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Barbara Daniels

Call Now

This poem is not available in stores.
It creates its aesthetic, is wound
with your mother's red hair. This poem

presses its shoulder against the scraping
complaints of birds. Look, this poem
hands you the moon on silver paper.

Watch as it fiddles with a shock
of white blooms. You don't need syntax;
you don't need parsing. Call now

for a special discount. The frozen river
is breaking up, plucking rectangular slabs
of ice and rushing them past you

like broken windows. You need
to wake from sleep now, leave the soft
lips of dream fish, light that slows

as it enters water, and welcome sweet
ministries of air. You need to return
from the dreaming place, get up, call now.

Audrey Friedman

Reaching for Hypnos

I linger at the closed window,
with sleep on the outside, cock
one shoulder back and touch
a lip to the pane, a kiss that ripples

the watery glass. I want to dive
into darting schools of dreams.
Will I agitate the trout or mackerel
if I study the iridescence of fish

scales, each stunning streak a dream
to pluck from the blue? With one hooked,
I'll no longer fiddle with the quilt, but
will glide through magnificent shimmer.

Fun Wherever We Are

Sometimes morning sounds like metal being bent and you can hear the floor
surrender to the low warble of the ceiling fan. It's difficult to prop yourself up
when all of a sudden serendipity gets plucked off your shoulder and you're expected
to remember every last face of every last woman you tried to seduce the night before.
Other times morning is a song played over and over, a song that skips in the same
place: The window facing east is open; it will shake slowly but looks and feels more
like a planned escape. The other one faces north and it's closed, locked and painted
shut. That one will be a blank canvas to write her name—the name of the woman
 sleeping
on her side, back to the door, hair drifting in the sheets. This is how Jane once
 explained
it all; blame tucked neatly into the corner of her smile, recrimination on the edge of
her lip ready to fall into her mouth. Jane said *Stop. Listen Dick. Listen. Listen.*
 Listen.
But I never want to stop, I want to fish for answers to fit into the three corners of
 this
triangular world. I want to fiddle with questions until they bend along the sharp
 curve

John Roche

Puck's Song

Pluck music from my shoulder
Pluck sleep from the devil's own sea
Pluck fiddle bones playing the old cold wind and rain
Pluck fish from the evening's paper
Pluck dreams from tomorrow's window
Pluck and pluck and pluck again
Sleep fiddle a kiss from your cold fish lips is all I crave
Put your queer shoulder to the window my plucky lad
A fish for your troubles a kiss for your brow
Sleep sleep my wandering fiddle sleep below her window
Soldier on soldier on you fishy stiff lip
Soldier on you mustachioed fiddler
You fish peddler of dreams at any maid's window
Pluck on!

John P. Cleary

Sleeping Alone

Fiddle with your blankets, still
Sleep does not come. Against the
Window brushes the wind, a winter
Lip pressing its cold kiss.
Fish for his old shirt, wrap your
Shoulder in it, smell his smell, and
Pluck some memories from your restless mind.

Christina Lovin

Instructions for Mud Season

Scour the sides of the unplowed
unnamed side road at the first hint
of spring when snow-packed ditches
yield tentative tendrils
of fiddle-head fern. Cook them slowly
with fat back and garlic then
sleep alone with the window open
on the vernal equinox. Let
the wind caress your limbs
remembering what it was like
to be a dormant polliwog
in some cold primordial soup or city.
Bring the taste of tender comfrey
to your lips and savor the bitter
bite of sorrel in the broken
bowl of your hand cast life. Become
a bottom dweller a flounder
a fish submerged in sadness
soundless as a fathom down
breathing in the rank solitude
through the gills of your isolation
breathing out bright memories
that float to the top of your mind
and burst like roughly handled
jewelweed. Reach out touch
with your bare hand the shoulder
of a stranger in a crowded place
then look away without a word
as if you've never met never will.
It's all right. Don't worry
that it's still March. There is time
while the sun continues to recede
at six to sit and pluck the last unbroken
string on your smashed mandolin
in the long dark evenings yet to come.

Bob Marcacci

fiddle on in the long dawn of dreamers

fiddle on in the long dawn of dreamers
let even sleep awhile slip you yon slip you on
usurper or supernumeror all window as it were
all whirled and welcome all lip and lather
in a fish slumber numbering up one after another
wrist elbow and shoulder you can taste it
so ready to ripen to pluck

Dorine Jennette

Melatonin Song: The Window

I have all day
to bare this shoulder,

all night to fiddle
with sleep like a fish—

though its breaths don't pass
its lips, it parts them anyway.

I borrow my pluck from that
which crashes against the glass.

David Seaman

Loss

For her
I wrote
Down all we
Did fiddling around
Last year in Beijing
Every little moment

So I start
Lying asleep
Even as the train
Enters the station
Pre-dawn

We meet in the window
In front of the
New subway line
Doubting the possibility of
Our future but
Willing to try

Love
Is not a word on our lips, not even
Possible for strangers like us

Friendship
Is just fishing for a connection
Something amazing, distant,
Hoped for

So we take the subway
Halfway around Beijing
Open to new
Understandings
Like how to revere Buddha
Devotion to Confucius
Entering the hutongs
Riding a taxi shoulder to shoulder

Poetry in Tang dynasty fixed forms
Links our souls across the hemispheric distance
Until we chance another meeting in America
Carefully busy with museums and games but closeness

Kills the poetic fantasy and plucks out our heart.

Chuechu Synaesthesia

(after the manner of Karl Young)

PO ET	PLU CK	YO UR	LU TE	STRI NGS
MUSI CIAN	SHOU LDER	YO UR	FID DLE	AND BOW
ART IST	PAI NT	FI SH	WAT ER	WIN GS
LOV ER	SLE EP	UN DER	BED ROOM	WIN DOW
MO ON	KI SS	HER LIP	AS SHE	SIN GS

Riddle

Fiddle sleep wiggle in the window

Sleep fish keep this cup at my lip

Window winnow over my shoulder

Lip slip tip flip on a trip in sleep

Fish lip dish wish minnows fiddle

Shoulder holder sleep and pluck

Pluck fiddle suck fish muddle riddle

Steve D. Dalachinsky

the fiddler's fish story

while plucking my fiddle
i pluck the fish scale from
my lower lip

my unaware shoulder
falls into a deep sleep and
my fiddle falls out the
window

gold fish lament

don't fiddle about i tell my gold fish
stroking its lower lip
in an attempt to put it to sleep

i pluck a feather from my shoulder
that alighted there
as our pillow was tossed
about by a sudden gust of wind
that vaulted thru the window

Pearl Pirie

dream rains thick as a swim

parting lip of fish darts back into weed
and murk, ruffles ruffles, bubbles release.
calves are blue water, veiled window. strained free
can it be called such? swaying gravity

rain coursing down back of who was cloud,
submersible motion soaking off flies.
no island to rely on, this body-water, bound
to land, shoulder of sand. pluck the lilies,

white toes, from doze-float. dashed grains used to hold
firm when massed. accumulated estate told,
dispersed, meaning to baubles, scree of dirt.
what tracks off? neck-broke, flat fiddle steps. dearth
of calluses, tenderfoot, a weak dirge,
seek shady corner retreats, little toad.

in gazebo

perspiring shoulder and lip of the cola
attracts music through the window –
the wasp, that fiddle for sweet. wave
and pluck a note for its paper nest and
my own, sleep in treacle, fish off
Guatemala's roadside stands for
potable water and Yorkshire puddings

Fiddle

Legible fish wrapped in sleep
violate lengthwise
where silence plucks sylphs shed
by a plush boat's

sinew of felonies pulped in traction
florid hushes a polished hull shoulders
to save the boat's skin with lures
ordered by parliament

divide into paragraphs the risk
of surge lint fraud husk
to imperil fevered lips aching
to block thresholds with sculptures

of botched holdups
gaze fixed on divestment
of pagodas that have launched
fish thrust into plumed ships'

slips pillaged by caretakers'
lips pelted by spills spelled out
in lira paid to a window
to audit a fiddle.

Carla Girtman

Ocean Song

Under the window, near the sea
Trembling lip sings sad stories
By mermaids who pluck strings
Of harps against a bare shoulder.
I sit by the window, bow against fiddle

Harmonize with the mermaid's harp
Joining songs. Seductive dreams
Invade my sleep until morning's rays
Chase the splash of a fish tail
Beneath the ocean's wave.

Amanda Earl

one

before jumping over the moon the insomniac cow
who had a lot of pluck pressed on the lip of the fish
who wouldn't shoulder the burden of sleep choosing to fiddle
then chucked him out the window

two

the fish who walked in his sleep
was astonished to feel a press of his lip
by the deranged insomniac cow who decided
for some reason to pluck the fiddle from the fish's gills
then chuck him out the window

three

the fiddle felt the pluck of its strings by the gills of a fish
and over his shoulder, from the side of his eye
witnessed with horror the hoof of the mad insomniac cow
press the fish's lip and chuck him out the window

Jeff Harrison

Lilacs

fish, sand, & bone
speak in a fiddle lip
as rain against a window
place, Verser, your hand upon a lyre
as a shoulder to a wheel
the pluck of a lyre cast their (oceans,
fish, sand, & bone) memory as knucklebones
whereupon memory borrowed lilacs, and indeed lilacs
pushed through sleep - oh, Memory, speak, instead,
of they who trade lilacs in
favor of fish, sand, & bone

Contributor's Notes

John P. Cleary is a poet from Elmira, N.Y.

Barbara Daniels's book of poems, *Rose Fever*, was recently published by WordTech Press. She received two Individual Artist Fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and a Dodge Full Fellowship to the Vermont Studio Center.

Steve Dalachinsky's books include *A Superintendent's Eyes* (Hozomeen Press 2000) and his PEN Award-winning book *The Final Nite* (complete notes from a Charles Gayle Notebook, Ugly Duckling Presse 2006).

Amanda Earl's chapbook *Welcome to Earth: poem for alien(s)* is fresh out of the oven from Bookthug. Her other chapbooks are *Eleanor* and *the Sad Phoenician's Other Woman* (above / ground press, 2007 and 2008).

Audrey Friedman received an MFA in Poetry from Vermont College in January 2005. She is a Contributing Editor for *Hunger Mountain*.

Carla Girtman and her family live and work in Central Florida. Carla has recently been published in the e-zines *Flashshot: Daily Genre Micro-fiction* and *Clockwise Cat*.

Jeff Harrison has publications from MAG Press, Writers Forum, Persistencia Press, and Furniture Press and two e-books: one at xPress(ed) and one at Blazevox.

Dorine Jennette (formerly Dorine Preston) has published poems, essays, and reviews in journals such as *The Journal*, *Ninth Letter*, *Memorious*, *Coconut*, *Court Green*, and *The Georgia Review*. She now earns her keep as a copyeditor for university presses.

J. A. Lee is an Albuquerque writer, bookseller, and publisher.

Christina Lovin is the author of *What We Burned for Warmth* and *Little Fires*. Her work has been generously supported on several occasions with grants from the Kentucky Foundation for Women and the Kentucky Arts Council.

A high-school English teacher, Bob Marcacci lives in Vacaville, California with his wife and son. Read more of Bob's poetry at <http://marcacci.blogspot.com>.

John Roche is an Associate Professor of English at Rochester Institute of Technology, where he advises the literary magazine *Signatures* (<http://www.rit.edu/signatures>). His full-length poetry collections, *On Conesus* (2005) and *Topicalities* (2008) are available from Foothills Publishing.

David Seaman is a professor of French and scholar of the avant-garde living on the coast of Georgia. His special interest is in visual poetry, and he participates in the Lettriste movement. He and his wife recently lived in China.

Alex Stolis is the author of six chapbooks. His sixth chapbook, *small confessions & pebbles of regret*, was a collaborative effort with the Austrian Poet Michaela Gabriel. His first full-length collection, *A Wilderness Arcade*, is forthcoming from Bewrite Books.

Submissions for *use these words* issue two: By January 1, 2009, send a brief contributor's note and 1—5 poems, each using all of the following words, in the body of an e-mail to usethesewords@gmail.com:

pillow, tantrum, silver, roof, vacant, atlas, break