

The Quaranzine 2



Writing inspired by the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Featuring...

Mike Andrelczyk / Lily Arnell / Daniel Bailey
Dan Eastman / Elizabeth Ellen
Cavin Bryce Gonzalez / Josh Hebburn
Graham Irvin / Charlotte Knight
TJ Larkey / Zac van Manen
Crow Jonah Norlander / Giacomo Pope
Josh Sherman / Zac Smith / Tom Snarsky

Edited by Zac Smith.

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CYNTHIA COVERT

by Graham Irvin

A WOMAN IN SOUTH CAROLINA
GOT ATE BY AN ALLIGATOR
AFTER WALKING OUT INTO A POND
TO TAKE A PHOTO OR JUST SEE IT
EVEN THOUGH HER FRIEND TOLD
HER
THE GATOR ATE A DEER A FEW DAYS
AGO
THE WOMAN SAID
I DON'T LOOK LIKE NO DEER
RIGHT BEFORE IT GRABBED HER
AND TOOK HER AWAY FOREVER
THE WOMAN SLIPPED AND TURNED
AROUND
SHE SAID I WON'T BE DOING THIS
AGAIN
AND THAT WAS IT
THAT WAS THE LAST THING
SHE EVER SAID
HER FRIEND TOLD THE COPS

THE WOMAN WAS DRUNK
SHE HADN'T ACTED RIGHT ALL
NIGHT
SHE CAME OVER TO GIVE HER
FRIEND A MANICURE
THEN WADED OUT INTO THE WATER
CALLED BY THE REPTILIAN GODS
FOR SACRIFICE
HER FRIEND HAD TO WATCH THAT
ALL
WITH CHIPPED AND BUSTED NAILS
BUT I CAN RELATE RIGHT ABOUT
NOW
RIGHT ABOUT NOW I FEEL DRUNK
ENOUGH TO LIVE FOREVER
WHAT COULD POSSIBLY KILL ME
DEATH IS JUST A BREAK FROM
MONOTONY
HELL I'D DO IT JUST TO FEEL
SOME WARM MUD BETWEEN MY
TOES
GOD BLESS THE REPTILIAN GODS
GOD BLESS THAT LOVELY WOMAN

3 Quarantine Poems

by **Dan Eastman**

Small Talk Before a Zoom Conference Call

your dogs must be so excited
to have you home all day

yeah, sometimes they get up
without warning
and start humping each other
and now i get to watch.

Trendsetter

no one else at the park wearing masks
maybe i should say something
no, no one likes a cop
i'll just take mine off.

Finding Purpose Within the Existential Vacuum

viktor frankl
wrote that
we cannot
control events
only our reactions
to the events
i am holding
my work calls
and ignoring
the news
and writing
poems
for a zine.

DON'T TALK DOWN TO ME

by Charlotte Knight

At the time of the flood, I was already living in a floating house, built for the purposes of low impact mitigation. When I'd welcome in guests they'd comment on its buoyancy, or on the stack of oars and pristine life jackets I kept in its kitchen. One guest went so far as to question what it was I was preparing for; this soon became a taunt amongst my social circle. Even when the conversation was not steered towards floods or housing, I felt a certain judgment upon me. Once a man called to sell me a picket fence and I calmly told him, *hey, no thanks, the garden's going under anyway. No point in dressing it up.* I heard whispers all around me for weeks after this encounter. *Aquaphobia is defined as an irrational fear of water, or the specific consequences of entering it,* a neighbour informed me as I watched her on the road. And as the road began to turn into a river I called back from my window, *hey, don't talk down to me.*

Trumpbux

by Crow Jonah Norlander

We bought a hideous piece of brightly
colored plastic
from one of the less detestable online
stores
to scar the yard, forsaking our usual
penchant for artisanally
handmade wooden shit so my two-year-
old son has something
to climb up and slide down without
risking infection

“Property is theft” he shouts
jumping with chunky legs, getting air for
the very first time
dunking the tiny basketball into the
attached rickety hoop
toppling the whole structure to the ground

3 Pandemic Poems **by Cavin B. Gonzalez**

HE ATE IT

went fishing the other the day.
finally caught a bass.
a guy screamed across the lake when i
reeled it in.
he said, “ya gonna eat it?”

i said nothing.
i circled the lake toward him.

i moved closer to the man who, in turn,
started backing away.
and then i chased him around the lake.
in circles.

coughing madly.
waving the fish at him.
are ya gonna eat it?
are ya gonna eat it?
are ya gonna eat it?
ARE YA GONNA EAT IT?

Mask On/Off

charging people in the grocery store
screaming SIX FEET DISTANCE....

BACK THE FUCK UP before
whipping out my guitar and shredding
over the PA system.

Q-Diet

no schedule means
drinking NyQuil at
3pm and 8pm
and 6am and –

Corn Pops

by Josh Sherman

Poured some Timbits cereal
into a bowl for breakfast
this morning,
and I was reminded
of Corn Pops
They look like Corn Pops
but with sprinkles
and kind of taste like them, too
But I'd never be eating
Corn Pops
Not even under quarantine
Not even if the COVID-19 pandemic
destroyed
food-supply chains
and they were all I had
left
in an otherwise bare
cupboard
Know why?
One time, when I was, like, 12
I was pouring a bowl of
Corn Pops

and out with the cereal came
an earwig
Not only did I throw the bowlful
out
I have never eaten that cereal
again
And for years, every time I pour
cereal
I've poured it slowly
to survey the scene
for earwigs
And then I rake the bowl
with my fingers
to make sure I haven't
missed anything
– and that was just a cereal
experience
two decades ago

Now imagine the impact of
my past relationships,
childhood trauma,
and that thing that person
said to me
that one time

*Selected Quaranzine DM's, Or,
Wearing a mask makes it harder
to identify your corpse*

by Some Buds

i need something for
the zine to break it up
right now it's all poetry
and a couple short stories
i want like a weird interview
or something

Zac Smith

Do a fake interview with
Dr. Fakeci

Dave Eggers

is that like
a joke about
the doctor dude
ohh

Zac Smith

Or obvious dumb facts like:
Doctors say inject coronavirus
directly into eyeballs is unsafe
And use that bad grammar
Doctor says eating covid
is bad for health

Dave Eggers

9/10 doctor say coronavirus
is actually covid-19

Zac Smith

9/11
9/11 doctors says
covid did 9/11

Dave Eggers

hahaha
god that tao tweet
about 9/11 and aliens

Zac Smith

Having unprotected sex
with covid leads to unplanned pregs

Yeh baby
Loved it
Adding some spinach to
your coronvirus is beneficial
for heart health
Good conspiracy tweet:
just figured out that 9/11
means that 9 out of the
11 world trade center towers
were destroyed in the attack.

Dave Eggers

hahahhaa
o one evwr talks
about wtc 11

Zac Smith

eating covid is safe as your
stomach acid kills it
but you must hold your breath
if you have covid in your
lungs, buy new lungs

Giacomo Pope

Be careful if buy covid online
due to scams

Covid-19 kills more people
every hour than nitro glycerin
Covid did blockbuster video

Dave Eggers

If orally taking Covid, remember
to clear your throat
Wearing a mask makes it harder
to identify your corpse

Giacomo Pope

Before snorting covid first
clear nostril passages of all
grime
If doing covid in the ass
first use the enema
Then do all these dumb fuck
things we've been posted and use
simpsons dr nick image

Dave Eggers

giac i'm still thinking about this
>Wearing a mask makes it
harder to identify your corpse

Zac Smith

turns out the guy that cop killed raped
and attempted to murder his 9 yr old
niece lol. so much evidence and
everybody still protesting the feds saying
its a cover up

Cavin B. Gonzalez



Party

by **T. J. Larkey**

My girlfriend called from work, panicked, asking if I could go over to her mom's house and check on her. I was in my boxers eating seven-layered-dip flavored Combos and I said, "Yeah, I've got some time today," then got dressed.

On the drive over, my girlfriend called again. She said, "So the firemen just left, they can't take her to the hospital because it's risky, but her heart is still beating really fast."

"Shit," I said.

"Yeah, but, she's now saying she thinks she might have accidentally eaten some edibles that Nick brought over a while ago."

Nick is my girlfriend's brother, has a marijuana card, and knows the motherfucking score.

"Oh no," I said. "Nick gets that potent shit, that could be bad."

“Correct, but Mom also said, at first, that maybe someone spiked her Mike and Ikes because she got them at the dollar store, so anything she says right now is suspect.”

“Was she just snacking like crazy or what?”

“Don’t.”

“Just living it up? One hand full of Mike and Ikes and the other fulla dat dank?”

She hung up.

When I got to the house, I jogged to the front door, realizing that this was very serious and not to be taken lightly, then knocked. Mom came to the door in a daze, told me very sweetly to keep my distance. We sat on opposite sides of the living room. I started talking softly, assessing. I asked if she needed anything, got her some water. Then I asked, “Do you want to just be silent, or, if you want, I can put something on TV?”

“I don’t know,” she said. “I can’t really move my eyes too fast or I get dizzy. And my neck is so tight, it’s weird.”

“Okay,” I said, examining her. “Well, you do have your shoulders pinched up by your ears, so maybe it’s just that.”

She looked down at herself. “Oh, wow, yeah I do.”

“And that could be one of a few things,” I said. “But I’ve been told that you might’ve accidentally, or maybe on purpose – no judgement – gotten yourself high.”

“The chocolates,” she said, almost to herself.

“Yup, the chocolates. I think it’s that. Because the other thing I’m noticing is your mouth is really dry, you should drink some water.”

“I... I don’t know,” she said, and looked slowly, with just her eyes, at the coffee table where I’d set her water down. “I don’t know if I can move that far.”

“I believe in you.”

“I can’t let the chocolates beat me.”

“Nothing can beat us.”

She smiled briefly. Then it seemed like everything became clear and she could see the world for what it was again.

She said, “When the firemen came they wouldn’t even come inside in case I had it. They took my blood pressure and heart-rate out in the front yard. Can you even imagine if they knew I was just high? They’d probably be pissed!”

“Nah... Get blazed, in the middle of a pandemic, then call the fucking authorities on yourself!?”

They’d probably be thinking what I’m thinking – that bitch knows how to party.”

this zine is halfway over



please wash your hands

note to self

by Zac van Manen

I bought a new notebook online and had it delivered to the flat in a paper bag and when I opened it, days later, the first thing I wrote in it was the date and ‘I have no idea what the fuck is going on.’

UNDER BLANKETS

by Lily Arnell

My lungs are not corroding
They've built themselves a makeshift
womb
In which they will rekindle
Their love of mucus production
They are soaking old dishes
They are learning basic jazz rhythms
They have a landline
Which they never answer
Because it doesn't have caller ID
The left has become very good
At folding fitted sheets
The right is trying harder to listen
When the left gives it instructions
On how to clean the bronchial tubes
They sauté nettle leaves
Before making miniature adobes
With the clay they used
To plug the leaks

oh no 5

by Zac Smith

i'm looking at my toddler
my toddler is trying to say new words
words like *beep* (like the microwave)
and *pop* (like the toaster)
and i think about the snow/ice region of
 Final Fantasy X
there was like a hotel
some kind of...robot...boss
my toddler doesn't say many words
my toddler likes to hold my hands and
 jump off of furniture
my toddler hasn't been to a playground in
 three months
every video game has a snow/ice region
i don't know why i'm thinking about the
 snow/ice region of Final Fantasy X
i think about words i know
i think about the word *atrophy*
but in my brain it's spelled more like
 arttrghrffrmp

from “Towards a unified description of knotted light”

by Tom Snarsky

An article about the New York doctor who died by suicide after weeks of treating patients for COVID-19 is interrupted by an ad for foreverspin tops. Admired, Loved, Cherished, Get yours. Dr. Lorna M. Breen believed in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. She volunteered and was an outgoing presence in the hospital where she worked. She had no history of mental illness, but her dad said the last time he spoke with her on the phone she sounded strangely distant; he knew something had to be wrong. Dr. Breen had had COVID-19 herself and recovered, which meant she went right back to the front lines to treat patients dying almost too fast to be placed into beds. I wonder what her heart felt like to her toward the end, pumping oxygen- and

antibody-rich blood through a body that wasn't immune to a second infection, that might itself have to endure the whole thing again someday. It's impossible to tell from the article how much of this blood was part of the scene where Dr. Breen was found, or if before it was done she maybe felt like a top left spinning too long, its looping precession carving an impossibly gentle, meandering curve into the layer of antibody-poor blood stretched thinly across America's surface.

NATURE POEMS

by **Giacomo Pope**

i.

With concrete breath
Spring gathers early
Dead without shadow

It is a green-leaved
Autumn without markings
Or punctuation

ii.

On a silent road between
Cavities I smell hot
Dust, loose bark
And flowering lavender

iii.

With delicate indifference
Between flowers, a butterfly
Dies without urgency

You paint your lips in
Morning light and watch a line
Of ants rescue each wing

iv.

Purposefully
Asleep by water
Burning

v.

I see sweat as light
Reflected from skin

Surrender drips
From a hand
Wrapped in cotton

vi.

Mist blossoms across
Glass from quivering
Fingers turned toward
A wine drunk beetle
Dancing childishly
Against its surface

vii.

Unpicked,
A daffodil
Decays

MGK

by Elizabeth Ellen

for Colson

I felt dead inside now all the time
Unless I was looking at Machine Gun
Kelly online

And then I felt alive

(Alive in the way that makes you want to
get a bunch of tattoos, I mean)

I did everything in life backwards
I figured getting tattoos was just one more
example of this

(getting tattoos underground during
quarantine, i mean)

I felt dead inside

Reading other ppl's poems

Abt leaves and the sky and rain and
mammals who roam the earth

Idgaf abt nature

Like that

Idgaf abt nature in general

I couldn't imagine writing a poem
Abt nature

I only felt alive watching MGK videos
While drunk in my basement
Sitting on my basement floor

I only felt alive reading poems that didn't
fuck w
Nature

I went for a walk
I was listening to the new song by
Megan thee Stallion and Beyoncé
I saw someone (a feminist) had tweeted
something about Beyoncé's rapping
skills

I heard on the radio Jay Z and The-
Dream had helped Beyoncé write her
rap lyrics

I wanted to believe Beyoncé could write
her own lyrics

I misheard one of the lyrics as "now watch
me sweep up these earrings"

I liked the line so much I was going to use
it as an epigraph for my story
collection

Until I got home and googled it and it
wasn't anything abt

Sweeping up earrings

I only felt alive reading/listening to
Ppl from Ohio

I googled MGK and saw he did an annual
concert

In the small town in Ohio where I'd
grown up surrounded by
Amish ppl and regular ppl who had icicles
in their bedrooms in winter

I only felt alive while thinking abt
Driving around the rural Ohio shitholes
were I'd grown up

All the hills and streams and cows
Fuck, I just made this poem abt nature

Fuck, I don't know how to not feel dead
inside

I guess this is why/when ppl start getting
tatted up

I guess this is why/when ppl start listening
to/fucking w MGK

I guess this is my life now

Drinking in my basement
And thinking of what new tattoo I'll get
next

While fucking w MGK

Michael Clayton
by Mike Andrelczyk

I worked at this shitty restaurant for a dude with a gambling problem. He used to compare everything to that movie *Michael Clayton*. I'd tell him dude I haven't seen that so I don't know. Recently while in quarantine I watched *Michael Clayton* and it was exactly like working at a restaurant in Delaware.

*Quarantine Haiku [Qaranzzzac
Remix]*

by Joshua Hebburn

Essential worker stocking essential
kombuchas.

Blonde in the supermarket gutter.

The fridge: egg salad, sad, pickles.

Sunday. Dirty socks, clean socks.

Your package will arrive guilty.

Wait. Okay. Wait. Do it.

Two Pandemic Poems

by **Daniel Bailey**

Cocoon

We waited for the chrysalises

Inside the mesh bag

Virtual learning and the struggles thereof

Self-quarantine and the struggles thereof

Getting drunk and the struggles thereof

Maintaining a relationship and the

struggles thereof

Parenting and the struggles thereof

Bob Dylan and the 17-minute song

The Tiger King and the oblivious nature

of spring

I reset the universe

Unplug it and plug it back in

Everything still in its stupid place
When they arrived it was like nothing had
arrived
Just a dusty oblivion trapped
Without release
Still fluttering in the mesh bag
The Cave
As taught via Zoom

Asymptomatic Carrier

Will get through tomorrow
Will get through the next day
Will get through the next day
Will get through the next day
Will get through the next day
Will get through the next day
I am traveling the world
I am traveling the world to tell you

I love you

I need to know the message is received

Hence the traveling

I am on an airplane, crowded in

I order drinks

I forfeit my powers

Wake up wherever

Dazed, glad to be away from America

Protesting my own Americanness

I ask directions to the nearest river

I am directed to a taxi which takes me to
the river

I say I love you to the river

I say I love you to the people near the
river

In the river

Boating the river

Fishing for fish

Reeling in heavy mud-clodded sticks

Casting again

Those oozing across the water on
wakeboards

Letting the slow current tug them along

I say I love you to the sky whose clouds
Will one day rain on my home

I love you to the hospital, now empty

I love you to the end of it all

You see who I am, no asking

Shouting I love you into the river below

With no reason, I love you

The last American

I have already divvied the American
Godshare

Across the globe
It will arrive in 1-2 months
I have already razed the cities
The farmlands remain
I have alerted world leaders
I have said I love you into so many dead
I have left them on beaches, in gurneys
I have mastered the art of the funeral pyre
Deer nibble on the toes of the dead
Hawks prey upon your cats
Vultures nestle in your ribs
As the last American, I did not fulfill my
 duty
I forgot to pray, as we do
Allow me:
Dear God,

Please hear our thanks and allow us
forgiveness
I've nothing more to say at this moment
As I'm hoping to give my undivided
attention
To this river in... I honestly don't know
where I am
This river in this part of the world

A different God lives here
With different views of water and blood
I feel unqualified to be believed by any
god
I have said I will get through this day
I have given my love
I find a roach on the ground
I let it dance across my fingers, my palm

It eats the salt of my sweat
It cleans my body of its crud
Spins the wheel of who I am
It lands on Spin Again
But I am in the river
I am floating downstream
Bumping into ducks
Batting away plastic trash
The last American
Waving to the sky
Tasting new water
Bobbing up to say, I love you
Sinking a little
Knocking against a rock, I love you
Leaf falls, I love you
Branch smash, I love you
Kayak slap, I love you

Waterfall, I love you

Reach the sea, I love you

Evaporate, I love you

Vibrate in cloud, I love you

I refuse to fall to the earth again

I'm sorry, but I will stay here forever

*FOR MORE EXCITING
CONTENT, GO TO:*

crowjonah.com

elizabethellen.net

neutralspaces.co/cavinbryce

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neutralspaces.co/mikeandrelczyk

neutralspaces.co/tjlarkey

quarrellary.wordpress.com

silentauctionsmagazine.com

twitter.com/lottietheknight

twitter.com/maneszjt

zacsmith.net

thank you for reading



please don't die