot keep her safe either.
They will shut the door of the storm cellar before
she is inside.
They will not hear her scream.

The knowledge of evil
Brings color to the world
And danger.

The young girl kills,
Yet she is not blamed.
She is innocent.

No one can steer a house.

Yet she is praised,
Made a hero
Through the actions of the house
They say she cannot control.

She is homeless.
The '30s were hard for everyone.

The path, at first cramped and claustrophobic,
Opens gradually,
And she moves from a walk to a skipping dance.

It is wide enough to take in her homeless friends,
The Forgotten Men,
Sans heart, hearth, brain, place, courage, station,
occupation, title,
Home.

In this land, only women have power
And it melts in water.

She is a young farm girl,
Headed to the big city
To Tinseltown,
To star in MGM musicals
Directed by hick hucksters.

The giant disembodied head,
Left over, perhaps, from the set of Citizen Kane,
Perhaps from Triumph of the Will,

Commands her to replace Bette Davis.
For she is Eve, and witches, like snakes, are green-
skinned.

Her task completed, he refuses to keep his promises,

Although to the men he gives the signs and symbols
that they have places,
Credentials, references, jobs,
If not homes.

And there is no place like home,
And she never should have left,

And if you believe that I know a wizard with some
fine dust bowl real estate to sell you.

For the heart of the story was lost long ago, in a
song about rainbows and bluebirds,

A song sung by immigrants
By immigrants turned away at the border.

They sang it on the way to the chambers
At Dachau and Auschwitz.

Dorothy cannot return to her sepia-toned Eden.
She knows too much.

-Kathy Silvey Hall

“Welcome to Part 2”

Welcome to the Holocaust

Part 2

Because it Might as Well Be

WWII

“Let’s Make America Great Again”

America Suffers: Part 2

Instead of a Mustache and Salute,

It’s a Comb Over and Bad Tan

A man who Agrees that Muslims should be

Registered

Let’s just forget about our First Amendment

Right

In a System to Be Tracked— and then a Ban on

Immigration?

Doesn’t this sound Familiar?

Again, Again— What Again?

“To be White Again!”

No Blacks, no Mexicans, no Complexion Darker
than Cream

Sorry, Syrian Refugees

I’m sorry, my Fellow Americans

This is Andrew Jackson: Part 2

This is the Trail of Tears

Part 2

This is the “Interment”-Work Camps

Part 2

This is Anti-Indigenous Boarding Schools

Part 2
Children Yanked from Mother's Arms
 Locked in Cages like Sheltered Dogs
Fathers and Mothers Arrested, Detained, Sent Away
 As if this is the "Christian" Way
Guns Pointed, Eyes Glazed, Hearts Ground to Dust

Cold, Killing Machines — U.S Armies

Mi Familia— Nuestra Familia!
 Pero la Familia no Significa nada para Ti
Salva a los Niños, Para Dolor!
Padre nuestro, Que estás en el Cielo
Por Favor— Que Encontramos una Solución
Pronto!
 How can we be okay with this?

Cracking Whips turned to Gunshots
 Part 2
War-Torn Refugees Rejected, Turned Away

Part 2
Witch Hunts on our Streets, Separated Families
 Part 2

America Suffers: Part 2
 Mother's Tears and Children's Wails
Fists in the Air, Peace Marches, Protests Signs
 Cyclical History Ends Here!
Let's Fix America Again:
 Part 2

- Savannah Hernandez

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“Odd Man Out”

There is the casual slouch
behind the shadowed windows.
Him all easy on the road.
Because nonchalance is good
At 90 miles an hour
on LA’s 210 freeway.

Right wrist is draped atop
the small black steering wheel.
Left hand where it can’t be seen
by others on the road. Alone.
Black hair gelled, clipped close in.
Jawline sharp, dark eyes set.

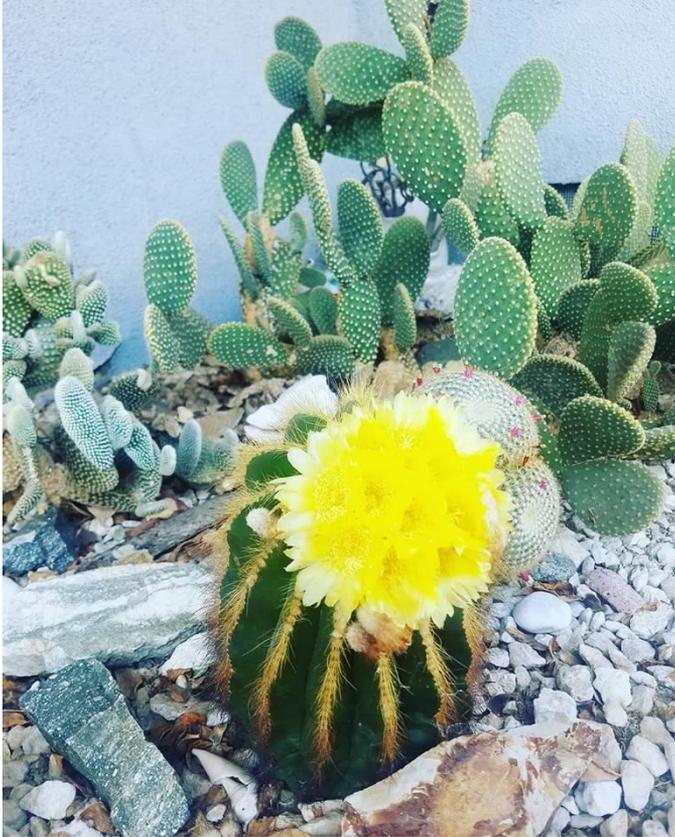
He’s one of many in the
ebb and flow of LA pathways,
That daring young man in the Honda sedan.
And perhaps he’ll make it
home today without a scratch,
while causing risk to others in his way.

Home is where his family waits
to share a family meal.
Together. Just for that.
With scents of ginger, fish sauce,
chili, lime and mint
lacing all the walls and floors of home.

But odds are, on this day,
his existential self will
meet his ending loudly.

A mangled mess of metal and of bone.
Giving some the sense
he's done the rest of us a favor:

One small win for the gene pool.
- Kate Flannery



“The Last Time”

The last time
I told my five year old son
We are going on a journey
An adventure
A quest for things that
Will make life better for us

The last time I packed his bag
I packed enough clothes for a few days
Four pants
Four shirts
But think if needed he can get by with what he has
on
Double check
Underwear, socks, and tell him he has to make do
With the new shoes that he’s already growing out of
I watch

The last time he dances
puts on his favorite shirt
Red with transformers
Stops in mid flight says
“wouldn’t it be cool mama if we could just become
Robot race cars”
I laugh
how silly it would be
To get away from all danger
They can’t catch us now
Ponder for a moment
If we would ever need to
Maybe we will

He laughs

The last time

I told him to pick one toy and one toy only

His favorite of course

In case he gets bored

He insists crayons and some paper too

To draw a map

This is where we will go

And all the fun we will have

The last time

He asked for one more thing for the last time

“Mama can I have my little blanket

In case I get cold”

The last time I say

It will only be a few days

Here’s a sweater

You’re five now

You’re a big boy

No need for a baby blanket

The last time

I say it’ll be ok

And he believes me

Mama will always keep her baby warm

No matter how big he gets

He climbs into my lap

I turn on the TV as we wait for the right moment

Knowing it’s the last time I’ll watch this happen

This will be the last time

This government will lock
children in cages
Behind bars
Force them drugged so they can
Sleep on concrete floors
Leaked photos
Of an ocean of silver
Mylar blankets
There isn't enough medication to calm the terror
That has been inflicted
We can't let these children or their parents die
Because this is what white supremacy wanted
So we need to stop asking why
how
When
did this happen

This will be the last time
We hear another story
and another and another
about how
A mother told her children
It'll be ok
Listen to tape recordings
Screams of mama and daddy
There are some things that need no translations
Prayers can never be lost in languages
That are older than this flag

This flag
Has spread its fury
Long before families decided to move north
Before a border crossed us

As the Yankees
Poisoned the soil of Latin America with claims of
progress
These Yankees
Have declared war on more than just this continent
They have declared war on the people and we will
fight back
Because

This will be the last time
They will tear baby drinking from
Mother's breast

This will be the last time
They will deport a parent without giving them their
children
Back

This will be the last time
They take the children's clothes
Leave in isolation
Strip naked
cold

This is a warning
Change won't come in the morning
But the middle of
Abolish ICE
Abolish Prisons
Abolish Capitalism and white supremacy
Because this will be the last time they make a liar
out of a mother

Who promised her child she would keep them safe
and warm so

Fuck your borders

- Irene Monica Sanchez



Flash Fiction



Greener Pastures by Susan Ilsley

Literary [18] Alchemy

“Denmark”

The men come into the bank the day before Shirley’s going to be transferred to fucking Denmark. One puts a gun to her head and screams, “This is a robbery,” and Denmark looks pretty good now, not that she has anything against it other than it’s too far from corporate, but hold on, maybe there’s a way to leverage this if she’s shot somewhere that doesn’t hurt too much, and she can move on up to job in Sacramento with an office that has a window, so she opens her eyes to see her robber move over to Gabriel who has been here only three years, and now he’s being pistol whipped because the little freak gets all the breaks, and he’ll be a hero, and she’ll immigrate on Thursday to sit around waiting for her shot at a robbery, and who knows if they even have guns on Denmark.

-John Brantingham

“Tanya”

Harry never felt at home here. When he was five, he was woken abruptly and packed in the family’s motorcycle side car with all they could manage to bring and driven through the fog across the Czechoslovakian border to a displaced persons camp in Germany. A few years later they moved into a house some miles away where his father had found work in a factory that somehow had survived the war. A few years later they moved to the United States. A few years later they moved back to Germany. A few years later they moved back to the United States. Abrupt moves, leaving behind homes, family, friends, and all of the familiar places and routines that made up Harry’s life. Even his name wasn’t originally Harry.

When his first wife left him abruptly, he didn’t see it coming. When his second wife died, he hadn’t planned for it. She died the same year that he retired, and his mother died as well. Now, he isn’t sure whether he can risk a third marriage to a woman from Norway, but then he isn’t sure he can live without her. He isn’t sure whether a German can live with a Norwegian named Tanya.

- Kendall Johnson

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Contributors

John Brantingham is a first poet laureate of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park, and his work has been featured in hundreds of magazines and in *Writer's Almanac* and *The Best Small Fictions* 2016. He has eight books of poetry and fiction including *The Green of Sunset* from Moon Tide Press, and he teaches at Mt. San Antonio College.

Kate Flannery is a writer and lawyer living and working in Claremont. An excerpt from her novel-in-progress was recently published in the Canadian literary journal, *emerge*.

Kathy Silvey Hall is a Pushcart-nominated poet whose book *Herstories* is published by Literary Alchemy Press. Her fiction and humor have been featured in Red Hen Press' *LA Fiction Anthology* and *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, among others. She teaches English at Santiago Canyon College

Savannah Hernandez is a fictional story writer, poet, and hobby artist. On cold nights in the Southern Californian desert, you can hear Savannah in a howling and yipping contest with the local coyotes and Chupacabra—and yes, she always wins.

Susan Ilsley is a photographer in Upland, California. Following careers in teaching and nursing, Susan is married to Kendall Johnson.

Kendall Johnson is a former teacher and therapist. Kendall Johnson writes, paints, and photographs in Upland, California where he lives with his wife Susan Ilsley. He is the Director of Gallery 57 Underground, Pomona.

Irene Sanchez is a Xicana, mama, educator, poet, and writer based out of the San Gabriel Valley in CA. For more information please see www.irenesanchezphd.com

Matt Sedillo is featured in the Los Angeles Times, CSPAN and the Canadian Broadcast corporation. He is a revolutionary poet based out of Los Angeles California. He is the current literary director of the dA center for the arts.