Freeze Ray Poetry

by Mix

Made for Garbage Day 2020. These are from ‘Freeze Ray Poetry’, which seems to be some kind of nerd poetry zine? No links, since there’s nothing really to see on the site I found these on, but I’ve included what franchise the poem is about **in cyan**. And don’t forget the Lesbiathan incentive! :)

Shell
Lesbiathan
Stress
Ganymede
Dijon
Tuttle

A Lady’s Place

(Game of Thrones)
By Kim Marshall
You were bitten
like frost on a flower.
Joffrey had been so beautiful— How
could you have known he would kill you?

Stripping a flower
isn't a feat of strength.

They cheered him anyway.
They, watching you, wanted the same
of all girls who'd grown petals
instead of thorns.
They wanted your sister.
Arya, with her sword,
learning the edge of her own spirit
could cut.

You weren't grown in the same garden,
so you kneeled, stark
as a shadow hanging
on the wall.

When Ser Boros raised his rod,
perhaps you wondered if you
could become a wolf, shed
your petal-soft gowns, move
to a different garden.

Your wolf is dead, you remembered.
Another lady
in an unmarked grave.

The Church of Ludgate

(Parks and Rec)
By Brennan Bestwick
for Aubrey Plaza

Some god of give half a fuck
shaped your awkward in her likeness.
You, the almighty messiah of mumble,
the Good Sheppard of shit talk.

We are kneeling at your altar.
Baptize us in bitchy and bitter.
We have all stood witness
to your resurrection of deadpan,

the dust rising from the cupboards.
No cast member from the Sopranos ever
accepted an award thanking both the devil
and every dark lord in their speech,

only you, the goddess of oh my goodness,
the all powerful. If the thunder you steal
from Amy Poehler's Pawnee parks
could be bottled, Edison would rise again

just to patent it. You archangel,
liquor breathed saint. Never before
has someone shown a GQ interviewer
the knife she'd kill him with and capture

our hearts. No longer will we wander
in the desert of laugh tracks. We have found
our salvation. How awfully out of place
you are and so perfectly need to be.

Lie to Me

(Lie to Me)
By Sarah Blake
Ria can see a lie
so it's ok to put her
in a room with

someone dangerous.

And she can get three
men into a room,
she can hold
her liquor. Oh Ria,

Ria Torres—my
googling says your
name means
Laughing Towers.

Even I know
that's not quite true--
a little lie for you,
Ria, dear Ria,

America's
Hispanic woman
of our dreams.
Once fields of wheat

for us, skin of the land.
Well look at this
now, new, sun kissed,
toasted, gorgeous,

skin of Ria.
God shed his grace
on thee. Crown thy
good.

Who do I tell
I want centerfold
photos of her
in my magazines?

I want her on
a billboard, bigger
than a thousand
human hearts.

Someone tell
Ria Torres she is
beautiful to a woman
that’s not her mother.

I hear Torres and toro,
toro! Ria, almost rojo,

and something soft
moves through the air.

Makeup Tips for the Eye of Horus

By Rich Boucher

I thought they were actually demons
so I let the Neanderthal out of me and howled for blood;
I started hollering and yelling old man phrases after them
get the hell off my lawn and all that
even though I live with my girlfriend in her ex-husband's house,
and what little lawn we have is barely enough for anyone to get off of;
I didn't know if they were Jehovah's Witnesses or Jehovah's Door-to-Door salesmen
but I stood my ground Florida-style with extra pulp and bellowed,
bellowed even though I hadn't shaved or Axed my body
and today's modern alchemists symbolize resistance to change at an elemental level
with a line drawing, laid on its side, of Lady Gaga hate-fucking Emily Post into oblivion;
like a man dispossessed I chased those three or four youths away from my front door
and yes, I'll still use the term youths even though I'm almost forty-five
and the WWII vet at Wal-Mart would consider me a youth;
it turns out they were the new religious tract salesmen
but they were not selling seventh day advent anything at all;
they were selling that I should like what MTV has become now;
they were selling that I should be ready for the Syrian slap-chop apocalypse;
they were selling that I should start not knowing the meaning of gender anymore
and in modern alchemy the symbol for fear of being wrong about a new person's gender
is a line drawing, laid on its side, of a stick figure man in a skirt in a wheelchair digging a grave;
they were selling that I should learn to speak like the modern young people
and begin to become ambiguous, that I should begin to be afraid of being exact,
that I should start thinking of asking for a clear, concrete yes or no as being rude;
it was the best three in the afternoon ever and I had the day off;
I was just eating my cereal just in a t-shirt and just my boxers
and it was a dark and stormy night even though it was three in the afternoon;
I chased them out of my cul-de-sac on that overcast Thursday
like I was St. Anthony and they were a pack of demons
and I was running them away from here, forcing them off of Egypt's cliff;
I ran after them past the open living room windows of my neighborhood;
I heard the soap opera women crying in the daylight air,
wailing like the witches in the olden-time movies,
weeping with all due loudness and inconsolable
because it seemed like there was no one who could remember 1985;
I heard the octogenarian infomercials asking who was that masked man
as fiery spit flecks flew out of my muzzle as I chased them chased them chased them
until they were at last and forever out of my empty middle-of-the-workday driveway
and in today's secret, modern alchemy, the symbol for ironic dissolution,
the symbol for precipitative collapse into your own first, base element
is a drawing, laid on its side, of Lindsay Lohan wetting herself
while trying to light a joint in a world-famous elevator.

John Travolta circa 1978

By Amanda Chiado

If I was born earlier I'd have stalked you, kissed your poster every night like a sneaky little school girl, Fridays, with tongue, let you slap me around like young men do when they are wrestling with love. I'd be your happy-go-lucky bimbo. Let's make out, hard core. I'm as clean as your eyes are blue. You can smoke in my house and try your lines on me. I'll buy you those cowboy boots you saw in the window downtown, watch you yank them on and strut around wearing them with just your underwear.

I'd be a 1978 leather jacket, or disco polyester jumpsuit. I would have fit my lips into the cleft in your chin like I was kissing heaven's magical son, breast fed, of course. I'd enjoy the bad boys you have boiling up inside.

Sure, you'd love me. Sure, I might have better luck loving a prisoner, but when I saw you in those tight jeans, that cowboy hat marked by your sweet smell of sweat—Man, oh man, did I feel like a god. (In my dream, I fall asleep with the hat over my face, inhaling you, exhaling you.) Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh. In my second dream, I am you. I am surprised by the thickness of your/my hair.

Oh, that Saturday Night Fever. It's my mother's fault that I love you this way. The night of my conception she was looking over my father's shoulder at you in that tight white suit jutting your fingers across your toned body, electrifying the big screen. Was she humming How deep is your love? Imagining the incarnation of your name's Italian translation: High voltage.

Do you ever rummage through old videos to rediscover time rewound when everything about you was fresh and fearless? John, you must see yourself smiling back at yourself from the past and sing in sync with your sway-Got the wings of heaven on my shoes. I'm a dancing man and I just can't lose.
I'm stayin' alive.

I decided early on to be a cowgirl or own a discotheque. Either way, I'd sooner or later, without regard to others, get me a man with an ass like that.

Kitchen Stadium

(Iron Chef)

By Andrew Campana

Long before reality show cooking competitions were the norm
there was Iron Chef: an odd little Food Network import from Japan
complete with its own pageantry, its own mythology
an on--scene reporter, two colour commentators
and a Chairman with a luscious voice and Liberace clothes
sensuously biting into a yellow bell pepper at the beginning of each episode
as majestic soundtracks from long--forgotten Westerns
spooned on their sonic gravitas like so much béchamel.

The Iron Chefs were my heroes.
I'd hide under the covers and pretend to be them
rising up on their platforms amidst billowing smoke into Kitchen Stadium

like judges in a Daoist hell:
Rokusaburo Michiba, Iron Chef Japanese
who solemnly wrote down his planned menus
in a flowing hand with an ink--drenched brush.
Hiroyuki Sakai, Iron Chef French
who I would tell anyone within earshot
was known as the "Délacroix of French cuisine"
even though I didn't know who Délacroix was and had never eaten French food.
Chen Kenichi, Iron Chef Chinese
who my Bengali mother would always root for
because his food looked the spiciest
and Masahiko Kobe, Iron Chef Italian
the loser.

The judges were just as memorable.
Sachiko Kobayashi, singer and supreme diva
who wore dresses and neck ruffs half the width of the judging table
and once performed a concert standing on the hands of a giant statue
of herself.
Kazuko Hosoki, a red--lipsticked neocon
who happened to be the world's richest fortune teller.
But most important of all was Asako Kishi
food critic, and terrifying, unsmiling grandmother figure
condoner of no bullshit, inevitably giving scores
three points lower than everyone else
earning her the nickname in the Japanese press of
the "East German Judge."

My mind, though, always goes back to the deleted scenes from one episode.
Battle Chinese Cabbage. The challenger, Cui Yufen,
was 57 years old, and used to cook for Chairman Mao
one of the few women to ever appear on the show
and the only one from China.
I remember her third dish being set before the judges
almost ludicrously simple--looking
Chairman Kaga asking her to describe it
and she said through her interpreter,
"It's just cabbage and mustard."
The judges, skeptical, took their first bite.

After a long silence, Asako Kishi, the East German Judge,
was the first to speak
her voice breaking ever so slightly.
"This is the best thing I've ever eaten," she said
as she picked up the bowl and raised it to her lips.

Postcard to Mindy Kaling from the Parking Lot of In-‘N-Out Burger

(The Office, somehow) (also note the poet is a white woman)

By Danielle Mitchell

From what you tell of it, we both grew up like chubby Indian girls. My mom made spaghetti & enchiladas & avocados on toast. I would say we ate “American” food, but that’s not fair to any of us. When I say “us” I mean you & me & whoever we are or who wants to be sleeping with us. The people who really care. I’m somewhere reading your book Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me? & realizing my coming-of-age story is titled I’ve Run Out of Reasons to Love Me & the Vodka is Missing. In the afternoons I drive by In-‘N-Out Burger & make a U-turn to get a chocolate milkshake. Or a vanilla milkshake. It really doesn’t matter what kind of milkshake, you see this is where I’m at in life. My ass hates me & guys love my ass & I fear my ass & what it might accomplish on this French fry & milkshake diet. Sometimes it’s really late at night when I show up here & I’ve just had an anxiety attack & feel like I haven’t eaten in 15 days. No man will understand how I want to be hated & adored like, say, the Oakland Raiders & there’s no way in hell I’d go 15 days without eating. I park under a streetlight so the drive-thru attendant could see me getting carjacked & contemplate what you would say here. You’d say, Danielle, you should just keep being what you are & wearing really tight dresses. Or you’d say Damn girl you got some fries with that shake? & I’d say, Thanks Mindy, you’re probably right. Then we’d go shopping for Spankx together. On our way through the mall we’d shop the “economy bin” at LensCrafters & pick out matching eyeglasses. Now we look like badass nerds. Mindy, I can’t wait for our thirties—we’ll be total thugs. Right?

For Daenerys Targaryen, Voice of A Motherfucking Generation

(Game of Thrones)

By Bobby Crawford

Khaleesi you are the prophet of my inner struggle.
Because every morning I wake up, I’m all like:
Where are my dragons?

In line at Dunkin’ Donuts,
trying to get to class on time,
Where are my dragons?
You better BELIEVE nobody cuts in line and steals my bagel,
(which they do, when my dragons aren’t around).
You better BELIEVE they don’t mess up my coffee
when I got DRAGONS
up in HERE.

Getting where I got to go in the city,
I’m sitting on the train, thinking,
You know what I would be doing right now if I knew where my dragons were at?
NOT SITTING ON THE B LINE LIKE SOME PEASANT.
I WOULD RIDE DRAGONS TO WORK AND SOCIAL OUTINGS.

When I’m enjoying Revere Beach and Chinatown and Grendel’s Den,
I try and enjoy them with the wonderful companionship of dragons.
Trying to cook a cup of noodles, late at night,
Where are my dragons?
Getting quizzical looks about my ID in liquor stores,
oh, it’s real, and SO ARE MY DRAGONS.
And quick social commentary here, but seriously,
how come you can drive a car as young as 14 in some states,

or die for your country at 18,
but you got to be 21 to have dragons,
Amiright?
Amiright?

I even try to check my dragon privilege,
make sure I'm aware and of society's gross dragon distribution inequality.

Those of us in the queer community, and working class labor unions,
and single parents,
and artists,
Where are our dragons?

Daenerys, it seems,
when only a few people have dragons,
everybody else is seriously fucked./

Do you even pay taxes on your dragons?

For real though,/
if I had a dragon,

I. Would. Have. The
BIGGEST DRAGON BURGER BARBECUE
and ALL Y'ALL'S INVITED.

I bet dragon meat tastes delicious.
Like freedom.
Like fraternity.
Like panda and polar bear.

Bioheart

(Bioshock)
By Beyza Ozer
sometimes i wish you were a little sister &
i was a sea slug so i could live in your stomach

sometimes when we're making out i can hear that
swingin' 50's jazz music play in my head

sometimes i want to inject you into my bloodstream
instead of ADAM

sometimes there should be a plasmid that could give me
the power of making you really good mac & cheese

sometimes i feel like a big daddy
i wanna pick you up & show off my guns

sometimes big daddies get lonely

sometimes i'm living in a hopeless dystopia but
with you around it's not so bad

sometimes i'd do anything for you
even fight a splicer

sometimes you use the incinerate plasmid
against me

sometimes the ad that says "fire at your fingertips!" pops up &
i think about yours on my skin

sometimes you save all of the little sisters

sometimes you get the happy ending

not always

My Ears Point Towards the Stars

(Star Trek)
By Rick Lupart
For Leonard Nimoy
Englewood, New Jersey
city on the edge of forever
oxygen first entered my mouth

nineteen-sixty-eight
You had already been Spock
for two years.

On the verge of cancellation
a move the television executives didn't know
would be meaningless.

Eighty three years later
another actor already put on your face.
But you are forever him.

Half human
your emotions a struggle
kind of like the rest of us.

Leonard,
I saw you eat birthday cake once.
A few bites then

the plate and spoon
abandoned at my table.
Leave a little bit undone

the wisdom of our ancestors
always on your mind.
The priestly blessing

disguised as a Vulcan salute
I shook your hand.
That hand.

I fan-boyed words
into your ears. Your wife
had seen it all before.

I photographed the cake.
This was the cake of the Nimoy.
This was his spoon!

My life
always informed by his.

Always
in search of the stars.

Study in Blue

(Sesame Street)

By Simon Mermelstein

the two flat black surfaces mash back and forth beneath the hands of the puppeteer
the crumbs fly everywhere the hunger is not sated the hunger is not sated
the Cookie Monster was built with no throat only googly eyes wide at the injustice
alienated from his labor blue the color of estrangement no red for tongue for taste just a taste
the Cookie Monster was built without sense only mechanical instinct, only vacuous destiny
to forever pulverize the ones he loves (if he thinks about it he can't even breathe)
which is why he doesn't think, just trusts in his jaw
to navigate the world full of things that do and do not begin with C

Clean

(Barbie)

By Milo Muise

I used to keep a sponge hidden in my playhouse next to an
almost empty bottle of dish soap stolen from the recycling.
A dismembered Barbie piled like firewood in the miniature
bedroom: her chicken-wing boomerang arms all askew,
trapped under her naked torso, legs leaning and toes pointed.

I always washed my child-hands before I touched her. A
surgeon approaching the operating room. Gently,
reattaching her limbs to her body and pouring water
through her neck socket. Adding the tiniest bit of soap.
With Barbie's head back atop herself, I shook her, hair
swinging, until I could smell the sharp lemon scent slipping
out from under her arms, between her legs.

I would let her stand for a moment, fully assembled,
leaking in front of the playhouse. I Like It Here, said her
plastic smile. As if she didn't spend most days in a heap on
the bedroom floor. As if she couldn't even remember.

Then, her dislocated arms and an unceremonious
decapitation. Back to disarray, my lost interest. But for that
one moment, what relief to see the brown water emptying
out of her body and into the sink.

PADME MOTHERFUCKING AMIDALA.

(Star Wars)

By Ellyn Touchette

If you asked a five year old me what she wanted to be when she grew up, she would’ve said

PADME MOTHERFUCKING AMIDALA.

Queen Amidala does not give a SHIT.
Not about acting like a lady, not about listening
to Jedi, not about the Trade Federation
and their goddamned treaty.

The only things Padme Amidala cares about
are diplomacy and high gotdamn fashion.

I was Queen Amidala for Halloween in 1999.
Pricewise, my costume was about on par
with a small motorcycle, but my glorious geek
of a father cared more about parading
his tiny homemade nets around the culdesac
than he did about Christmas presents or, like, dinner.

My dad did my Halloween makeup that year
and it looked AWESOME. He told me
the red stripe on Queen Amidala’s lip stood
for the suffering she’d endure for her people.
I remember thinking that the kind of ruler
who paints her loyalty on her face in blood
is the kind of woman I wanted to grow up to be.

When Episode One debuted, I was five.
My dad let me believe that Queen Amidala
was the main character for as long as it took
me to realize the most respected political figure
in the galaxy, was a supporting character
for all one hundred and thirty three minutes of disaster
that was The Phantom Menace.

George Lucas, the real menace, had at his pudgy fingertips
the chance to give us one of the most compelling female characters
mainstream science fiction had yet seen.

And he robbed us of her. At no point is it revealed
how Padme was elected democratically
to lead an entire planet at fourteen, an age when most girls
can't maintain diplomacy with their hormones.

We don't get a lick of what is undoubtedly
the coolest backstory pretty much ever.

Instead, we get two dudes in a submarine dodging leviathans.
We get forty-five minutes of dudes pod racing.
We get a whiny nine year old dude with
SO MANY MIDICHLORIANS.

No one wanted to be a young Anakin Skywalker for Halloween.
I went as a brilliant, capable, and powerful diplomat
who spent one hundred and thirty-three minutes
taking orders from men, but I felt powerful for the first time
in my short life.

Now, as I recall, although every door opened
for me that night, as I reached for each bowl
of my well-earned reward,
each towering adult told my father
how cute I looked in my dress.

Everything I Know About Love I Learned from the X Button

By Melissa Anne
the best way to beat a boss is to leave the game
for a few months and forget you ever played it
which is a tactic I have used in relationships
but in those I can never load from saved game
and new game doesn't quite have the same taste
and that's all I want,
just the old stuff,
but from the beginning

I started playing Dragon Quest because of a boy
and I started playing Final Fantasy because of a boy
and I bought a PS2 because a boy
and I practiced DDR at home for hours because of boys
games, so many of them
boys, so many of them

I learned how to properly catch Pokémon in Pokéballs
after a boy showed me how
with his thumbs over mine:
‘you just hold down B while it’s wiggling’
ten is a very romantic age

when someone dies in Dragon Quest your party
pulls around a coffin until you get to a church
where you pay the priest to revive them
I made sure to make my player a woman
the strongest one, the warrior
and I always made sure the men died first
because that’s how I learned about chivalry:
you lose before you win

I used to talk to a boy about how much we loved
DDR when we were younger, how the arrows
never seemed to go where we thought and how our
favorite song was Heaven by DJ Sammy
I never touched him but he is the one who taught me
to be grateful for the life I still have

in Mario Kart I always pick Peach
because someone always saves
the princess

the one thing I have always wanted is to be loved
the way Tidus looks at Yuna in Final Fantasy X
and holds her to him in the lake like they could stay
that way always, battle
no one, live
forever,
just
be

Love in the Time of Creepers

(Minecraft)
By Rodney Wilder
Looking over you I felt pride,
the way Frankenstein must've

as his jigsaw opus resurrected.
But no stolen limb, your glory;
you: cobblestone and obsidian,
lapis lazuli, oak, and sandstone
mined with nothing but a stone
pickaxe, and the patience taken
to swing it until whole hillsides
resided as little blocks in chests.

You were everything I wanted,
the blueprint seeded into finger
that had me shadowboxing trees
and slapping the cutlets off what-
ever I could eat to keep my arm
swinging, keep the cubes coming
because, one day…your ramparts,
your diamond-bright cupolas, your
oh-so-zen dojo-cum-reading-nook…
and the creepers spawning in the basement.

Who gave these miscoded pigs
permission to hiss sibilances in
you?—the only place truly mine.
I spent too long popping blocks
of acacia and quartz into place to
turn a corner and find my Xanadu
a nightmare of fuse-tongued cacti,
voices, the inescapable promise at
the heart of a world saying Build
through a mouth dripping rubble…Ka-boom.

They left little of you standing.
I—turquoise shirt, purple pants--
an easy-enough reassembly, but
you, your perfectly-po-mo haven
made to a constellation of craters,
Stonehenge testifying to the grief
in unbeknownst creepers' TNT.
I watched the sunset through you,
fixed nothing, filled hands with
twin axes and now await nightfall,

await the things
that thought you
better a haunt of
spider and death,
skeleton and bow,

a chance to meet

their scowls, lay
your wounds in
their parts, and play
Frankenstein again.

Returning to Lavender Town or I am Emotionally Incapable of Letting Go of the Dead

(Pokemon)
By Adrienne Novy
Cubone! Use:
Dig.

Bury the dead daughter.
Smooth out the clumps of soil
with your paws.
Press dandelions into the dirt of
tiny graves.
Remember the names of all the
cemetery children.

Cubone! Use:
Focus Energy.

Do not cry over the body.
Do not scream out for your mother.
Your sobs are useless at healing.
You cannot attempt revival.
Your mother's miscarriage did not poison the living.
Her womb is not a haunting.

Cubone! Use:
Earthquake

When another one of your kind is born,
you protect him with all you have.
You teach him how to sharpen his teeth,
to gnaw at fear and transform it into strength.
You hold each other when your eyes well with tears.
You both embrace for impact.

I CAN'T REMEMBER WHICH EXPLOSION SCENE

(Star Trek)
By Linette Reeman
in the Star Trek 2009 reboot movie we first
had sex to, but i remember your mouth looked like
a black hole and when we kissed my organs mutated against

each others' soft and my brain dripped behind my eyeballs and
i don't remember how old i was when i first learned about
black holes but the picture-book told me they turned a person
spaghetti-shaped right before their brains stopped working and
maybe that's why the only thing i can cook well enough to make
for other people is pasta / because i don't want you to forget me /

and maybe i'll never write another poem that's just a list of things
we did together because i let the memories run loose like scared red-
shirts around my brain and when they try to stop the ship from
collapsing they all get swallowed up by something dark

is it crazy or brave to accept a five-year mission to the end of the
known? we're still not sure / maybe it's based on whether
you make it home or not / so at what point is it brave to stop
trying to turn around? i've roiled this relation-ship of ours in

the craters of the universe for so long it might just be safer to
accept that i don't know where this ends. your new partner
likes Star Trek too. i went to see the 2016 movie with my
parents and cried at all the mouth-holes like my mush-brain
was trying to remember what it felt like to inch towards
the end of space and have the edge of space inch back.

the first time Gaila was ever in the Original Series,
the video-editors thought her skin wasn't supposed to
be green, so they kept editing her back normal without
mentioning it to the directors. the directors thought their
body-paint wasn't showing up on camera, so kept painting
Gaila's actress darker greens until finally someone
thought to ask why it wasn't appearing in the proofs.

you thought i didn't want to have sex anymore
because the explosions stopped happening /
wanted to edit me back to my old brain, who
remembered how to swallow. it was brave
of me to fuck until it was brave of me to stop.
the video-editors were just doing their job, saw

something abnormal and washed it out
of their eyesight. how should they have known
they were removing the hardest parts of production,
what we spent so long trying to make work?

Overly Analytical Cookie Monster Is Neurotic about His Affection for Girl Cookie Monster

(Sesame Street)

By Eric Sirota

Cookie Monster like Girl Cookie Monster nom nom nom She is nice. And she is blue.
And she say nom nom nom in way that make Cookie Monster want to be better Cookie Monster: Comfortable with appearance but still seek balanced diet nom nom Excited about cookies but not eat heads of friends who steal cookies nom nom Cookie monster to be more moral relativist and realize there only cultural-linguistic distinction between condemning theft
and condemning unwillingness to share nom nom Cookie Monster strive to turn moral compass more towards the latter. More sharing. At least with her. Cookie Monster want to share whole self with her. Near her, Cookie Monster heart feel like brimming over jar of cookies trembling in Cookie Monster eager cookie hands. Nervous it will break nom nom but also so excited it filled with sweets. To paraphrase Corinthians 13, love is patient nom nom nom nom. Or to quote William Shakespeare, a rose by any other name is still cookie cookie cookie cookie. Cookie Monster understand profundity when near Girl Cookie Monster.
But when Cookie Monster is away from Girl Cookie Monster, Cookie Monster brain get so hungry for cookie heart. Cookie Monster brain become Analytical Brain Monster. Eat Cookie Monster warm cookie heart faster than real Cookie Monster eat real cookie. BRAIN SAY GIRL COOKIE MONSTER NO LIKE YOU nom nom GIRL COOKIE MONSTER JUST BEING POLITE nom nom GIRL COOKIE MONSTER TAKE LONG TIME TO RESPOND TO TEXT MESSAGE BECAUSE GIRL COOKIE MONSTER HAS SNUFFLEUPAGUS ON SIDE AND IS JUST USING COOKIE MONSTER TO PLAY ADORABLE FURRY CHARACTERS OFF OF EACH OTHER IN TWISTED PRISONERS' DILEMMA nom nom nom nom nom Brain say Cookie Monster bad! Cookie Monster just monster! Cookie Monster imposter syndrome!
C IS FOR COOKIE! C also for Compulsive thinking patterns nom nom nom nom Brain say RUN say BURY FEAR IN COOKIE cookie cookie Not even taste good. Just eat to eat. Just nom to nom. Girl Cookie Monster smell like warm bakery but Cookie Monster brain so hungry for cookie heart brain eat heart brain eat heart no savor just nom. Leave Cookie Monster hungry. Again.

all the time

Pacman Is a Symptom of My Repression

(Pac-Man) (Note this guy is an English teacher at a university)

By Justin Holliday

Every Friday night I don a hair bow
and apply cotton candy-flavored lipstick.
For the rest of the weekend
I can be Ms. Pacman.
When I eat the dots, I tell myself
they're only mints to freshen my breath.
No one has kissed me yet,
but I'm always ready.
The fruit is my comfort food.
I've learned an extra banana here and there
will let me live a little longer.

Back in the 90s, I went to a seminar
where we discussed gender fluidity.
More like gender fucking, I thought
I said to myself, but it was during a lull
in the conversation. I blushed,

but someone told the group
it didn't matter what was between your legs.
So I said, Hell, I don't even have legs.
When no one laughed, I rolled out of my seat
and out the door, unsure what went wrong.

Since I've been online,
my life has become a reality show.
Someone always wants to watch me
gorge myself as I run for my life.
Still, I have a few moments away
from the chase. I've been on some chat rooms,
and they've given me the confidence
to kill myself—at least Pacman.

So one Monday I didn't show up.
Some kids kept clicking refresh
on their browsers, hipsters kept on
inserting quarters at arcades,
but all they saw was my pouty lips
blowing kisses. As the chase began,
I swore to myself
no more pretending I'd meet
the Pacman of my dreams,
no baby would drop from the sky.
When Pinky cornered me,
I spoke to her for the first time.

We're sisters. We have to overturn
the patriarchal machine.
She said my voice was too husky
and swallowed me
as if my death did not mean hers.

A Prayer to the Mcelroy Brothers

(MBMBAM/Adventure Zone)

By Julia Gaskill

i've been praying to the mcelroys before bed / these days / which sounds like / the fumble of a laugh / gasp of warm air / tooth snagged against my tongue / which is to say / a thank you / mumbled to the hungry darkness / a holy vow / how january has swum by / oh so dripping slowly / this year / & i haven't cried / once / have not heaved myself from bed / have not broken / i am always so punctual / in my breaking / but this winter / i am still whole / & i know / there are a multitude of factors / but / i keep coming back / to these three / how they / turn my mouth into a circus flare / how the rain slips off / my sun of a body / how i have turned warrior cat / i am not fooled / know depression / is but a stone's throw away / has only left to go grocery shopping / it will return / the breaking always returns / punctual imperfection / but these boys/ these good good boys / slit depression's tires / cover the aisles in jelly / pull depression into a bizarre sales pitch / they keep the breaking / so far from my home / that depression slips from my memory / & what is left / is all of me / chipped but still all / & so / i pray to taako /

i pray to every dog i long to pet / i pray to a world that is oh so wonderful / i pray to my headphones / bury them in / my ears / like seeds aching to bloom / & i push play / & grin / & heal

Self Portrait As Rainbow Road

(Mario Kart)

By Andy Winter

pulling up through neon night /
whistling my name /
cruising past comets
at ninety nine
/ two bodies
in the backseat
roller coaster / i want a fuck that crashes
through constellations / i want a wish
searing through ozone
& engine / i want air
-bag kisses / these roads
buckle
under us / fingers
in orbit / we collide over &
over again / & each time
a mushroom grows / a blue
shell rockets past / a star edges
everyone else into dust / & you /
you / oh
god
you/ you
in the front seat / in first place / in
the heavens looking up / at us bullet
past red / lights & shells of fallen
drivers / i want wings / that have
forgotten their spines / a video
game where we / burst
/ into aurora
/ into Möbius strip
of banana peels / wasting fuel
/ 'cause love / is a grand
prix / every galaxy comes
to watch us win

Alex Guarnaschelli takes me to therapy

(Chopped)

By Mackenzie Bush

And right away, she is talking,
warm like a bread pudding just out of the oven.
She asks about the art on the wall
and tells my therapist all about

how hard it is to be a woman on television
and gossips about the work culture on The Food Network.
It makes my head spin.

I am content to let Alex talk,
if she can fill the air with her key lime pie breath.
When I have to open mine,
I hope the notepad will gloss over the potting soil
Between my teeth, the smell of oversteeped
tea and store-brand vodka on my breath.

With only fifteen minutes left, the therapist glances
at me, like he's startled by a ghost in the room.

Potting soil flows from between my teeth,
damp with saliva that I hope is mine.
I am embarrassed. I try to shove
it back into my pockets, but they don't have the room.
I slink out, feeling ashamed of the pile I've left on the floor.

In the car on the way home, Alex looks at me
like a kitten she hit with her car.
"I didn't know you had so much to carry."

At home, she makes some of the raviolis
she knows I like, filled with cheese and warm.

She tucks me into bed with a kiss
on the forehead. Now her lips smell like basil.
She tells me that somehow,
my dirt will sprout. It will grow
raspberry bushes
sweet potato plants
pods and pods of sugar snap peas,

and if I'd like, I can refuse
to share them with anyone.

Magical Girl

(Madoka)

By J.Bailey Hutchinson

for Mami Tomoe

Given ribbon, I make musket.
And this is no easy thing to build:
the ramrod, breech, the powder-filled
bladder, channels of oil and flint.
All this mustered with folded legs

and jaw-grit before dinner, meeting
my own eye in the cat's. Sulfur or opal.
Mortar or knee-sock. How to be a girl
and also bury bullets: sign a contract. I wonder
what a witch I might be, if in that world
I might at least have a saucer for my tea.
With sugar. Jarred honeycomb. I
didn't know name-on-the-line meant
the kind of forever that gathers
each vessel and organ for pickling.
Heats each leg's nervous gristle
so, even in death, I'd stand rifle-cocked.
God of this body, you gave me
ribbon. I asked for please, an ungiving
thing. So I might do this
on my own. So I might
walk home at night.

ACME, Inc.

(Looney Tunes)
By Mariel Fechik
One morning I am struck dumb,
lightning in my eyes,
birds flapping around my head

I am the coyote everyone mistakes
for a wolf, endangered only by
my inability to kill meaningfully

My cartoon paws skid along the
rims of canyons, keeping time
to the drone of buzzards

The west opens its cavernous
mouth and spills out what it
had for dinner last century -

bones, metal, and me.

bipolar wizards get sorted twice

(Harry Potter)
By Catherine Weiss
i.

lion holds the door for you
wants to make eye contact but
pretends you don't even have a face

she lets you slip away
forgotten in the fog

snake holds the door also
grins proud
says “you’re welcome”
says “have a nice day”
saw what model car you drive
notes what brand of shoes you wear
just in case

ii.

lion doesn’t have the right words
copies off hermione’s paper
or sits at home with a still-blank page
empty/angry/stubborn

snake has shit to say
less time to say it in
knows you need to understand
the way she has the whole world
clicking together like hallelujah
sunbeams touch the rolling hillsides
greened because she saw them
clearly, watch those flowers
blooming, each one a poem
ready to be gathered

iii.

lion stays in bed
inhabits the cramped spaces
stuck between mattress, wall
waking, sleeping
dusk, dark, dawn
waiting to feel as brave
as people say she is
a tiny tired hero
continuing to breathe

snake levitates three feet
above the crumpled bedding
floating demon buzzing breathfull
a vast expanse in her chest cavity
expanding like a super
nova

iv.

lion is the cancer and snake is the gemini
though lion scoffs at cusp days
star-study is too witchy for lion
too superstitious, too whatever
lion walks past the tarot reader
doesn't touch the crystal
says "who cares,
i'm a muggle anyway"

snake knows the truth
the pinpricks dance to her command
answers are everywhere she looks
she reads the sky like a written thing
snake knows she is devilry
feels the alchemy of her body
shift lion, snake, lion, snake
a one-or-the-other tumbling coin

v.

on the first day
on a stage
in a hall
of a castle
the hat listened to her carefully
bade her make a choice
and she answered "both"
just like the snake she is

Body Dysmorphia Hidden in the Leaves

(Naruto)

By Aeon Ginsberg

Naruto isn't a boy /
Naruto becomes the hokage /

is looking to be held broth to noodle /
to soften / to fill a bowl big enough

to make someone feel loved /
to get to be feminine and also succeed at doing so /

Show me a boy who transforms themselves
feminine and I will undress my dysmorphia /

show you my youngest trans-self gender
identity as being worthy of companionship

identity as knowing yourself / show me
a boy who dresses as a woman and finds joy

and I will show you my past / will become
stealth and hide in the shadow of my body /

dysmorphia iron / maiden myself
noodle bowl / my mouth is a pout /

let me suck with/out apprehension and I will

canonically Naruto uses a ninja art
dubbed “sexy no jutsu” at age twelve

and I research how to tuck into nothing /
canonically Naruto uses “sexy no jutsu”

and was shunned for having a demon
locked inside themself until

proven useful to praise /
canonically Naruto uses “sexy no jutsu”

and still got to fall into the arms of a lover
who saw them as a whole self / hold me

as I art myself into the body I need to have
to make it through the night / bless the ninja

that hides in the forest even when the leaves die /
bless the body held through fire and took the burns
and the bones and turned them / into safe haven /
sanctuary city my blood /

hidden in the leaves / a country of closets /

bless the world with room for girls like us / who know
the shape of their belly best in shadows /

limp like noodles / mouths full / broth pursed lips /
I don’t need you to show me something

I can just as easily perform / watch
as I smoke bomb my body booby-trap /

to make yourself into one million women
is a forbidden art so forbid me into something

unwritten / bind my body into a sealed scroll /

teach me how to gesture myself into permanent

suppleness and I will / what doesn't kill you
makes you stronger but I would love to be

the soft and whole noodle / true / even if
for only a moment it meant that being me is seen as an artform.

I don't need you to love me as I am
if it means you won't let me

grow into what I need to be to live longer.

what happens when the fire falls in love with you.

(Harry Potter)

By Julia Gaskill

When the nightmares come,
Ginny learns the best thing to do is to lay an arm across his waist
and run the fingers of her unused hand
through his always-messy hair; a
hummed tune calmly floating from her throat.
When he screams in his sleep, she pulls him closer,
kissing the back of his neck to usher him away from the darkness.
It's exactly what she wishes someone had done
when the nightmares came for her at twelve.

When the silence overtakes him
at the breakfast table, jam dripping off his toast as he stares across
the room like the Dark Lord just waltzed in,
Ginny asks him questions to bring him back to earth.
She asks how Neville's getting on in his new position,
what he thinks of her soon-to-be sister-in-law's wedding plans,
where Luna's at in the world nowadays, and
of course she knows. She always knows the answers, but
it's better to keep his mind distracted. She knows that
this is the only way he'll survive.

When the tears overtake his entire face in
the middle of the grocery store, she doesn't ask what triggered
this sudden shift. Perhaps the little golden boy
at the end of the aisle reminded him of another
who once wielded a camera or the clerk who just posted how
there's a sale on socks; maybe
it's just the overwhelming sense that the muggles surrounding them
will never know what it is they went through. Ginny doesn't
shirk away or snap. Instead, she offers him her palm,
running her thumb over his knuckles as she squeezes,

never once letting her blazing eyes leave his face.

When he drops onto their couch,
hardly awake due to the exhaustion of yet another interview,
she follows suit, throwing herself nearly on top of him.
It always pleases her if a laugh leaves his lips,
and soon her arms find their way about his neck.
Through their laughter, she places a kiss on his forehead
where the reminder, the proof, still lingers,
as if to say, “I’ve got you now. Don’t you worry,
I’ll kill anyone who ever tries to take that smile away.
I’ll burn them to the ground before
they can even touch you,”
and she means it
with all her heart.

The Half Blood Prince Tells Justin He Is Not a Wizard

(Harry Potter)

By Justin Rogers

it’s silly to believe you are wizard you are
so limited so predictable you think you
have all this magic but you don’t

see the death or the ghosts i've seen
you look for dead friends & find pictures
instead you try time travel & wake
up at 4am unable to summon a sun

your mattress is a plateau
of failed charms your fingers burn
from blunt buds not blue sparks or brewing potion

the only magic you’ve ever
spit is a curse
from the mouth a word you fear
friends will find deadly a prayer turned plague

you don’t have the discipline to bewitch the
mind what makes you believe
you know this power when you can’t even
identify yourself
The Half Blood Prince Speaks of Body Parts

#3 - The Mind
is a terrible thing to cleanse

is cauldron of fragmented visions
made whole by what the mouth feeds it
Or
the mind is a potion of dreams
that only come true inside the head
Or
after all this time
the mind must become a
waste
The Half Blood Prince Sweeps Through The Past
Or
The Half Blood Prince Recalls His Past Selves

I sweep the halls,
my tongue a straw bristle
my body a cauldron that the halls
memories are poured into. I ask my
past selves if they are real & they say
I am only as real as what i have forgotten.

I sweep my memories & learn
I have forgotten how to smile to want
what I own more than what I have lost.
I have a castle of anecdotes but have filled
my body with old selves.

I am a cold stare in the corridors
mouth pressed thin holding
back the potion my saliva must be:
A poison brewed of
deaths I cannot forget
Or
a remedy for the present.
The Half Blood Prince Speaks of Body Parts

6 - The Tongue
is a double spy:
bottles fame but makes home of shadows
brews glory but spills a prophesy of death
speaks clear but saliva is a pool of doubt.
The tongue is the most powerful magic you know
there isn't a witch or wizard who went bad
who wasn't hiding a spell
in the mouth