

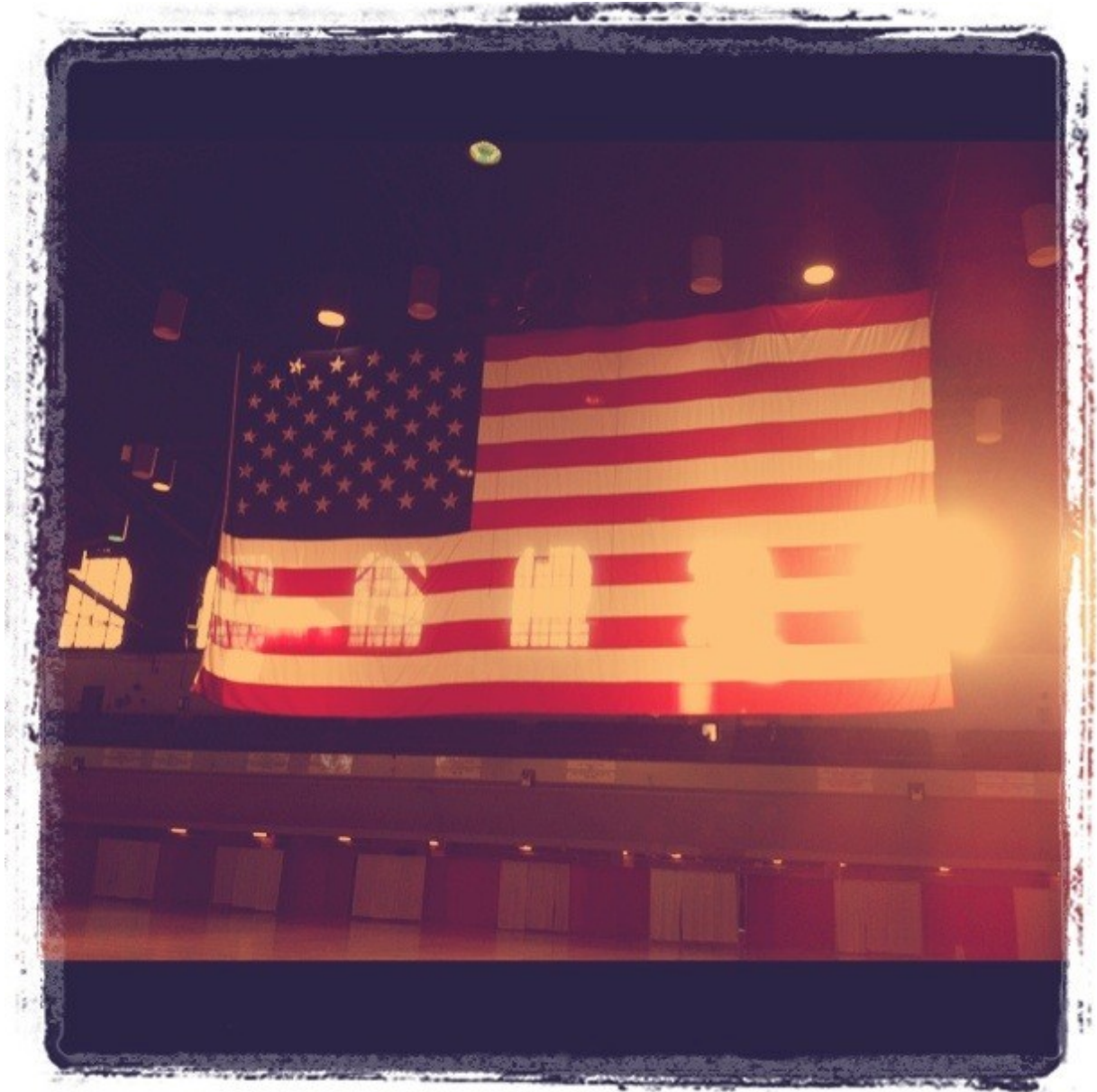
# THE NEXXUSS, Volume 11



"people getting words to people that don't get words"

**Cover Design by:**

**Annie Perconti**



**"words are not so important as to be vaulted away, nor are they worthless enough to throw away, so we give them away"**

**-DP-**

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## That's The Difference

If I could meet my dad  
when he was 37 years old  
as I am now

I'm sure he would  
not have a gay daughter  
and I'm sure he would never  
drink cheap beer  
just to make himself  
feel better or  
smoke cigarettes with regret

I'm sure  
he would go  
to work with purpose  
and never want more  
from life or anyone else

especially himself

By: Keith Landrum

## **Depression Glass**

the evening  
hears the chickens cluck  
they eat tomato seeds  
from an attentive keeper  
the spider lady plants  
lean against the old wood shop  
lavender hookers  
the sun is dripping  
down the house's western  
grapevine growing side  
and the wind chimes  
are playing  
counting flowers on the wall  
by the statler brothers  
the garden is in a state of grand decline  
purple faced petunias  
who don't know  
not to be beautiful  
float upward after drinking rain  
the picnic table  
has a centerpiece  
of foxfire  
glowing  
for the half august moon  
the smell  
of fall  
a notion  
harbored  
within the breeze  
upon my face  
i fear the coming winter  
and  
for two hundred year old trees  
roots weakened  
by shifting soil  
that remembers  
native curses uttered  
this earth parched for water  
of provincial people  
composed  
and  
carbon bonded  
of a more  
egalitarian  
molecule

## Dream Distillery

This is the place where dreams are made. It's far from fancy, but it suits me just fine. The shellac finish of the bar top is patchy and worn, from the travel of thousands of elbows and pint glasses. Two TVs set to different sports channels bark at each other from opposite corners of the bar, each drawing the attention of half of the pub's dozen customers.

In this neighborhood, the drinkers are mostly of the white-collared variety, and their loosened ties dangle like slack nooses as they commiserate about the state of the stock market. But that doesn't matter to me. I'm not here to make friends. Neither am I here to get stock tips or wallow in depression. No, I'm here only as an observer. I don't belong here. Not like they do.

To me, Ed's Cocktail Lounge is the door to the imaginable universe. Partly it's the gin, softening my own doubts; but mostly it's the people around me, spilling their unhappiness. They say it's *the world* they're dissatisfied with, but I know better. Somewhere in those collective pools of regret and lager, they have something to offer me: the brutal honesty of life. And, as a writer, I drink up their stories, bottle them to vintage somewhere deep inside my head. Their losses become my gain. And for that, I thank them.

Ed watches me from my seat—my usual at the center—and reaches over the stretch of faded mahogany to offer me another drink.

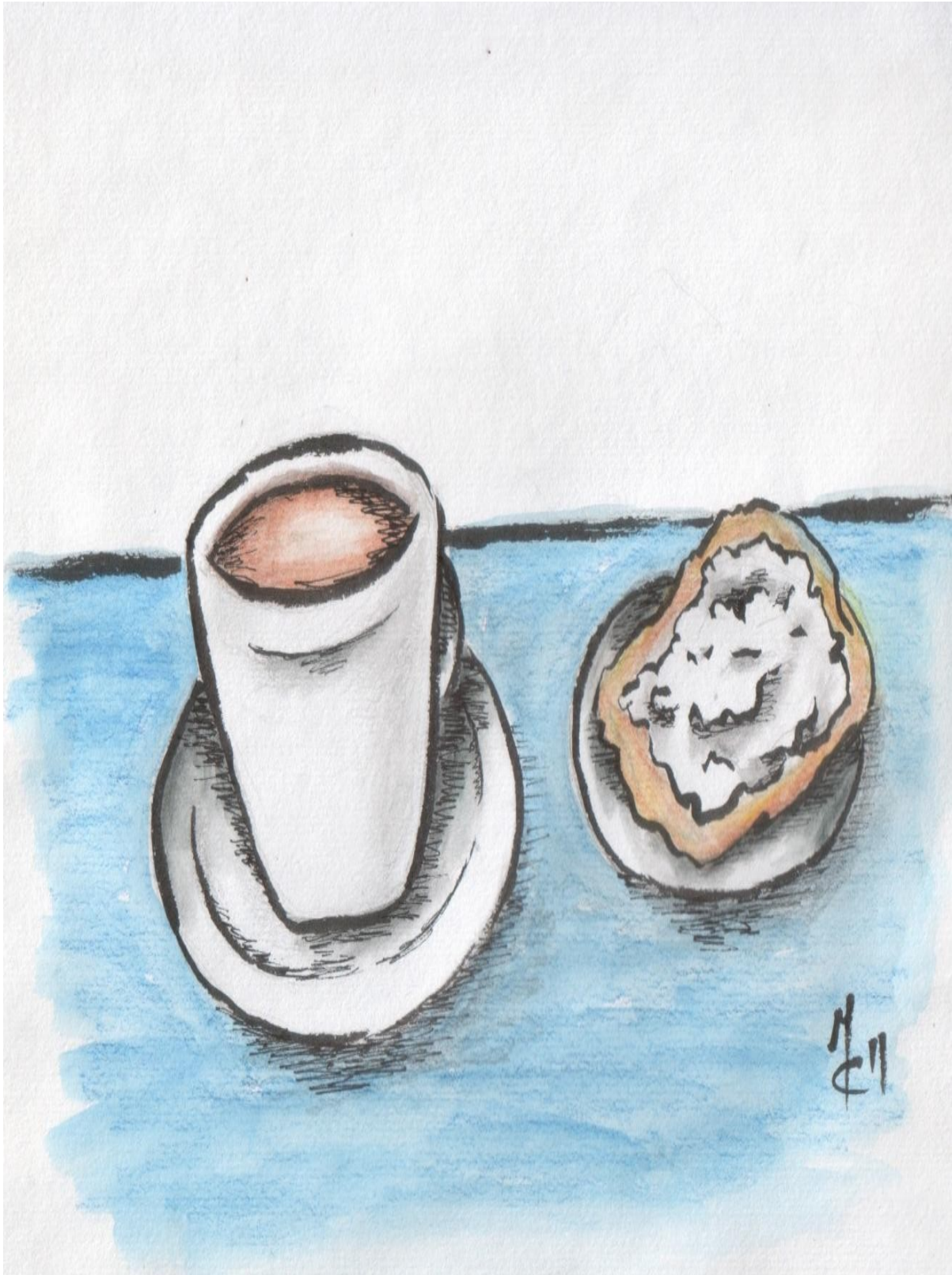
He's back tonight. My least favorite customer.

Sure, he always pays, and he tips decently, but I see the way he looks past me in my own bar, even as he's taking his, what? Fifth? Sixth drink of the night? It's like I'm not even here. All he sees is his drink, and the look he gives it isn't one of want; it's need. It's pure animal lust, disgusting.

I often wonder what goes through his head as he sits hunched over in his barstool—closed off, guarded—like a boy in a bubble looking out at the world through two inches of plastic. His eyes have scoured every last inch of my bar, from wooden floor to unfinished ceiling, from happy hour businessman to lady's night out, and yet he's never strayed from that barstool.

It's the seat directly in the middle, and for being as central as it is, he doesn't speak to the others. Refuses it, even when they say hello. He's quiet. Sad-looking. Keeps to himself, like a man with a secret worth keeping only to himself. Only, it's no secret, pal. We all know you're a drunk. We all know the clichés—that you'll never become anything more than this, that you hate your life that you wish you were one of us.

I'd like to think that maybe one day he can find the same happiness my other patrons have... But he's not going to find it at the bottom of that empty gin glass.



“Morning At Home”

By: Micael Chadwick



## The Manner

of their going shone through mist dew  
they lived on the most threadbare of  
carpets slept rattling upon floorboards  
nobody really cared where they were  
no fixed abode is an honor in court  
sometimes seeing them within pigeons  
soaring over The Liberties or down by  
that river their souls locked within cells  
i don't claim they had hearts always and  
yet at times they may have saved many  
without knowing Butt Bridge oh yes cute  
old Sam Beckett knowing where his bread  
was buttered claimed to walk don't digest  
one word apply roughage with due measure  
slice ego as if it was an egg write not faction  
but facts i rest my case upon a sling arrow ah!

By: Sean Patrick Carey

## **F-16**

The sky is blue today  
For once  
no haze  
no smog  
no clouds  
It's beautiful, an endless ocean  
I watch as an F-16 swims by  
like a shark on the hunt  
and for the first time in my life  
I feel  
tiny  
unimportant  
I feel  
human

By: Michael D. Goscinski

## I Always Was

echoes of stillness  
pulsate within  
your face etched  
in my blindness

lips trail tear  
stained memories  
left behind in the  
soullessness of ~ us

simplistic promises  
harsh realities  
push against  
darkness, smothered  
in denial

incredulous heart  
can not stand the  
roar ~ god damn the roar  
this sham out of control

your finger tips  
play mine as I clutch  
emptiness never knowing  
shallow could hold so much

cold graveside eyes  
look through me as  
though I were not here

Asshole ~ I always was

By: PD Leitz

### **Short thought in form**

I would die  
if my  
wife did.  
tho she does not  
believe me, I  
fear it is honest.

or –

A DISAGREEMENT OF SORTS

I would die,  
pass from physical life, cash in, check out,  
croak, decease, meet my demise, my maker,  
go, depart, drop out, expire, kick it, kick in,  
pass away, kick off, peg out, pip, pop off, become extinct,  
annihilated, silenced, fall to the long sleep,  
snuff it, snuff out, perish, succumb, swelt, go to my fathers ,  
breathe my last, shuffle off this mortal coil, give up the ghost,  
kick the bucket, cash out my checks, meet my end,  
toes up, tits up, push daises, fail to exist, cease thriving  
if my wife did.  
tho she does not believe me, I  
fear it is honest.

By: Jhon Baker



“ No Escape”

By: Pam Tucker

**A cast of thousands**

cast no shadow  
of thousands  
the pearls, the swine  
anyway you play it  
up down  
in out  
saw a vision  
the vision saw me  
the vision got scared and ran away

debonair air meets lungs undone  
the wheel needs a few good shoulders  
i know where the music goes  
when it  
gets off  
work  
shake your empire  
call out for delivery  
hoodlums in every religion  
winter in every  
summer retreat

man said i am god  
god said ohhhhhhhhhhhh man

they look so good  
in bed  
go to sleep now

all the children went inside  
time  
for the real meaning of  
childhood  
to  
Fly:

## Numb And

number  
number  
number  
in your case  
6 channels  
3, 5, 8, 19, 25 and 43  
through 1 antenna  
900 channels via cable  
9 DVDs on the mantle  
32 flavors  
4 scoops tonight  
and like me you become  
number  
number  
number  
in my case  
24 cans  
a 6 pack  
2 22 ounce tallboys  
a 40  
a 12 pack  
4 pints  
1 smothered love  
and all this in 2 weeks  
who seek strength  
in numbers

By: John Burroughs

## **HUMANOSAURIA – A REPLY TO BUKOWSKI**

We fight like this  
Not born like this  
Made to be, like this,  
By family, society, bigotry & commentary  
The new-age digital tools never supersede the law of the fist  
Of man, knuckle-dragging dick-swinging rage machine  
Always searching for the answer  
To wrongs by adding another  
Results never vary, remain antagonistic from the playground to the  
dog pound  
Brute strength prevails over logic  
We are not born like this  
We are made like this in the human factory  
Engineered to hate, manufactured to breed, designed to lie  
We are the all ordinaries, the dead zone, mutated freaks with time to  
kill  
The pathetic, the apathetic, the synthetic  
Rushing head long to death  
With no laurels or victories to claim  
Spent entities, wasted lives, voided tickets.  
HUMANOSAURIA.

By: Teri Louise Kelly



## **Tired**

part 1

It is hard being  
sleepy in the night.  
so much so much

it is hard to think

by the moon  
is great

it is hard to sleep.

part 2

It is hard being tired  
in the night  
so much, so much

it is  
hard to think  
but the moon is great  
it is hard to sleep.

oh, daddy,  
it is hard to think  
when I'm tired

By: Jackson Grey Baker – seven years old



“Telescope”

By: Peter Schwartz

(Completely) centered. around you

It's a blank

those thoughts from the past

canvas without paint                      stripped bare

layers.            peeled.            like flaking skin.            until

the pink shows through

emerging life

standing alone

waiting...

feeling each deliberate movement creating

new birth

new breath

new cognition

for a new world

(completely) centered.

around you

By: Bruce Arlen Wasserman

## Our Führer Androgynous

It worked in sync with the rise  
of the Nazis. That great androgynous unconscious  
beast. Men smacked rhubarb  
on their gobs & donned hosiery; women  
wore Fruit of the Loom & smoked  
big stinking Havanas.

Hitler had discovered something  
about himself: there was a long-stem whiterose  
buried in his chest, his hips  
were fit for garters. His grim inner god,  
The Eternal Feminine.

He put it outside himself  
and tried to kill it there. It became the Jews,  
degenerate art, dwarves, Hans  
in Luck, the purple flowered

toothwort. It became every non or semi-  
threatening phantasmagoria  
in the world, but the end,  
he understood: the war

was lost. The masculine  
machine had nothing on the feminine perennial.  
They were two in the same.  
And the only way  
he could've killed one was to put other  
back inside,

where it belonged, and put a pistol  
to both.  
Victory for all.

## **GOOD NITE SWEET DREAMS**

You checked out  
while I'm still climbing autobus stairs  
once I took four seconals  
you thought it was funny  
now you said goodbye  
shut a door  
to a world  
that was a disappointment

By: Lois Michal Unger

## Double Dactyl Delight (which sounds like a pudding)

Comedy, tragedy  
two sides of history,  
rations of one counter-  
balance the other.  
Everything's ticketyboo.

Double dactyl Disaster

Political tragedy  
feminine apathy  
historical struggle  
for a vote was in vain.

Parliamentarians'  
continued shenanigans  
contemptible avarice  
disgraceful venality  
dishonour and shame.

By: Viv Blake



“Canada”

By: Kim Rockdale

## Open Sesame

Five decades  
She begins to rise  
She stretches her stiff muscles  
And yawns awake

I greet her warily  
yet  
Longingly  
Like the sister I never had  
And never knew I wanted

She is curry while I am raita  
The yes to my no  
The no to my yes  
But more than this

She wears tacky jewelry  
She paints her toenails midnight purple  
She buys strange spices she can't pronounce  
and throws them in her potions  
She dreams of kissing girls

Half a century  
She slept  
The weight of obligation her blanket  
Her eyelids tied shut with apron strings

She is a sesame pod  
With the slightest touch  
She will burst open  
and explode

She is ready  
I inhale her heady perfume

By: Sheri L. Tardio



“Critics constantly complain that writers are lacking in standards, yet they themselves seem to have no standards other than personal prejudice for literary criticism. (...) such standards do exist... three criteria for criticism: 1. What is the writer trying to do? 2. How well does he succeed in doing it? (...) 3. Does the work exhibit "high seriousness"? That is, does it touch on basic issues of good and evil, life and death and the human condition. I would also apply a fourth criterion (...) *Write about what you know*. More writers fail because they try to write about things they don't know than for any other reason”.

—William S. Burroughs, *"A Review of the Reviewers"*

"Nothing exists until or unless it is observed. An artist is making something exist by observing it. And his hope for other people is that they will also make it exist by observing it. I call it 'creative observation.' Creative viewing."

— William S. Burroughs (Ports of Entry: William S. Burroughs and the Arts)



**From the contributors to the recipients, I thank you for helping to make this a reality.**

**For anyone interested in learning more about, or to submit for future volumes of "take-it-to-the-street" please feel free to contact us @ [www.takeittothestreetpoetry.com](http://www.takeittothestreetpoetry.com)**

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