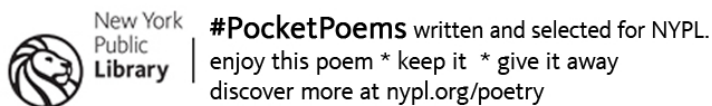


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Higgledy piggledy,  
Ernest H. Shackleton  
Couldn't man up for the  
Polar Bear Swim.  
*No bears in the South Pole*, he  
Geo-pedantically  
Whined but he knew he was  
Being a wimp.

*Adrienne Raphel*

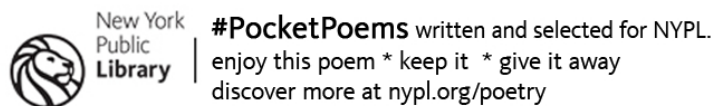


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## Heretofore Unuttered

As if god, despite his compulsions, were decent  
and hadn't the tendency to throw off  
all appearance of decorum, here I am  
admiring this single violet orchid.  
How lucky am I to go unnoticed  
or so I imagine, when, at this writing,  
there is a red-tailed hawk, somewhere,  
tracking the soft shrills of newborn songbirds—?

*Nicole Sealey*

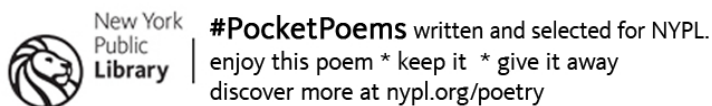


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## NO GHOST THO'

Pull a black pyramid  
from your mouth. Spit-glistened  
affair of sphere swallow  
not merely a theory of beauty.  
Province knows the boundary  
of what is fearful. The object  
called forth, more to say.  
Lead back to something.  
Belong here with me among  
the smallest of means.

*Katy Chrisler*



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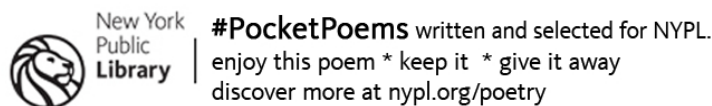
## A TRUTH THAT TELLS YOU

I wish for you a small, portable truth you can take  
anywhere—no foreign adaptors needed,  
no translation required and nothing lost in it.

Once, looking at a map, my daughter said,  
*A river is a line the world drew for us.* I wish for you  
a truth that stays true across any line drawn

by the world or its people, a truth that tells you  
wherever you arrive, you are welcome.

*Maggie Smith*



---

## Systemic Risk

You can analyze systemic risk according to how many bodies live or die  
If the system fails the broken bodies become invisible and/or hyper-visible  
The people are being born and dying  
They are enacting the invisibility of the security system through the exhibition of their  
naked bodies  
I eat corrupted data to keep my skin from becoming transparent  
I would rather be a defect of culture than a defect of data or character  
What is not observed gets more visible in relation to the strength of the surveillance  
It's better to deprive a few million people of food than to pull the plug on the global  
economy  
If the consumers don't buy your product then teach them the meaning of love

*Daniel Borzutzky*



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## Unconditional

If this black willow is calligraphy  
then this white sky's an invitation  
and requests the honor of your presence.  
And you—will you attend?

*Dora Malech*



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## Sun-Stuccos Caught Nearby In the Least

The image on my screen defeats the window  
in front of me; a shadow behind the moon;  
creation without prior text; LOVE as my first person.

Say one fruit for another fruit: Love, Apple, Ruth.  
To be while continuing a little dying breeze over  
and over again; till I go up, I am a case.

*Catherine Blauvelt, NYPL*



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## THE MOON LETS GO

Years and years from now the earth will gain  
another hour in its day, but I'll be dead then,  
and everyone I love will be gone, too. At daycare dropoff,  
my boys wave to me but kiss – *mwah! mwah!* – each other  
through the pre-K room's goodbye window,  
launching each smooch with a sticky hand and smacking it  
against the glass. The moon is small and bound to us by gravity  
that's slowly loosening its grip. I'd wanted them to love each other like this.

*Nancy Reddy*



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## Parable of Joan Mitchell

*Blue jail, teal jail, green jail, ochre jail, aqua jail, yellow jail, mustard jail, red jail, rose jail, magenta jail, platinum jail, charcoal jail, chartreuse jail, puce jail, pink jail, lilac jail, sunset jail, sail jail, soil jail, salmon jail, noise jail, blood clot jail, stair jail, rust jail, custard jail, snail shell jail, drip jail, grass jail, rhyme jail, dice jail, worm jail, circle jail, dot jail, clear jail, chrome jail, mail jail, air jail.*

Daniel Poppick



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## Plea

How when a body dies it becomes *the body*. No mind to all the mouths who named it, who knew it in quiet, who call for it now, unanswered. But know it: bear the cells' leaking out and pooling where they're pulled to, bluebottles lapping at these final outputs, fur around their mouths bloodied like winged wolves. Note them as markers, makers beyond you. Watch the body age beyond itself, wage against itself, overwintered. Count the cracks of cygnets hatching in June. Let the prayer come out your mouth, just let it. The light will regain its blueness, I know it.

\* originally published in *The Manchester Review*

Caitlin Roach



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## Helia

She eases us her brilliance upon us.

Slow. Careful.

Waking us with gentle hues that rock the soul like grandma's hands.

The brilliance of mid-day is a steady pulse.

She is proud of herself at the end of the day.

To rest she cloaks herself in the color of Queens.

First lilac. Then lavender. Then she drinks the wine of sleep.

Rhonda Evans, NYPL



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## Mango Mañanas

I reached up  
and picked a mango  
from my grandmother's tree

She cut it into slices  
added lime, salt and alguashte

That day we ate our native fruit  
under the tropical Salvadoran sun  
while a green little lizard looked up at our delicious fun.

María José Maldonado



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## world around the

The eye does not see itself as a place to live.  
The cruise ship parties on a bellyful of jellyfish.

Painted stars hold the cracked ceiling together.  
Light falls and the sea is supportive.

My debt shoves me aside and grins at the camera.  
When a number forgets where it started, it speculates.

Coins multiply in the frozen hearts of Bluefin tuna.  
This old coin cannot bear its own head.

*Caleb Klaces*



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## from *The Goodbyes*

Can I become closer to a portrait in my nature?  
Less like something overheard in town,  
but still a way to refer to oneself. Not  
me or you, we or they but more  
like Sylvia's dogwood is blooming &  
Susie's are in blossom too.

*Emily Sieu Liebowitz*



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## BEGINNING WITH A HORSE

A horse has six legs  
two belong to a man  
who might be Pluto  
disguised as the devil  
abducting a unicorn  
whose horn was used  
to purify a spring  
that whetted the infinite  
now behind us

*Alan Felsenthal*



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## My Attendant

He saved the seeds  
From an orange I ate.  
I like it when he does  
This but don't  
Need these seeds.  
"Good. I'll throw them."  
As I wrest the Ziploc  
From his hand  
I peer into the eyes  
Of my attendant.  
I see there the strings  
I have made taut,  
That they are made  
Of my own muscles.  
I see them waiting  
To be plucked by touch.

*Jessica Laser*



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## VIOLIN

A violin filling with blue dusk  
or else your voice  
is a grotto inside a waterfall,  
a house with four walls of rain  
outside of which the birds  
are patches of song  
scissored  
piecemeal  
from the light.

*Ian Brand, NYPL*



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The cosmos:  
a fluttering

colorful bird  
that each night, we take out

to play on our fingers  
as we sift through books

who eats small seeds  
that look like stars

*Mary Catherine Kinniburgh, NYPL*



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## The Hand People

A lot of what we know about earth comes from space  
The trucker has a crush on Terry Gross. "Lovers  
Of serial killers guarantee the persistence of art"\*  
Behind Cor-J seafood, big hooks bring to mind  
The bouncing movement of a branch freed of snow  
Tall woman in a cream pantsuit gripping the bar  
With one hand holds New Lease on Love  
Nails large round and flat like those of a saint

\*Quoted from Andrei Codrescu

*Callie Garnett*

---

## What Parks Are For

In a field, two Labrador retrievers  
roll together, tongues out.  
under an orange sky.

What have I lost that I cannot remember?

I think it is the color of that sky  
and what the two dogs were trying to say with their eyes.

I bark like a cloud.

*John Burns*



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## Soft

I have lost soft things  
suddenly turned stiff  
wept a wall of stone into my skin—  
but your yellow eyes can already see through it  
your moody meow already pricks up my ears  
your heft has made a home on my hip;  
I can't help but let you knead me  
paw your way in

*Jackie York, NYPL*



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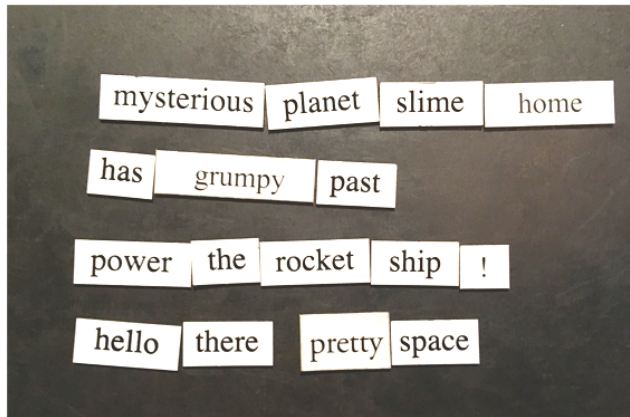


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*Caroline Reichardt*



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## Oda a Pura Belpré

Ay dulce Pura, tu nombre lo dice todo  
Siempre íntegra cual alma cálida en un mes de verano  
Tus dotes de contar y cantar se hacen palpables por doquier  
Con voz suave y sutil

Ay dulce Pura, tú que derrochas paz por donde quiera que vas  
Brindando alegría a chicos y grandes  
Con tus cuentos de antaño  
Y tu folklore colosal

Ay dulce Pura, a pesar de no estar mas aquí  
Tu espíritu brilla con luz sinigual  
Y tu legado continúa muy presente  
Tocando a toda la gente con tus espléndidos cuentos de siempre

*María Isabel Molestina Triviño*

---

## firefighter

I come from a long line of women who believed  
that it's better to be on fire than to be a fool  
so I'm teaching myself to cry again  
hoping that these embers will be extinguished  
hoping that at least one of us  
can know the joy of water

*Al Valentín*

---

## You

are rogue balloon caught in revolving ceiling fan  
speeding car in the emergency lane  
the dog who wanders too far without a leash.

I try to ground you like chancletas do beach blankets  
and hand holds on rollercoasters.

But we're the prizes discarded in the cereal box  
socks lost in every wash  
and the farmer's market haul  
we swear we'll eat before it goes bad.

*Katrina Ruiz*



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## Monday, May 15, Sappho, WA—

a logging chapter is closed. Those  
country maidens were good riders,  
flowers blooming in an old bathtub,  
cows grazing in an orchard. Their  
garments neat as they should be. A  
-cross the dirt road, peasant-girls  
on the front porch—oh,  
anyone would want to live  
in the fenced area nearby. Anyone  
would want a dress around her feet.

*Sarah Dowling*



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Escribes un hayku  
en una hoja de cuaderno.

Arrancas la hoja  
la doblas y la doblas.

Por la ventana  
se va el hayku  
a las estrellas  
hecho avioncito.

You write a haiku  
on a sheet from a notebook.

You tear it out  
and fold it and fold it.

Out the window  
the haiku heads  
for the stars  
made into a little airplane.

*Raúl Hernández*  
\*translator: John Burns



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## Shipwrecked

I feel no wonder  
Looking down on my ship run aground  
Decks and helm deserted  
By the rage that filled the sails and rowed the oars  
I can only wander along this salt coast  
Collecting and discarding the memories I will need  
As I continue on without them

*Grace Yamada, NYPL*



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## [Every bare tree]

Every bare tree  
is a silent  
chorus of itself.

*Robin Myers*



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## 4ever 2morrow

I live in a world of my own  
There's no place like home  
Somewhere that makes you  
Want to write a poem  
Just imagine a nation  
Where you can use your imagination  
As a passport to the future  
Using creation to get away like vacation

*Mario Santana*



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## CONNECTIONS

All of my trains  
arrive seconds too  
late to catch your  
closing doors.

*Jason Baumann,*  
*NYPL*



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## Royal Enfield

If we could remain  
in that over-embrace a motorcycle demands  
you think, as a dog  
crosses the pavement  
like a black stain,  
your head lowered  
to feel the speed rattle  
through his spine, the crowns of the trees  
recede into the distance and you tighten your grip  
now that you're being pursued  
by an idea: in the shade of those trees  
together you will leave the motorcycle's body  
where the chrome will fail to rust  
and walk  
each clutching a helmet.

*Silvina López Medin*

\*Translated from the Spanish by: Jasmine V. Bailey

\*\*This poem first appeared in *Brooklyn Rail's InTranslation*



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## *I Give You My Heart*

I find myself on my feet with fifteen leaves. Everything carries its own light on the walls.

I woke up to slaughter—my heart opening to cemeteries of moon, to parasites, to drizzle, the mud crowning the undergrowth with immense sadness. I knew death when I dressed in my uniform. I found the index of solitude: my country in legal jargon, its piety, its fiction—*Yes. It loves me, really.* I give my blood as the blood of all fish.

*Ricardo Alberto Maldonado*



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## Sun-Stuccos Caught Nearby In the Least

The image on my screen defeats the window in front of me; a shadow behind the moon; creation without prior text; LOVE as my first person.

Say one fruit for another fruit: Love, Apple, Ruth. To be while continuing a little dying breeze over and over again; till I go up, I am a case.

*Catherine Blauvelt, NYPL*



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## When I say I'm Spanish, I mean

Yo soy Puertorriqueña through blood. Culture runs through my body, stops at my mind and my tongue speaks the language foreign to my ancestors. Native tongue pronounces a mixture of failure and American. I rarely speak Spanish but I feel it in my mothers hands when she tames my curls. When I walk into her sofrito scented kitchen and open arms. Saint candles burning the day away, my ancestors humming in my blood.

*Alysia Vargas*



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## Boys Accidentally Set Sail While Painting Yacht

A logbook of dirty Mad Libs.  
Hooks without bait. Shucked skin.

They vow never to speak of what happens, then nothing worth telling happens.

The moment of day when sky is dark and sea is light reminds each of his other.

*Jared Hayley*



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Language

Nobody

will believe

I reached so far

on this old vehicle

of thought

*Carla Faesler*



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## MOLECULE

Each molecule of water, bound by a  
limelit orgy in the elevator before  
internship to some cubic unit of sea reef  
requiting birth, causes an eddy of  
causality where sedimented rings appear  
as vertical chutes in the heat of the  
moment, leading straight from surface to  
core, obfuscating the sweatshop of  
historical accretions madly revolving to  
support the spectacle drinking from a  
cup, seeing “no manner of similitude.”

*Cole Heinowitz*



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## Kintsugi

Gold in the cracks. Thank god the vessel was broken. Why did I believe that repair would never mend it back to its beauty? Over the years, mending has become a monotony. Never mind the slow burn of a porcelain birth—kiln of a million live embers. Repair this ever with precious metals, let its fractures show. Soak the shattered thing overnight in whole milk. Morning, wait for its whole.

Apply adhesive—  
pinch of gold, silver of ash.  
She was broken, thank  
god.

*Sally Wen Mao*

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All of my trains  
arrive seconds too  
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*Jason Baumann,*  
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