

# THE NEXXUSS VOLUME 16



RABBIT

Cover Art & Design  
By: Micael Chadwick

<http://www.micaelchadwick.com/>

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

-RD-

**Throw away your history books**

Vogue is all that really mattered  
anyway

Children  
visit Disneyland  
for half a days pay  
and get consumed  
by pop culture  
icons

So when dreams  
turn to nightmares  
at least they'll have  
their memories

...at least

By: Jeff Loquist

## **An Elongated Viewing**

Dead ahead stands Barry's tree;  
first step outside my front door  
rest on the step, glide on the swing  
rouses the incredible green hulk

pinus block the north  
past the south field an endless stretch of scrub trees  
timber to the west, and  
this east eating sky-scraper closes the coffin

poetic dithering roped with angel hair—  
sugar-laced prayers and hummingbird honey,  
haven and rebirth, and whispering-leaf denial  
are better left to clawed creatures

the looming thing only resurrects the date  
slowed down into hour increments, minutes,  
time-skewing last moments . . .  
don't plant a tree when I die  
whispering leaves will haunt the neighbors.

By: Wanda Morrow Clevenger

## Homecoming

Before she comes home,  
two bottles of beer  
will drip with rinse  
for show  
in the recycle bin transfer area,  
while a tumbler hides on kitchen counter  
for future fetch -  
free from alarms:  
creaky cabinet doors,  
crowded glasses.

Her bitter breath will kiss me  
in deep simulated slumber,  
suspicious of dreams  
beneath my feigning brow  
and conspicuously steady breathing  
accentuated by lidded, shifting eyes.

By: Ink

## Waiting for a bus

The man  
at the curb  
yawns  
and stretches  
his arms out,

looking  
for all  
the world  
like an  
early morning,  
greasy-faced,  
boss-cursing,  
chain-smoking,  
phlegm-coughing,  
coffee-guzzling  
savior.

By: Matt Galletta



## Doing it Jack Allen style

with the grip of a possessed lover  
he took her hand  
leading them backwards  
to the alley where they met,  
broke one another.

amid concrete, empty soda cans  
and trashy love songs  
from sleepy alley men  
they burned each other  
with love that left signatures  
on walls, graffiti-style.

the band played on  
his breath grew strong,  
and he never heard nails break  
or see fingers bleed  
onto mortar  
as she made a crack  
big enough to hook  
her life into.

By: Lynne Hayes

**Bottom Feeders to Dark Matter**  
*for science!*

Scientists, all doctorates, sit as anchors that don't sink  
and sip lemon rimmed ice water, repeating receiving  
the joy of the first bite. All you can eat: all you can  
keep in. Heaven's on hold for lunch. Smack it to last,

work it with teeth like super symmetrical mathematics'  
theory of super mass, super energy, something like supper's hab-  
its.

Calculate fearful symmetry, their incalculable hunger.  
No white flag napkins before all breaks down to dark matter.

Crawdads come with helpless claws, crackable shells.  
Succulent scorpions with no sting, no creek. Hands on,  
fingers as forks, everything exists as mass is collected to be  
eaten,  
cleaned by paper bibs in starched white collars above pocket pro-  
tectors.

Remains erased from taste bud's memory, washed away by  
canned coke, BYOB, iced tea sweating in saturated napkin mud.  
A corner of textbook writers, discovers of particles, dine on deep  
-  
fried death by nothing but gums as cut as their collider's fund-  
ing.

A lagoon stands deeply unmoved by the restaurant.  
There's nothing to catch but oocysts. Descaled, gaunt,  
characterless frozen and headless fish move upstream  
by a market truck, from a tank in Texas to tuck into throats.

The fish do not swim out any hole, but from openings  
of bellies belonging to brilliant brains like stingers on bees.

By: Tyler Malone

## The Blood of a Tourist

The world's a wounded beast  
drunk on the wine  
of our fear,

desperately hungry  
for whatever's left  
of our grace.

I watch as cronies  
dissect your smile  
on plastic tables in cold  
white rooms

as your love is bled  
into vials and tubes,  
watered down  
and packaged to sell

on street corners  
and the covers  
of magazines,

our dreams just powder  
to dust the graves.

My silence brands me complicit,

ashamed I was never equal  
to the blue of your eyes;

with the cold blood of a tourist  
I could only look away.

By: William Taylor Jr.

**Early morning unslept**

I am tired of dealing  
with ancient memories

they ought to  
invent                    a machine  
where I can  
                                 delete

I guess there is a pill  
for that  
and now I hear it comes  
in bottles at every street  
corner in every city  
except for Salt Lake City  
                                 on Sundays

By: Jhon Baker

## **The Pledge of Resistance**

I pledge resistance  
to the united snakes  
of corruption  
and to the police state  
for which it stands  
one nation  
under corporations  
inexcusable  
with liberty  
and justice  
for the one percent

By: Michael D. Goscinski

## **Journey**

Life's journey takes us  
down roads and paths  
we never expect...

Pathways that cross  
in the unlikeliest of places,  
spaces ethereal and otherworldly  
time bridged by electricity and information -  
physicality and location  
no longer an impediment  
to the exchange of  
ideas  
thoughts  
friendship

Doors close, windows open  
Life takes flight  
and through it all - the bond remains

Someday, we'll sit in a corner cafe  
and speak - face to face -  
we'll wander the streets,  
find the poetry that lives there  
under the surface, behind the facades  
we'll write it all down  
in the pages of our souls,  
and pour the ink from our hearts

By: Rebecca Clark Gober



## **New Orleans Blues**

it is a healthy blues,  
that is why the city  
is so rich in culture.

you take sadness  
and feed it with  
grits and butter.

even the most  
shoddy food store  
is stocked with  
gourmet foods.

carrot soufflette  
homemade banana  
pudding  
red beans and rice  
lemon chicken and  
three bean salad.

ah, there is the devil  
playing guitar  
on the corner.

he looks happy.

By: Mike Meraz



## Animal Control

She panthers in front of my car,  
her one kitten a tumbleweed behind.

I brake sudden, intersection  
of Curly's and Bedrock Bars.

Ghostly slips, cat and kitten dash  
towards the empty VFW lot,  
everybody finished with  
their whiskey and waters.

I pull over to curb.  
Bars' lights slick  
and ooze neon tears  
over and over my vehicle,  
lonely ten pm rainbow.

Mother cat pauses, a pine shrub  
bedded in cedar chips, the city's  
small gentrified coup,  
and the kitten burrows in.

I get out of my car, the scent  
of Jim's Short-Order-Egg-Scramble  
(steamy, greased windows)  
walk over and sit, the lot pavement  
cold as space.

When cat turns she sees me,  
mirrors, plumps herself under  
someone's forgotten truck,  
waits with golden eyes.

I realize I'm not the answer  
to a stray with a mission.

From the car again I watch her.

She slowly pads over to the spot I was,  
crouches, sniffs, holds herself there  
as if to reclaim this interruption.

After a moment she moves  
across the street, shadows the edge,  
the pale, faux marble bank building  
and disappears, probably to the  
train yards rich with their  
infinite stars of grain.

The kitten is quiet and unmoving  
as I approach. But shakes the bush,  
a seed rattling inside a gourd,  
mewing and climbing branches  
away from my voice.

Not for her mother to be surprised  
by again, supper for them both  
buttoned in her mouth,  
I drive away this time.

Car tires firework streetlights' reflection  
in water-filled potholes, loosen glittered asphalt,  
diamond galaxies toward home.

By: Liz Minette

## Traces

Fire against fire. Blistering grasshoppers,  
Fluorescent glide of a heavy stream.  
In concrete and pavement, upon  
the armor- metastasizing wounds  
of stray witchery and direct hits.  
Constant of electricity, elastic lines  
of copper in the air stay lucid.  
Muffled scream of machinery,  
tired metal gives out,  
Black towers spliced with acid  
Orange coals. Bleeding oil, decommission  
the upturned shining sour smell  
of catastrophic kills. Sickening.

By: Denis Calin

## Natural Death

It's that moment  
when you turn off the radio  
because the music is  
no longer as comforting  
as you remember, but  
you've been so unaccustomed  
to the silence  
so when the silence descends  
you feel uneasy and out  
of your bearings for some time.

Your heart is cold,  
and so is mine.  
You've been lost to me even  
long before I tried to love you,  
long before I succeeded.  
My heart is cold,  
and so is yours, and  
it takes way less, now  
to let go of something  
once cherished  
than before,  
but it still takes every bit  
of pain as it always has  
to live with a decision made  
with a heart that is only  
recently coming to terms  
with how cold it's become.

It's only my pen that  
catches dusk, now  
and only the paper that  
gets entangled with dawn.

September and  
wasted time come around  
unannounced, now  
like an unfaithful lover  
tiptoeing at 3 a.m.  
to the bedroom where the  
blind faithful lies sleeping.  
There's no longer passion  
between these sheets,  
even if a sophisticated  
eloquence remains.  
The blood that used to fuel  
the fire between our bodies  
has become so thin and  
diluted it can no longer  
bind to the walls.  
Doesn't even stain, when we  
get cut and it spills  
on our words, anymore.

And it takes only a moment  
of fear, to sever a heart from  
what it's been too weak to hold  
to begin with.  
A moment of startling cold.  
It instinctively embraces itself,  
tastes blood,  
remembers everything,  
in flashes.  
Entertains a ribbon of regret.

Then nothing.  
Only a flat line and white noise.

By: Iris Orpi



Take-it-to-the-street-poetry wishes to thank all of the writers and supporters. Your belief in our vision of

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

is what makes this possible. As long as there is an artistic hole in the universe, we will find ways to fill it with words.

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