

The
Phoenix
Poetry
Zine

Bram van Beerendonk - Indie
Reijnierse - Danee van den
Eijnde - Cecilie Balemans-
Højberg - Loes Boers - Onno
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der Steen - Suzanne Balm
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Good Girls Don't Complain

written by Indie Reijnierse

I've been pulled off the streets by men and boys,
Commenting on my figure, my face, my hair.
I drown out their whistles as they turn to white noise.
My body is not something I should share.

I've never had to open my own doors,
But I've always locked them on my way in.
"If I show you mine, will you show me yours?"
I wish I'd kicked him in the shins.

I've been told pretty words infused with class,
And I've accepted them with guarded grace.
But when I'm flattered by a slap on my ass,
I'll thank them with a smack in the face.

Back to You

written by Dancé van den Eijnde

Sometimes, I allow my thoughts
to wander off
to places far away,
places I'm homesick for
or where I've never been,
and sometimes
I dream of running off
into the night,
but most often
my mind ends up
wandering back to you.

Even the birds and mice can hear you whisper

written by Cecilie Balemans Hojberg

When I was young my mom would always tell me,
Never speak your thoughts for your safety won't be a guarantee.
Even the birds and mice can hear you whisper.

I did not dare watch a movie,
Afraid that anyone would see me.
Even the birds and mice can hear you whisper.

My friend once walked past the photos in the hall,
But she did not bow down at all.
Even the birds and mice can hear you whisper.

My neighbour got caught for selling rope from the mines,
Little did he know it would cost his family their lives.
Even the birds and mice can hear you whisper.

Every night I think about the lights on the other side,
Perhaps there I could find myself a bowl of rice?

The Other Side of Darkness

written by Cecilie Balemans Hojberg

silent through the winter night
not a single soul in sight
the river cold and thick with ice
here's my escape to paradise
shouting starts tells me to stop
I run until my lungs give up
shots fired don't know where
bullets falling from the air
halfway there feet so cold
run towards the lights of gold
through the trees safe for now
they will find me anyhow
now I'm stuck in this mess
the other side of darkness

Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward

written by John Donne

Let mans Soule be a Spheare, and then, in this,
The intelligence that moves, devotion is,
And as the other Spheares, by being growne
Subject to forraigne motion, lose their owne,
And being by others hurried every day,
Scarce in a yeare their naturall forme obey:
Pleasure or businesse, so, our Soules admit
For their first mover, and are whirld by it.
Hence is't, that I am carryed towards the West
This day, when my Soules forme bends toward the East.
There I should see a Sunne, by rising set,
And by that setting endlesse day beget;
But that Christ on this Crosse, did rise and fall,
Sinne had eternally benighted all.
Yet dare I'almost be glad, I do not see
That spectacle of too much weight for mee.
Who sees Gods face, that is selfe life, must dye;
What a death were it then to see God dye?
It made his owne Lieutenant Nature shrinke,
It made his footstoole crack, and the Sunne winke.
Could I behold those hands which span the Poles,
And tune all spheares at once peirc'd with those holes?
Could I behold that endlesse height which is
Zenith to us, and our Antipodes,
Humbled below us? or that blood which is
The seat of all our Soules, if not of his,
Made durt of dust, or that flesh which was worne
By God, for his apparell, rag'd, and torne?
If on these things I durst not looke, durst I
Upon his miserable mother cast mine eye,
Who was Gods partner here, and furnish'd thus
Halfe of that Sacrifice, which ransom'd us?
Though these things, as I ride, be from mine eye,
They'are present yet unto my memory,
For that looks towards them; and thou look'st towards mee,
O Saviour, as thou hang'st upon the tree;
I turne my backe to thee, but to receive
Corrections, till thy mercies bid thee leave.
O thinke mee worth thine anger, punish mee,
Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,
Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace,
That thou may'st know mee, and I'll turne my face.

Goede Vrijdag, naar het oosten

written by Onno Kusters

Stel mijn auto is een bol en in die bol
beweeg ik mij, onderhevig aan werktuiglijk
bewegen, zonder te bewegen, me overgegeven
naar het oosten. Goede Vrijdag, de weg is vol
van wat de radio die ongestraft waar flitsers staan
verraadt noemt Paasverkeer. Zakelijk of vrije tijd
mij is de onwetendheid en daar doorheen vlecht me
de eerste ontsteking de verbrandingsbeweger
naar het oosten terwijl mijn gedachten
voeren naar het westen waar het wacht
de zonsondergang die mijn nu al zo lang
doffer en doffer wordende moeder ontsnapt
die in zichzelf een immer zwarter zwart verpakt
dat niemand vat. De nacht die valt
was er altijd al. Er is geen kruis dat dat
ontkrachten kan. Hoe wankelmoedig
ook mijn rijden van het hart van het land
naar de grensstreek, van waar ik woon
naar wie ik ben, ik prijs mij gelukkig
is het woord niet er zeker van te zijn
de dood niet als een deur maar als een muur
te zien: wie die muur, die majesteitelijk
alle andere naar de kroon steekt louter
als muur bestormt zal niet ontluiserd zijn
Wie de natuur die niemands luitenant is
zo groots laat als ze is, wie ons pad
over de aarde achter zich weer dichtgroeien laat
de aarde zich aan de zon niet andersom
laat warmen wie in ootmoed zonder daartoe
door enige boekrol te zijn gemaand de weg aflegt
tussen er nog niet en er niet meer zijn wie de bol
van stuurloos rijden tussen wat A en Z zal blijken
in kleine handen warmt en met toevalstreffers vult
voor hem neer te leggen op een aarde
waarop talloos zulke bollen haar alleen
zoals wij haar kennen in beweging houden
wie de verbeelding ongebreideld laat
heeft aan de werkelijkheid voldoende
Hoe zou ik anders dan naar het oosten
mijn hebben mijn houden mijn dochter onzichtbaar
meedeinende meeneuriënd in de binnenspiegel
de kat op de bijrijdersstoel kunnen bewegen
op een vrijdag als deze? Mij overgeven
aan een huis van bestemming waar
een passie waar ik niet in geloof mij tot stilstaan
wekt waar een gedicht passeert waaruit ik,
vrije vertaler die ik zonder meer ben,
omgekeerd dezelfde conclusie trek?
Ik keer het oosten de rug toe door erheen te gaan.
Als dit is wat ik achterlaat, dan is het welgedaan.

You

written by Tessa van Westerop

You used to amuse me with your quick quips,
Your beguiling attitude blessing me,
My guise, with lucid laughter and curved lips,
Indulging your sublime urge to intrigue.
You frequently brought me with you, and I,
Enraptured by your alluring nature,
Treasured that not unlike how the fruit fly,
Treasures sour fruits: desirous but demure.
Your unremarkable features and youth,
Caused an outpour of musings to unroll,
Urging me to assume your tales as truth,
Clouding my judgement and my wounded soul.
 But no further shall I endure this hurt,
 In fair retribution I must subvert.

&

I

written by Tessa van Westerop

I won't apologise for choosing me,
This choice is mine and with it I intend,
To rid this universe of this debris,
To display that I will be my own friend.
I will intrigue me with my silly quirks,
And bring me whither I highly desire,
Inducing my lips to twist in wide smirks;
Validation diverges like wildfire.
I will examine me in the mirror,
And recognise my fair captivation,
Making me realise I like me more,
You're simply a bygone fascination.
 Time's ripe for humankind to realise,
 This self-love is a blessing in disguise.

Doldrums

written by Chiem Schaminée

To live in a daze of doleful doubt,
declined to a lesser state.
Its fate unscathed, a cloistered crow
brooding above

clouded redoubt

The insight outlasted by jaded eyes,
squinting through plighted porous lies
that divert the twirls of twilight.

To be in the dark of daunting draught,
quiet currents drowning thirst.
A thin foil of temperament
diluted by dull reflection

empty

Spoiled and overflown
knowledge- I am left unaffected.

To exist in a rift of wonderless ponder,
fleeting desires out of sight.
Demons delight woeful wander,
forming disciplined desertion
of the border being

adrift

Devoiced, the void night's canvas,
a barren breeze skimming slack sails.

Cider

written by Fenna Leeuwenburgh

Discussions over cocktails
and slumped shoulders,
distant music, match the glowing dark.

We camp out,
laughing fits, just barely sober,
hiccups overshadow soft remarks.

Our needless caring
filters out the noises
the campfire crackling mindlessly behind;
our orchestra
of thrilling, sickening choices,
the spirits rushing speedily
through our minds.

With starry eyes, we sit and watch
the spinning, the slow
and muffled turning of
our realm; We sit and watch,
we sit and feel it burning,
When nothing
else is left to overwhelm.

Forest

written by Thijs Biezen

There was a forest nearby, with trees
wild and erratic; growing wherever;
doing whatever, and everyone let them
because nature can't be controlled.

Yet the trees were put down, cut
from the forest to be moved far away
from the place where they grew up
and rose high, reaching for the stars.

New trees took their places, replaced
them, though now they grow in lines
neat and compact, carefully planned
with no tree challenging status quo.

Like white gravestones they stand
honouring the dead of war: rows
upon rows of trees, all arranged,
and I wonder, is this still a forest?

A Eulogy for Subjects

written by Rico van Opheusden

- It is 1938. You are writing about play. You're always serious. Others don't understand why you're concerned with children's games. Declaring you a genius was just another way to silence you. In seven years, you will get sick and die and be buried next to a green church.
- It is 1945. You are writing about bodies. You shuffle around in your apartment. The mahogany groans in tandem with your joints. You haven't talked to the people that raised you since they found out what you believe. Your heart will cramp up and kill you in sixteen years.
- It is 1983. You are writing about stories. You dream about your body suffering at the hands of others. You say you stayed true to yourself, and have nothing to be ashamed of. You will tell yourself this story for twenty-three years, then you will pass away in your sleep.
- It is 1999. You are writing words no one will read. You don't lack in conviction, in experiences, in stories to tell. Your words might have saved or doomed us all. Perhaps you were unlucky, perhaps others meant for you not to be remembered. You are already dead.
- It is 2012. You are writing games that tell stories about bodies. You won't hide that you're fighting for survival. You take these texts and their bodies for yourself. You devour them sadistically. You bury them without ceremony. To you, a eulogy is the true killing. One day you will die, and someone will miss you.
- It is 2020. You are writing, and that's enough for now. You don't know if you're fooling yourself. You don't know if you deserve to speak. You don't even know what you would say. You only know that you don't want to kill what you can't use. Still, you hope to be born someday.
- It is now. You are reading these words. Are you afraid to touch them? Are you thinking about breathing? Are you a part of this story? You will live, and find out.

something is growling alongside my body on the edge of sleep

written by Isa van der Steen

something is growling alongside my body on the edge of sleep.
she hisses at being called a muse yet the idea sounds romantic to me.
mosquito insomnia, the blue eye of my phone blinks, I give in:

she hath no face, and yet her mind is shared
with mine, as it has been for all those years.
throughout the time her presence has appeared
but vanished soon as a connection nears.

fascinated by the lyric mind,
I envied those who had her on a leash.
but she is never just so much as kind
eating them alive, with pills booze fags hashish.

like le horla she clamps onto my heart - lungs - throat
I ache to write like Dylan
but I don't plan on being burnt like roast
I want the soar the height the good the whole the princess
the villain, but -

so long as I can't tame a simple form,
I will contain the ever brewing storm.

there there, she is sated, content to curl up beside me and purr me to
tomorrow.
I love her dearly. She'd never turn on me.

Gladly

written by Suzanne Balm

I come in small sizes only. I make myself of diamonds and glimmer when spoken to. My teeth are a row of white lies. I swim upwards in a sea of blood and let it drown out the sounds of hurt people.

I am vulnerable. Yes, you can touch me, but only the parts that you're supposed to, so I that can convince myself I willingly gave them away. Come and live inside of me, today is as good as any.

My voice is a thousand stinging pieces that splinter when I speak. I leave a few under your pillow in the night and place the rest of them under my tongue, where they can't hurt you.

There is nothing I have left to prove. I burn the evidence in the darkest corners of my mind to save you the discomfort of thinking twice. I pretend I am a hero for leaving you be.

Hide your lovers, for I crave to be a case of epistemic disobedience. I'd sell my soul for any single certainty. The only thing I hate more than these obsessions is the system that made me this way.

Be careful, love. You'll cut your fingers on the raw edges of my pain. But the glue is hot and soothing and the wires hide an empty pit of panic from your sight.

The truth is spilling out of me. Pitch-black lilies grow where it seeps into the ground. This is where I remember that I hold the compass, the key, the blade. This is my gate to keep.

Does it hurt enough for you to look away? You will no longer stain my sadness with your gaze. My suffering is mine and mine alone. Your mere presence is a capital offense.

I'll destroy you in the best way possible. I'll take every shred of power that you think you own and crush its empty shell. You built a cardboard empire that ignites with a single spark.

My scars are what make me a king. I fall apart with pleasure as I let go of my restraints. After an endless night, I will rise from my remains. And then I'll start anew.

Signature Crises

written by Patrick van Oosterom

“But Homo sapiens have not yet failed” – Greta Thunberg

I am here to say
That with these deforestation rates rainforests will disappear within
100 years,
That the government of the Maldives seeks to buy land in India
because their land is drowning,
That in the 1960s fish jumped out of rivers poisoned with DDT
because they couldn't stand the pain, and they preferred to die.

I am here to complain
Of having fits of lethargic despair,
Of knowing that it does not matter whether I sleep or talk,
Of sitting on the cold stones next to the refrigerator drinking Cola
straight from the bottle.

I am here to complain
That the most important skill to master
In this madly hot, madly hot century,
Is learning to dance
While the house is on fire.

I am here to propose
To think by day
And dance by night.

The Haunted House

written by Loes Boers

In front of your beautiful haunted house I stand
to find the ghost of the past,
the ripped wallpaper and
the half-finished whiskey glass.

Or to sit on a broken chair,
fall on the basement floor;
only seeing what is there,
always wondering is there more.

To this ghost of mine,
am I your ghost too
afraid to cross the line
scared to fall right through.

Void I want to hold
my transparent faux
I wish you had told
me where not to go.

