



SELECTED READINGS FROM
Poetic LICENSE
3/6/22 6 MAR 2022

Poetic LICENSE

Get your Poetic License at the
1st Sunday afternoon open mic
every month @ a Zoom meeting

Join host Janet Kuyper on the 1st Sunday of every month
at a monthly Zoom meeting for poetry
(for flash fiction, or acoustic music) + occasional readings
@ the Poetic LICENSE open mic to rock the poetry world!



Not available
on picture for



VACCINATED FROM WHAT HAPPENS IN WUHAN

Janet Kruppers

how do you think
lethal infectious diseases
are spread anyway

seminal fluids,
blood transfusions, or... not
washing your hands

did you think
you were safe vacationing
on a cruise ship

silly you, for you
forgot that we're now in that
global economy

and what happens
in Wuhan doesn't necessarily
stay in Wuhan

—

after thousands
recently died from a recently
discovered virus

it's discovered
this virus escaped from a bio
research lab

in China — not
Russia, not the middle East,
but a place where

they now say that
the Great Wall is only for show.
But is it really.



For the only
known bio lab in China, in Wuhan
recently re-issued

a statement on
cleanliness for the country,
to avoid disease —

released just after
this most-recent mass epidemic
was fully discovered

—
and you'd think a lab
would know how to be clean,
but that doesn't mean

that their well-paid
researchers wouldn't illegally
make an extra buck

(or would that be
making many, many extra Yuan)
that doesn't mean

these researchers
wouldn't sell these laboratory
animals, still alive,

for extra cash
because one Beijing researcher
said they once sold

live monkeys and...
rats for the equivalent of over
a million U.S. dollars

JANEY

and yes, those
precious disease-ridden animals
made their way into

people's stomachs, and
maybe eventually to people working
on your cruise ships

and you thought
you were safe, silly you — you
should know better

—

you thought that
if you didn't swallow three gallons
of someone's saliva

you'd remain safe
from contracting those infectious
diseases, you've been

vaccinated, you even
go so far as to wash your hands
how noble of you

and you thought
that was enough — but as I said
this global economy

means it's almost like
we're all sharing one giant bed
together — we just

didn't realize
how messy that bed could really be
how messy indeed

2022/03/06
JANEY

HISTORY

John F MacMullen

Some may not
believe the story
or even know it
but
the Judeo-Christian Bible
tells the story that
in the beginning of the Earth
there were only two people
from Creation or Evolution
or whatever
a man and a woman

They had everything
they needed
great weather
food
sex (no clothes)
and the God/Spirit/Nature
had only one rule
and they broke it

So it was
get dressed
get out
grow food
labor to live
and that was the real beginning

Supposedly
they had two sons
and one decided the other had more
and killed him for it
and we were off and running

Since then,
we have decided
that the “others”
whoever they are
have prettier women
have more or better land
worship the wrong God
are of a different color
speak a different language
or a threat for any reason
and might kill us
if we don't kill them first
so we try to

We get better at it
rocks
clubs
spears
swords
guns
canon
planes
bombs
drones
and we get more sophisticated
couching the killing
war to end all wars
war of liberation
a peacekeeping force
Never facing the real problem
that since Day One
we have been totally fucked up
and humanity is doomed



CROCUS

Rita B. Rose

Winter delight pleasing sight
when others nap your corms take flight
blooming happily against a snowy landscape
Crocus, your petals of hope unfold winter's rugged drape

When others nap your corms take flight
saffron spicy lady fall is becoming; winter holds you
Crocus, your petals of hope unfold winter's rugged drape
purple perennial you brighten the season a new

Saffron spicy lady fall is becoming; winter holds you
blooming happily against a snowy landscape
purple perennial you brighten the season a new
winter delight pleasing sight



THE BOSSY BASSOON

by Mr Z (Bob Zarlow)

When the orchestra in the town of Harmony lost its first bassoon, he was replaced by a Bossy Bassoon who overwhelmed all the instruments.

“Bassoon! You’re spoiling the orchestra,” said the conductor.

“Nonsense!” said the bassoon.

“One day you’ll change your tune,” she said, and marched away, shaking her head.

One day became *the* day when half the town of Harmony turned out for a concert. But Bossy Bassoon played so loudly, he left the woodwinds winded, the brass breathless, and the strings quivering in a corner. Even the loudest percussion instruments wanted to drum the bassoon out.

“Worst concert ever!” grumbled the people of Harmony.

“How do you feel now, Bassoon?” asked the conductor.

“I feel fine. Is it my fault the other woodwinds were weak, the strings were tight and the brass blew it?”

“There’s no “I” in “orchestra,” said the conductor. But the bassoon just snickered.

The next weekend, only a handful of people attended the concert and Bassoon overpowered all the instruments again.

“Do you still feel fine?” asked the conductor.

“Well, not fine, exactly. No one came to see me.”

“No one came to see the *orchestra*. Were you really happy bossing everyone around?” she asked.

“Of course. But when I noticed how the strings cried and the brass blew their noses and the other woodwinds wheezed, not so much.”

“Do you know that you can never be happy by making others sad?” asked the conductor.

“Well, it’s too late to do anything about that now.”

“No, it’s not! You can change. If you want to.”

“I don’t want to.” Then, he added, “But if I did, what would I do?”

“Instead of overpowering the other instruments, try to *give* them power.

“And take the spotlight off me? Why?”

The conductor thought for a moment and then asked, “What’s my job up there on the podium?”

“Duh...You conduct us.”

“Yes. I make each of you feel special in your own way. And you know how that makes me feel?”

“Left out?”

“No. It makes me feel great! Look, Bassoon, make someone else feel good and what do you think will happen?”

He let out a slow bellow. “I’ve been a big dope, haven’t I?”

“Well, you haven’t exactly...”

“You know what?” he interrupted her (like a big dope). “I *am* gonna change!”

The next day, he apologized to everyone and said he would stop his bossy ways. The oboe was not convinced. “What scheme could Bassoon have up his bell?” he thought.

But the following weekend, half the town of Harmony packed the auditorium for the concert.

And a concert is what they heard! After all, “concert” means all the instruments working together in Harmony.

During the standing ovation, as the instruments took their bows, the conductor turned to the oboe and said, “Maybe we should call him, “The In-Tune Bassoon.”



MOTHER RUSSIA: CHERNAYA MADONNA

Inspired by courageous Russian protestors

Thérèse Craine Bertch

You think it is about Ukraine, “No, say it out loud, No!”
Put down your arms for now is the time,
your time to be proud
Lay down your arms. and take to the street
you will meet God face to face, and there’s no disgrace in fear,
staying clear of harm

Just lay down your arms. Ring the alarm embraced
by your Mother, Chernaya Madonna, who is not far,
not not far at all. Can’t you see,
she walks the streets with you, Yes it is true we prayed for you.
She asked us to, and we prayed the rosary
for Mother Russia, her children loved her so

Throughout the ages. she said.
“I will not fail you!
I am your mother.”
Now break the chain of pain you see in the children
of Ukraine and yours and ours
Now is your time. We pray for you.



A TIME AND PLACE.

Richard Kent

There's no mole hills into mountains to make,
and on its belly slithers no snake.
In a bar I used to know, far away and a long time ago,
in a different country and a different time,
above the door read this sign....
"No swearing, aloud allowed"
is what it said.
But no one knows what's in my head.
I keep it there, and don't offend,
my language I try to amend.



DEDICATED TO SAMIRAMUS

Susan J. Rogers

(from *Landscapes of the Mind* by Susan J. Rogers, 2020)

Remember.
Remember, if you dare;
because the stories they tell us today
are all wrong.
This is why we feel uneasy.
Symbols on restroom doors,
for example, the symbol for woman
was never a triangle,
and certainly not a dress,
something both men and women wore
in ancient times;
until the Queen of Babylon,
inspecting her engineering feat,
aqueducts in the desert,
decided she would be more comfortable in pants,
which she designed, so she could ride her camel
as she watched her construction workers
labor under the Syrian sun.

The symbol for woman is an inverted triangle,
the base of it, with a slit
to show where we all come from
and where our souls will return
when our bodies recede to bone.
Then we will see the world
as nothing but a reflection pool,
and even the Goddess will mirror
our bodies at the hour of our death.

She, too, will be rendered in bone,
arms folded across her chest,
breasts shrunk, body stiff,
but still, the inverted triangle,
the womb will invite us back
to the River Styx, primordial blood,
original nourishment,
the sacred river inside her
which we will follow again.

From the beginning,
is now,
and ever shall be,
the dearly departed set course
on her wide and rolling river
to the land of respite,
to Avalon, place of magic and rebirth.
Remember this story.
Remember if you dare.



THE QUANTITY OF MERCY
FROM: THE MENACE OF KAVANAGH

Michael Sindler

For C.B. Ford (with apologies to Willie the Shake)



The quantity of mercy is oft strained
It drops charges, ignores blame, treats women
as if a race beneath. It cheats twice, yes
It forgiveth him that beats and him that rapes:
'T is easiest upon the mightiest; it becomes
the privileged male to act the vengeful clown
His status bends the force of judicial power,
Thus able to make awful travesty
Wherein doth sit as peer and pull at strings
But mercy is absent - justice decays
Privilege enthroned at the heart of things
It is an affront to suffrage itself
As unearned power doth then skew all odds
When mercy pleads for justice. Therefore, true
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in this court of Just Us, none of us
Should see salvation: He who plays for party
And that same power doth sour all he renders
This thief of mercy. He will do thus much
To mutilate justice for the worthy
Which if though follow, this warped court of vengeance
Will thus give sentence 'gainst the women there

I DON'T NEED A RIDE, I NEED AMMUNITION

Steven Blanc

Inspired by Volodymyr Zelensky

I don't need a ride
I need ammunition
Baby can't you see
I am on a mission
Comes to my liberty
the bullshit stops with me
I don't need a ride
I need ammunition

Don't need no sanctions
just send us guns
one for each and every
mom and daddy's sons
If we die for our country
well that's how it must be
I don't need a ride
I need ammunition

I'd like a battleship
who's missiles fly precisely
but Howitzers and Javelins
would still do it very nicely

Don't want no war
but go to hell
that's what I said before
my body fell
But spirit will live on
long after I am gone
and I don't need a ride
I need ammunition



EVERYTHING AFFECTS EVERYBODY

Thom Woodruff

EVEN IF YOU ARE OFF-GRID

Even in a desert. Even away from “news”

Even on a private yacht or island.

You cannot escape others’ auras

Air links us, and earth, seas and skies

Every poem, prayer, petition, promise has a home

inside the air or skin or another’s ears or eyes

Even on the ISS, they pump the oxygen of wars

Even on the Moon-Space Whispers

Unexplained images from Webb and Hubble

WE ARE NOT ALONE (but they are not human)

Why dare we assume we are immune

to bacteria and organisms returning in plague proportions?

Science says irreversible environmental damage

Musk says “Multi-Planet Options”. Russia threatens to explode ISS

So Musk Internets STARLINK Ukraine. We are all Webbed.

One Degree of separation from Kevin Bacon, Francis Bacon

Bacon and egg burgers from McDonalds in Russia with NO REAL MEAT!

There is only shelter in this silence-between songs

wherein and whereby we can finally hear ourselves

Turning the News OFF, and beginning to listen...



WHY MY BEARD WAS MY
MOTHER'S MORTAL ENEMY
or WHY SANTA WAS LUCKY
HIS MOTHER WASN'T JEWISH

Bryan Franco



The fact that I have a white beard makes me look at least ten years older than my age. Without the beard, I still look older than both my elder brothers who are respectively a-year-nine-months and four-years-seven-months older than me. My mother adamantly disapproved of my beard, no matter how well-groomed it was. Her constant vocal disapproval bordered on emotional abuse. When it turned from a streaky auburn to white (when she was still alive), she was never remiss to point out that it added an extra ten years on me. After one of the many times she asked me to shave my beard, I suggested she stop frosting her gray hairs. Because she went through labor with me, her unsolicited advice was appropriate, but mine was demeaning. Such double standards were standard practice in my family which I can honestly say was filled with love and hugs even if my mom always kept a beard trimmer handy just in case I came to my senses.

from LOOKING FOR A WORTHY ADVERSARY

Janet Krupers

edited 3/27 on World Theater day

all this time I've been playing a part
an actress on a stage, spouting the lines on cue
that role was getting tiresome
but those stage lights still came on night after night
and I still had to play my part

until on my night off I saw your performance
at the theatre down the street
and you know, your protagonist
was doing what I was doing
right down to faking it with people who don't matter
right down to going home and still feeling empty

watching your show, I liked to see
that boiling emotion underneath
that no one else could see
because only I had the knowledge to know
what that emotion really means

so I'm beginning to wonder
if we can get together
and write our own play

it would be a masterful performance
and as that curtain would close we'd hold each other's hands
and walk off the stage
and the audience would know that there is a happy ending

now when I walk out on to the set
there you stand, in front, stage left
I wait for my cue to make my move
none of the rest of the scene matters to me

maybe they'd like our little play, maybe they wouldn't
who really cares

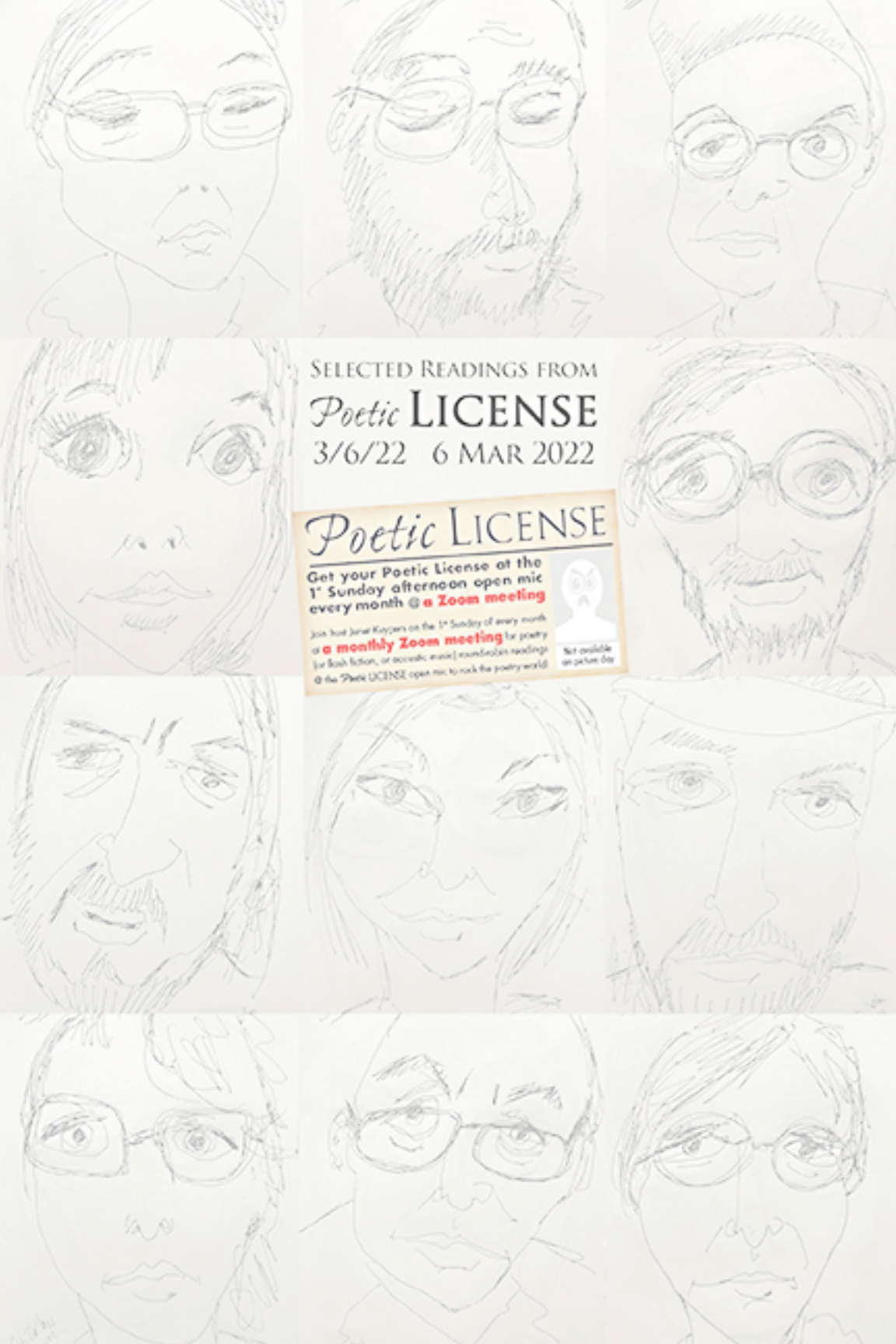
because now my performance of a lifetime is made
I stand here like a statue
and wait for my applause
as I wait for the reviews
on the performance I was made for

I know what they're all going to say
but none of that matters anymore

because I know what you are going to say
because it's everything that I want to say

so I will wait for you to come on stage again
for our next wonderful performance
where we have our happy ending





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Join host Janet Kuyper on the 1st Sunday of every month
at a **monthly Zoom meeting** for poetry
(or flash fiction, or acoustic music) read-aloud readings
@ the *Poetic LICENSE* open mic to rock the poetry world!



Not available
on picture for