

Harvest International Fall 2021

FACE TO FACE ZINE



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Hoorah! Face to Face!

MIRIAM HERCEG

Schools reopen. Clubs reopen. Events are face to face.

And people wonder why it hasn't been like that all along and they don't think about anything else that doesn't concern them and they don't think about the five million people that have died because of one virus and they don't think about the increasing anxiety, depression, abuse, and eating disorders. They think about going clubbing and complain about the rule that forces them to wear a mask, so they can't make out with random strangers on the dance floor.

But still, we all shared a sigh of relief when we heard that events are face to face again and the children can go back to school because we, too, don't think about the people that have died because we, too, are selfish and stupid and self-absorbed.

Yes, schools did reopen, and some events are face to face, but the pandemic has not ended yet, and people are still dying, and people are still sick and just because everything seems fine now, that doesn't make them any less

Dead.

And it doesn't make her alive again. The fearless woman, who seemed fine before the pandemic because she had everything: the beautiful children, and the husband, and the great house, and the adorable pets.

But also, the pain. The pain, which possibly got worse over the pandemic.

But the schools reopened, and the clubs reopened, and the events are face to face.


Why are we celebrating after a fight that is not yet won and that we just can't seem to win?





April Eyes

Marina Torres



Eyes that lock, fix the broken clock
What time are you? Where have you been?
Passing through into two sides
Of the same whole
Torn apart by a ticking tide
And rains which froze the soul
Through eyes which have paid
Toll after toll after toll.

Your father's eyes, your mother's gaze
Amazed at last by the hour you let
The rains spill into, and it slipped by
The young roses left behind the cry
Unchanged from when you were three
The monkey in your tree so spry so sweet so free.
You miss it all from twenty falls ago
And now you share a glare with the hour
Present.
But not a gift.

Hidden eyes
They stare to only things which cannot hold
your own
Broken, shuddered tight from any more rain.
You know too well the pain is met
with gentle brushing hands stung by the
honeybees
in your eyes, guarding your sweetness
From the ones you flee from.
The time you beg the clock will come
When you might look up at the sky again
And see the warmth of a kinder spring sun.

BLOOD THICKER THAN WATER

JESSICA CATAJOY

“COMMUNISM.

YOU'D KNOW ABOUT THAT, RIGHT?

YOU'D KNOW ABOUT THAT BECAUSE

YOU'RE CHINESE, RIGHT?”

MASKS OBSCURE OUR FACES.

THE STOPLIGHT SHIFTS TO RED.

CARS COME TO A STOP.

NO BUS YET IN SIGHT.

I SIT AND I HEAR THE WORDS EMERGE

FROM THEIR MASK, FROM BAD FAITH.

WORDS EMBEDDED IN MY MIND, AND ON MY BODY.

FAMILIAR TO ME, WHETHER AWARE OR UNAWARE

TO THE PERSON SITTING ACROSS FROM ME.

A STRANGER WHOSE WORDS I KNOW.

A STRANGER WHO BELIEVES THEIR WORDS KNOWS ME.

MALICE DRIPS FROM THE PERSON'S MASKED MOUTH,

BEMOANING THE DECLINE OF “BETTER DAYS”.

BLAMING ME FOR THE FAILURES OF COMMUNISM IN CAPITALIST AMERICA.

SLURS, SLIGHTS, BIRTHED FROM SYSTEMATIC RACISM.

ALL CONDENSED INTO ONE MOMENT

WITH ONE WOMAN, ME, AWAITING THE BUS, THE SAME AS THEM.

A DAUGHTER BORN AND RAISED IN AMERICA,

BY A MOTHER WHO LIVED AMONG THE BAGUIO PINES

AND A FATHER WHO YEARNS TO RETURN TO MANILA

OCEANS SEPARATING US FROM THE MAINLAND, YET

CONNECTED BY OUR BLOODLINES AND SCARRED BY

THE IMPERIALISM FOR TAFT'S BELOVED “LITTLE BROWN BROTHER”.

MY ANGER SEEPS OUT IN A THIN TRICKLE,

BUT THE ANGER BOARS INSIDE ME.

WAVES CRASHING OVER ONE ANOTHER—

THE SEA THAT NEVER CEASES.

I CURL INWARD TO KEEP THE ANGER FROM SPILLING

BUT WHAT I'VE KEPT DEEP, DEEP, DOWN

UNFURLS LIKE A SAIL CAUGHT BY A FURIOUS WIND.

BEFORE THIS PERSON'S WORDS ERASE ME.

BEFORE THIS ERASURE SPLITS INTO THE BEFORE AND AFTER.

BEFORE THIS ERASURE BECOMES ANOTHER ITERATION OF GUILT AND BLOOD SPILT.

I REALIZE

THIS MOMENT HAS BEEN

RE-LIVED OVER AND OVER.

THERE IS HARDLY ANYTHING DISTINGUISHING

THE BEFORE AND THE AFTER.

BECAUSE THESE MOMENTS BLUR TOGETHER

BECAUSE THESE MOMENTS REMAIN THE SAME IN THE END.

BECAUSE IN TRYING TO DISCERN THE CATALYST OF THIS ONE MOMENT

JUST FURTHER PROLONGS A CONFRONTATION WITH THE TRUTH.

OUR ANGER,

THE UNSPILLED BLOOD OF MY ANCESTORS,

COURSES THROUGH MY VEINS, LIVES IN ME.

I STAND, FACE TO FACE WITH

THE PERSON SITTING ACROSS FROM ME.

AND I SAY,

“I WOULDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT,

BUT I KNOW WHO I AM.”

THE STOPLIGHT SHIFTS TO GREEN.

CARS DRIVE ON BY.

THE BUS PULLS UP IN FRONT OF US.

Try Harder: Luis Velasquez

Some people never take chances.

Me? I'll be the first to throw my hands up, raise my voice and taunt the starving beasts.
Stupid if you ask me.

but

I do it.

There's no reward. There's little glory.

but

I like it.

In between the squealing and mooing somewhere in that chaos, there's a silence.
It's brief, but a perfect chance to slip away.

Disappear.

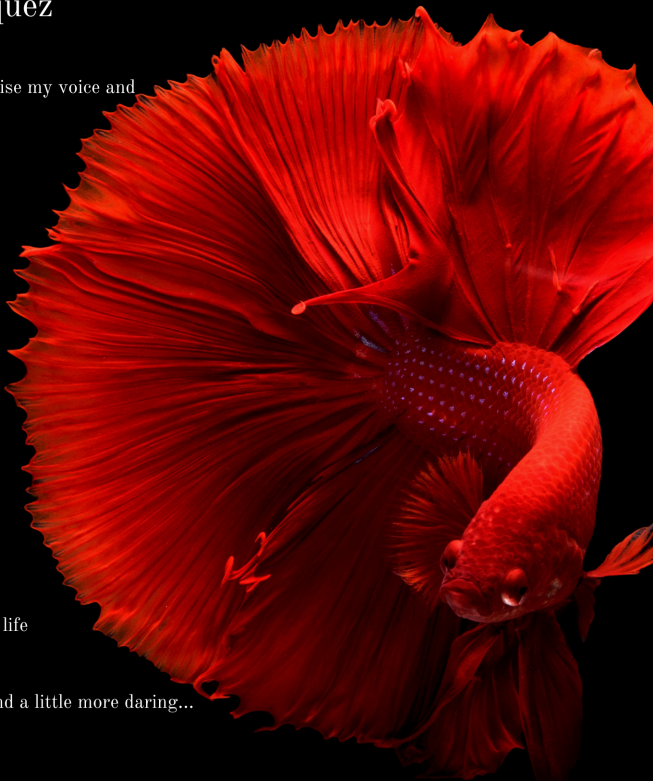
Eventually they'll find me.

"It's you!" they'll roar,
and ram bills down my throat
pierce my chest with paperwork
and smash my skull with meetings.

I'll reappear, broken battered
cursing every single wretched moment in my life
where I never decided to say "no."

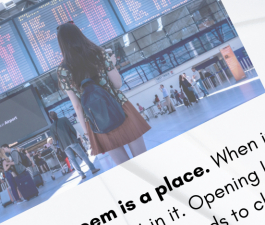
With the work done, the hunger satisfied.
I feel a little taller, a little more confident, and a little more daring...

Some people never take chances.
What a boring life.



THE BILLY CLUB

Liam Corley



A poem is a place. When it begins,
you are not in it. Opening lines see us
finger a few enticing words to choose a destination.
The bags we lug to the plane overflow with necessities,
some quite suitable, but most far removed from
poetic reality. On short flights, perfumed attendants
waft through the cabin, adjusting shades to let in more

or less light, as the poem calls for. Longer flights
are crewed by muscular stewards who prowls aisles
when seatbelt lights are on. They seize the restless
and hurl them out emergency exits in little
ceremonies of exclusion. Some passengers thus ejected
sprout wings from their desire and flap behind
the receding jet of words, hoping to catch up, even

if it's not for the best. Arrivals snap us back.
We end in a tropical spot with no proper jet-way,
deplane smack into humid air, and wonder
which of our bags was lost this time.

We step to earth as the massive engines
die, leaving us in silence punctuated only
by the oft-misunderstood cry of the hyacinthine
macaw, a noise so grating we question
whether this journey was worth
the always non-refundable ticket.



PREDATOR AND PREY

SKYLA SANTACRUZ

I.

I put my snout to the dirt,
Yearning for the scent of anything,
The size of this prey no longer matters,
As my stomach growls and fights until,
At last!
A deer and its fawn.

I scan the brush, searching for leaves rustling,
The slightest patch of auburn fur,
I spot you, my dear lunch.
Claws out I lurch forward,
Drool dripping from my lips,
Yet, I freeze.

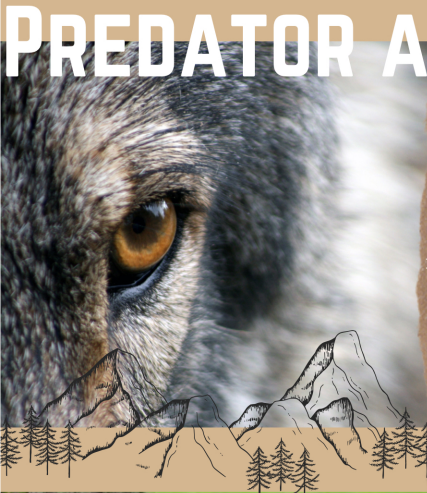
For I recall the warmth
Of my mother's tongue.
Suddenly, the memory

II.

Isn't far away. Our lives are so simple yet small.
Awaiting our painful deaths.
A Prey that never stands a chance,
to the dangerous maw of predators.

A beautiful relic to the land and the trees
Born to be hunted by man or beasts.
Every trip for food we must
Use the brush and trees for cover,
Holding our breaths, unmoving,
For who knows what stranger,
Awaits for our hides.

As my fawn huddles close to me,
We pray you are different,
Staring into cold, murderous eyes,
Shaking and trembling in fear.





THANK YOU FOR READING!

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