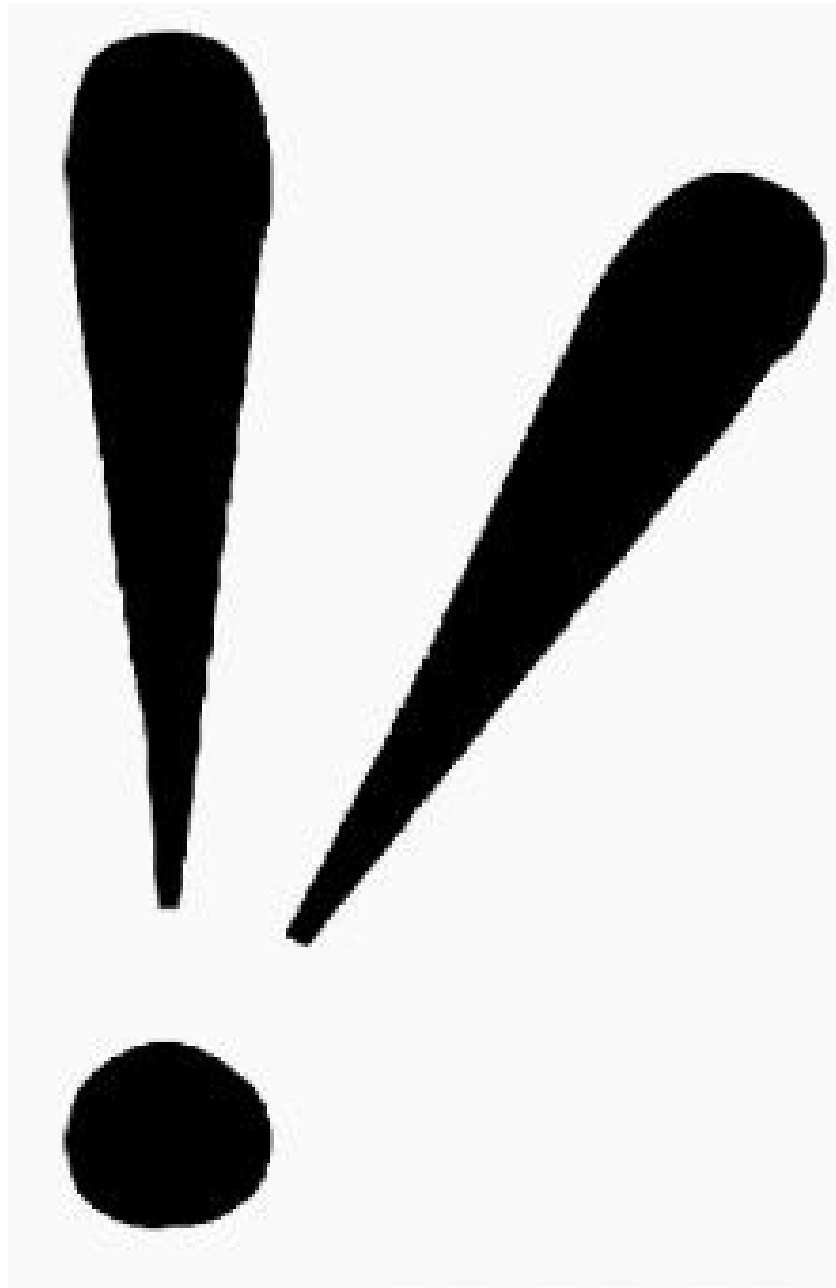


ACCLAMATION POINT

A MONTHLY JOURNAL of ART and LITERATURE

*Vol 1, Issue 5
December 2019*



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Greetings!

Here we are at the end of an incredible year. We would like to thank you all so much for joining us these past five issues. As a thank you, and as a way to wrap up this year, we've invited some contributors from our past issues to help celebrate in style! This issue you will find two **poems** and a short **prose** piece by Kushal Poddar, who first joined us in the October 2019 issue. Two **photographs** by returning contributor Roksana Zelazkiewicz, who also first joined us in the October 2019 issue. One of our original contributors who first appeared in the September 2019 issue, Laszlo Aranyi (Frater Azmon) returns with a new **poem**!

Along with our returning contributors we are delighted to have two new contributors in this issue as well! Opening our December 2019 issue is a **short story** by Christopher Moore that definitely put us in the folklore mood. Dr. Priya Dolma

Tamang, our second new contributor, has written a beautiful **poem** that we think you all are really going to remember!

Be sure to check out the contributor bios to find out more about this issue's contributors. Also make sure to follow them on their given social media handles linked in the bios. You're not gonna want to miss updates from these amazing artists.

Thank you all again for coming back to our little journal. We look forward to continuing to make art in 2020 and expanding our contributor family even more!

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! We'll see you in The Roaring Twenties...

-Ashley Davis & KB Thomas
Editors at Acclamation Point

January Prompt

This month our issue was themed around the idea of folklore. It was interesting to see this theme take shape with our submissions and we certainly hope you enjoy it!

Moving out of the 20-teens, we find ourselves at the precipice of the 20's. To celebrate this move into the next decade we'd like to honor the 20s of the last century. To really kick off our new year we'd like to invite submissions based on **The Roaring 20s**. With all its glitz and glamour to intrigue and heartache, we think this is the perfect prompt for our January 2020 issue. The Lost Generation of the 1920s brought about many changes to literature and art and we think there are more changes coming in this decade!

For the January 2020 issue, contributors are encouraged to submit pieces related to this prompt, but as always we will also accept unrelated submissions. Please submit no later than **Thursday, January 2nd**. Please see the [submissions page](#) on our website for formatting and genres.

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The Ice Prince

By Christopher Moore

I'd do anything to see him smile.

It's a remarkable thing to have to wish for. Something as small, as unassuming, as everyday, as a smile. To see his lips turn upwards and his eyes brighten, and the warmth that always used to pour from him to radiate towards me once again. To have his eyes flash with the simple joys of our childhood.

But, I don't know if I'll ever see that look on his face again.

He looks older. Much older. Old enough, in fact, for him to be... grown up. And if that's how much time has passed for him, then the same must be true for me. I knew, deep down, that that must be so, the longer my journey went on, the longer I was delayed, the more obstacles were placed in my way, and the more people kept me in place through either deception or kindness. I knew I had to be growing older, as sun gave way to snow, roses to ice, and back again, but I hadn't let myself stop long enough to truly consider it. To consider just how much time had passed. How many years. It was all I could do to cling on to the hope

that he was still out there somewhere, alive. To have let myself think about the years passing us by, to accept how much time I was losing...would have been to despair. But, here is, now, before me, and in place of the happy, laughing boy who chased me through the town square in a snowfall and along the riverbank in summer, who had me fall about laughing in the autumn leaves and gave me his coat in the spring rain... In place of him is a young, fully grown man.

It's like he's made of ice. Perhaps he is. Who knows what the Queen has done to him, in all the time she's held him prisoner here. Maybe she's transformed the very way his body is made. Turned him into one of her servants by making him exactly like her. His skin is a pale, frosted blue, lips as black as the depths of night, eyes cold and almost unseeing. At their edges, I think I can see the ongoing pulse of the magic that set him on this path, the shards of the demon mirror that found their way in and began the slow transformation into the cruel teenager who sent me away

crying before he disappeared. I can see them flashing as the spell continues to do its work, like some mystical infection keeping his soul diseased in the absence of any medicine capable of reversing it. And his hands... Busy gripping and turning strange blocks of ice at his feet with letters written on their side, barely seeming to comprehend what any of them mean. His hands are strong, firm, infused with the power of young adulthood, so much more capable now of danger than they were as a boy. For a dark second, I realise it would only take a few seconds of him squeezing them around my throat for me to lose consciousness. If he's still far enough under the Queen's influence to do something like that if she tells him to...

But, there's something else. Something else amidst the sadness of the lost time, the wonder at how he's grown, the wariness at the possible strength... Something much more primal, simple, impossible to deny to myself. Screaming at me from the moment I stepped into this frozen chamber and set eyes on him for the first time in years.

He's beautiful.

I guess I've always known. I didn't hide myself away in my bedroom and cry for hours when he first turned me away for nothing. My stomach didn't leap

into my mouth every time he called at my door to go out and play for no reason. My grandmother didn't give me knowing smiles whenever I complained about him being so *stupid* any time he annoyed me on a whim. I've loved him almost since we met, and just didn't realise what to call the feelings, or how to process them until this moment.

I suppose, too, that it's why I never gave up my quest. Why I couldn't bear the idea of leaving him out here, as her captive, or giving him up for dead as I sensed so many people along the way would have liked me to do. My heart ached at the very thought that he might be gone forever, that I'd never get to see him again. No matter what temptations came before me, how much disillusion I felt, how much despair I almost fell into. I couldn't let go of the idea of him, waiting for me, somewhere, sometime... No matter how slim.

And there *were* temptations. So, so many temptations. There was the sorcerer by the river, the kindly old man who took me into his house and made me feel safe and loved, looked after and protected, for as long as I wished to remain there. Secretly using his magic on me to make me forget my former life and my quest to find Kai, keeping me as a benign prisoner to fill the void his son's death had left in his soul. His tears of remorse so

sincere that I forgave him even as the spell wore off and I remembered, despite the time lost to me while under his influence. There was the Prince of the Flower Lands, the heir to a whole kingdom, who slept in beds made of roses and lilies. He had begged me to stay with him instead, to rule with him, to have anything I wanted if only I would choose him instead of my 'dead friend in the frozen north'. If it hadn't been for Kai, I probably would have done, too, for he had been one of the most handsome men who, I'm sure, have ever walked the earth. And, after him, there had been the Beggar Boy, the heir to a much darker kingdom of thieves and bandits, who nevertheless had opened up to me and shown a vulnerable, purer side drawn out, he told me, by my goodness.

I've never thought of myself as that good. I accepted Kai's growing cruelty without asking why for too long before the Queen took him away. I fell into the seduction of all those temptations, not fully, but long enough to waste precious time in trying to find him. And seeing him now, I feel half-tempted to turn and flee before he can see me and either recognise me with a look of disappointment, or, worse, not know me at all. But, they all said it. All three. They all insisted I had the purest heart they'd ever

known, that I had no idea of the effect I had on people without realising, whether the paternal desire of the old wizard to make me his child, or two crown princes falling in love with me enough to offer me a share in their reign. And, indeed, before any of them, I can hear the words of my grandmother coming back to me suddenly, as though floating on the wind being carried through the Queen's castle, caressing my ear like an old friend.

You have such a good heart, Gerald. You have no idea how rare that is in this world.

I can feel it give me strength. Can feel it filling my body with renewed courage as I finally take a step forward, entering properly into the throne room, surrounded on all sides by sleek walls of ice, and make my way steadily towards him, towards Kai, sitting at the foot of her chair, still moving around the lettered blocks with a vague look of puzzlement.

'Kai,' I hear myself speak, my voice almost choked by the emotion of being able to say his name to him. 'Can you hear me?'

He stops in place. Turns his head towards me. Eyes fixing on me, but not betraying any reaction, any feeling, for a long, long moment, until I truly start to fear it's all been in vain, and I'm never going to see a look of familiarity in his eyes again. That he's going to remain like this

forever. A cold, frozen slave to the witch who stole him away. The Ice Prince to her Snow Queen.

And then, suddenly, in the very corner of his eye, the slow flashing of the mirror spell, the pulsing infection, seems to fade a little. And something escapes from that same corner, making its way slowly, slowly down his cheek, to rest on his lip, shining in the light of the chamber, the glistening of something that hasn't been

possible for him since boyhood. Accompanied by, at last, against all my worst fears, answering my hopes and prayers and wishes since the day he disappeared, a look of recognition... A tear.

And, coming soon afterwards, as the wicked light in his eyes finally seems to go out, and the natural warmth they always held when we were children finally returns to them...

He smiles at me.

The Lore of the Ouroboros

By Kushal Poddar

The innkeeper, lean, circuitous, bent over his newfangled but cheap device watches a video, and I inhale the redolence of the fish being prepared in his kitchen for me, yawn and to kill time mumble the obvious, "It is a snake. Anaconda, is it?"

He sighs, "Snake, I have seen one once. I arrived here, green, wet behind my ears, way behind my years, with my father's sending off – *"Be the son you should have been to me to your employer. Don't try to earn money. You will be rich."* from the far east of this country where the map mimics a thin crust pizza and the language sounds slanted.

I came here and worked my childhood mopping, washing, shattering, being rebuked, crying, laughing, eating free food, lodging with three other teens inside the restaurant itself.

The owner was fat. The owner was happy. The owner was bleeding money on this joint and in his spleen which they later discovered.

What I earned, if anything, I cannot remember. When I last met

my father he came here to meet the owner - a village cousin of his cousin, and they laughed while I stood hanging by the curtain of a blue door. Then, I ceased to remember my father even. In my household my mother was the wind. We knew she existed but we never saw her for real.

The spleen killed the owner. He had a mouthful of meat when he kicked the bucket leaving behind a daughter recently motherless and married off. We found his will. He left everything to me.

I need not send anything to his daughter who is not concerned about this not too profitable concern but I do send a little-money some months, food the other times.

Oh, sir, your food has arrived."

I was bewildered, "Where is the snake in this?" and make the payment.

He grins, shrugs, "The story is the snake. It is, sir, when you come to think about it.

Holographic Animals

By Kushal Poddar

Animals, mostly holograms, flicker.
The roads to the woods
dream if they could meander back
inside our limbic systems.

We chance upon a tree
with an interior hollowness
hosting a hoot. No bird we see.
Our children wait for the circus.
Holograms after holograms.

We buy them candy flosses.
Rain cauterizes holes on the tent.
We should stay at home with screens on.
The n'th president denies the climate
and concentration of death.

The Lore of the Third Key

By Kushal Poddar

What opens your third key?
We ask the lean man,
an oscillating mind obviously.
He shows us his throng of keys
As if he treasures them more
than the Lore of the treasury
he chronicles at great length
once we buy him a simple dinner
and a moonshine, half glassful, enough.

What opens my third key?
He chuckles, waddles towards the door
not ending his short long lore.
The keychain rings with three keys
one of which unlocks the main gate,
the next – his room. He says
it overlooks the ocean at night,
but a desert during the day.

Moon shines and names each wave,
and when they roar back it names them again.
We laugh at the unreliable narrator.
Sea soars nowhere nearby,
two hundred miles afar to be precise.
So does the desert.

What opens? The third key?
He grins and wanes in the sombre outside.
Late at night we all talk with him
in our separate collective dreams.
What opens the third key?
A story, he explains,
One you began with a question.

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By Rokšana Zelazkiewicz



025

By Rokšana Zelazkiewicz



About these photos:

The photographs are part of Graphic City/Lost Words series created in 2018.

In this series I've decided to put aside topics typical for my hometown, known mostly for the gothic architecture and brick churches in favour to focus on the neglected part of my city. Specifically on abstract, two-dimensional surfaces such as billboards, gates and walls, especially those transformed by weathering and decay. I'm trying to search for the graphic shapes and patterns, carefully framing my subjects. I'm looking for ugliness between the walls of monuments.

Lotus

By Dr. Priya Dolma Tamang

On a sun-kissed day
beseech such clarion way
that rings rainless
on the murky nooks
of your swampy pride.
Soggy with hurt,
dripping heavy your heart,
be dried
in the love of dawn's rebirth.

And as its petals
reopen one by one,
airy and ajar,
soaking Sun,
let the tears part where
aquifers run.
For this lotus of life,
a new life has begun.

Stonework

By Ashley Davis



Idyl

By Laszlo Arayni (Frater Azmon)

Translated by Gabor Gyukics

A few well practiced slits
and the head is separated from the trunk
to grin on the hooked pike of the forever cheerful
impaler.

He came on behalf of some "Lord",
but our people accept the spirits of Fire, Air, Water and Earth only
as the entities of high quality above us.
We call the servant of a foreign god "long swine".

We eat his fat body; his flesh becomes our flesh!
Gourds collect his almost clotted blood.

Our knowledge plodded what it could
across the boundless breathing sea.

Our priestess is smiling on his dried up, maggot like penis
that visited countless stinking, moldy hollows.

For her virginity
is born again everyday thanks to the absolute liberty of love.

There is only one law: balance
with the perceptible and omnipresent world.

Our lives are an incessant orgasm...

Contributor Bios

Christopher Moore is a Northern Irish writer, and a graduate of English from Queen's University Belfast, and of the MA in TV Fiction Writing at Glasgow Caledonian University. He is also an alumnus of the Curtis Brown Creative novel-writing course. Alongside a number of playwriting achievements, including being longlisted for the 2019 Bruntwood Prize, Moore has had a number of pieces of short fiction performed and published in the UK, Ireland and US. You can follow him on [Twitter](#).

Kushal Poddar is author of 'The Circus Came To My Island', 'A Place For Your Ghost Animals, Understanding The Neighborhood', 'Scratches Within', 'Kleptomaniac's Book of Unoriginal Poems', 'Eternity Restoration Project- Selected and New Poems' and now 'Herding My Thoughts To The Slaughterhouse-A Prequel' (Alien Buddha Press). He has been published in a number of magazines and journals. (If you'd like to check out more of Kushal's work please visit his [Amazon author page](#). You can also follow him on [Twitter](#).)

Roksana Zelazkiewicz was born on March 12, 1996 in Torun, Poland; student of the fifth year of workshop graphics, specialties: Workshop Graphics (Intaglio) on the Department of Fine Arts of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland, led by Dr. Hab Marek Zajko, prof. NCU. In my graphics, I'm strongly referring to the human body; through physical deformation and understatement, I'm building my own vision of the figure - bizarre picture of damaged human being. I'm focusing on a form, looking for proper angles, right frames and interesting poses. I'm relying on a dynamic sense of composition to create two-dimensional surface and texture. The challenge is to see beyond the ordinary; to capture its unique self. I'm trying to use figurative to create dynamics and atmosphere; to find out how ambiguous a pose can look when it's in black and white. I'm cutting, deforming, changing, looking for tensions between elements of composition. I destroy. Then I reconstruct. I'm building a picture from pieces. Because of that some of the artwork are printed from two plates and the other from five and usually in more than one version. My goal is to inspire those who see my work to look more carefully at the world around them, to discover disturbing beauty in usual places. (If you would like to check out more of Roksana's work, her portfolio can be viewed [here](#). You can also follow her on [Instagram](#) and [Tumblr](#).)

Dr. Priya Dolma Tamang is a medical graduate from the north-east Indian state of Sikkim. With her tribal Nepali roots and deeply seated Buddhist beliefs, culture and mindfulness have both been active themes in her writing. Her poetry has found home in magazines like International Times, Urban Magazine, ReadMoreCo, Headline Poetry, with work forthcoming in Tales of Reverie by Paragon Press and Just Milieu Art Zine. Her debut book, Ivory Gleam, was published by Leadstart Publishers, India, in 2018. You can follow her on [Twitter](#).

Laszlo Aranyi (Frater Azmon) is a poet, anarchist, and occultist from Hungary. In his poetry he explores known spiritualist mediums, art and explores the relationship between magic. His earlier work includes (szellem)válaszok, A Nap és Holderők egyensúlya. You can find him on [Twitter](#) or on [Facebook](#).