

**FULL HOUSE
LITERATURE MAGAZINE**

ISSUE 1



**EDITED AND DESIGNED BY
LEIA BUTLER AND JACK OXFORD**

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Note from Editors



Welcome to the first issue of Full House Literature Magazine! It's been a long journey since we first made a Twitter account and WordPress for the magazine, but we've learned so much about what goes into making a literary magazine along the way, as well as meeting so many wonderful people!

Speaking of wonderful people, we have the wonderful work of thirteen wonderful people to share with you in this issue! Each piece was chosen for its immense originality, and creativity. The selection process was so, so difficult, resulting in the formation of our Wild Card issue to allow us to show off the work of even more talented people.

Our aim is forever and always for Full House to be a place for everyone to be passionate, fun, and free with their writing. We hope our first issue, the diamond issue, is just the start of this.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us so far, and we hope you enjoy our first issue!

From Leia and Jack x



A

Red Sink

Alexis Noga

The deep red sink in the kitchen is clogged

again, choking on leftovers or a

forgotten spoon. The garbage disposal

sputters- a stalled engine during winter

in New England. The blades hum, rotating

and hesitating, rotating and hes-

like a windmill on a still August day

attempting to grind wheat into snowflakes.

The honeycomb blades turn slowly, then stop--

motionless, patiently waiting like a

childless pinwheel for a rare gust of wind.

V

2

Gill Girl *Kristin Garth*

Cuts you camouflage with hair, secret you
are aware, perforations of the neck —
gangrene, at first, you suspect. Mottled hue
imbued a metallic sheen — genuflect,
in horror, what they mean. What hides
behind your honey hair? Longer each day
to part, prepare, arrange an exit, sides
brushed straight. Groom not for vanity's sake
but to prevaricate. By blue lips you are
betrayed. Matte lipstick cannot save the day —
bottled water (not to drink) poured over,
until in bath you sink, flesh rosy pink.
You grow gills, amphibious instincts.

(Previously published with Unpublishable Zine)

7

Ageless

E. F. S. Byrne

“Bedtime,” said Mother.

“Lights out,” says Father.

Curled up in bed, under the feather-like sugar-coating of pink bedsheets, hot, snug, music pounding, make up dripping in the heat, hot chocolate slithering down the side of a cooling cup, my eyes swoon. I grasp Snoopy-dog. He’d been a present for my fifth birthday. From a boy I used to know. I snuggled him close. Time to relax. I get out my laptop and sign on. I’ve been alive all day but there is something extra special about those late night connections, when all my friends are online, behind closed doors. I pull the bedclothes over my head and settle in. There is nothing more comforting, more exciting than diving into new worlds, meeting all these people who follow me, love me, make jokes, tell me how cool I am, argue then make up because I am just ... just that cool. My biggest fear is Dad catching his foot and kicking the Wi-Fi cable loose.

I claim to be twenty something. But so do they. You just never know. It’s good fun. And sometimes a little daring. I worry about my own batteries fading, sleep closing my eyes but then a new voice calls and I am wide-awake.

My mind whizzes, twenty-four hours around the clock, like a server farm, a needy bank of hot flushes pumping out instinctive responses, an endless stream of ones and zeros pounding themselves into a pulpy mess. I can’t stop. I sleep through my math’s exam, forget my cigarette in the break until it burns my fingertips. I keep texting, snapping away. The likes need to add up. I reply frantically, heart beating, palms sweaty with desire or maybe fear.

So many followers, thumbs up and petitions for more friends and messages and photos. My antivirus needs updating, new filters. Avoiding my parents is becoming harder and harder.

I send photos. The demands keep coming. In class, in the shower, wet hair, dry hair, smirk, wrinkle, dazzle. Snaps, comments, similes, requests don't ebb, they tumble and wave, a tsunami that never retreats. And they expect me to study as well? My parents just don't understand the pressure.

One of them wants to meet. I've promised him all sorts of things I have read about, but never experienced, and have no idea what they mean even after watching a couple of blurred videos.

Can't refuse. I steal one of my parents' condoms but it goes all sticky in my fingers. Maybe I shouldn't have taken it out of the package beforehand. Soft, slippery, skiddy, like my social relationships it didn't really seem to fit in properly. I stumble, I'm nervous, lack of sleep, blood pounding. I grab Snoopydog and hold him tight.

I borrow the house keys one night and creep out of the flat, down to the park. He looks scary. I run home. He looked pretty mad. He unfriends me. Doesn't matter. There are many more where he came from.

He pasted a photo of me on the street, around the corner from my front door, bare naked, horrible words sprayed over the top in red. All the neighbours saw it. My parents couldn't avoid it. Nobody ever found him. I locked myself in my room for days.

I was so happy when my mother unplugged the Wi-Fi. I could finally rest in peace. I just hope he leaves me alone but I'm still not sure I can close it all down, walk away and pretend I don't exist.

A good book would help. I fire up my Kindle. A little fairytale won't go astray. It would be nice to stay in, huddled up in bed. It isn't the season for going out.

Dad orders barbecue pizza. Mum is on the phone. I double check. They're on Netflix. The connection is back. I close the bedroom door. Then I lock it just in case. Snoopydog smells like my old socks; he needs a wash but what teddy bear doesn't. I'm feeling scruffy myself. I want more likes. Quickly. Right now. I burst past my firewall, out into the world, the one that understands me, that no longer scares. I've forgotten the insults, that weirdo downstairs. I need to be loved, patted. Parents really don't understand. I pull Snoopydog closer. Together we tap into the screen, flicker in the haze like puppies abandoned by the roadside.

4

Single sadness

Robin McNamara

Machine voices echos out artifical love,
Played out on tinder dates and zoom chats.

Romeo and Juliet died a long time ago
Giving it all away for nothing in return.

End-of-day bottle of wine by the microwave
Dinner, sad cat pitying you and leaving your

Side, like last night's stranger in your bed.
Sad Dads like your Instagram photos and
Message; 'Hi, how's it going?'

Time for one/table for one/cinema for one.
Rinse and repeat again tomorrow when the tears
Are dried and the smile is forced.

Live Up Timothy Tarkelly

You enter every room like a cannon,
loaded with the exact expression
to crack open our morning numbness
and let an inferno's worth of humor
overtake the room. It's got a name,
this presence of thought and power,
I don't know, I remember loud,
they said loud, but any volume will carry
when you're the only one
with the nerve to laugh, to acknowledge
how dumb Carla sounds when she thrusts
her bland, garage sale Jesus
on these proceedings, why can't people
just let things be fun, like you,
let's laugh as we soak our mistakes
and war stories out of the office carpet,
a roll of paper towels in hand,
a comeback locked and loaded
and it's not that you won't let us
live things down, you live up,
a level where even death can grab the mic
speak of unfulfilled mothers,
his presence in our daily conversations
and be funny for a 10-minute set
followed by mild applause
and our return to the people,
the other people, who talk like they're cooking
a Sunday casserole, too much practice,
a tired recipe that comes out the same
every damn time.

Sleeping Beasts

Alyssa Jordan

Granddad's face appears in at least half of the photos. Anika picks one at random and presses her thumb into the yellowed edges.

He used to call her mom a night shade. When his wife caught wind of this, she said all that pipe smoke had addled his brain, but Anika liked Granddad's collection of stories. They deftly spun images of her mom, built her out of smoke and air with his tongue, filled in her ghost so well that Anika couldn't think of her with only love and contempt.

Who knew those would be the good days.

Sometimes, Anika rides her bike to the city limits just so she can breathe. It's a little easier when she goes fast enough to make it feel like flying, when her callused hands barely grip the handlebars, and everything blurs together.

Most of the time, though, she drinks cheap tequila and eats leftovers and wears a casino uniform. She quickly learns that abandonment is written in her blood. She tries not to think about the tightness in her chest, or the stack of photos in her cramped apartment.

Despite her best efforts, the smell of pipe smoke always lingers.

The Mundane Ghost

David Wasserman

Scott and I found the ghost in our attic. She was sitting in an old rocking chair my mother didn't think matched the rest of our decor. I pulled on the light string.

"Do ya grant wishes?" my brother asked.

No answer - she just sort of rocked and stared at the floorboards.

"How are you sitting?" I asked. "Can't you walk through walls and stuff?"

Nothing. She didn't even acknowledge our presence when Scott gently (tenderly, really) waved his small hand through her face. The ghost wasn't old, or scary. She looked normal. Maybe a little lonely. Her outfit seemed like it could be one of our mother's - Loft, perhaps. She pulsed a translucent blue at a pace that matched my relaxed heartbeat.

When the authorities came (and scientists and ghost hunters and government and all kinds of other people) she still just sat there, rocking. No one could identify her and the scientists said they weren't able to collect any samples of anything and the government seemed a little wary but she "didn't seem like a threat" so eventually they all departed. Even the ghost hunters and religious zealots and TV people grew bored and disappeared. Tourists stopped stopping by; mom and dad's cash box dried up.

One day Scott just gave a sad little wave and I pulled out the light.

The world steams
DS Maolalai

smoking the cigarette
of a generous coworker,
a sandwich clamped under
one arm. it's a hot white
september, but not
very shiny – the world steams
like an iron
on a somewhat damp
shirt. and the yard, too,
is mostly empty – a few cars, untidy
as torn-off buttons. I inhale, enjoying
the closeness of weather
and the distance of roads
and the mountains behind them –
this crumpled pile
of far off laundry –
our bedroom,
where you don't like
me smoking, its ruffled
and countryside
character.

9

A Cubic Zirconia Kind of Love

Richard LeDue

There was a time (sand
trapped inside a sneaker
after refusing to go
barefoot on a beach,
due to lessons about broken
bottles) when he would have
given her (waves sounding
assertive until ocean
settled down, like a forty
something with five cats,
memory finally drowned
of that summer picnic:
champagne spilled
onto the blanket,
food chewed with opened mouths
because it was easier
than talking about jobs
and hometowns,
diamond ring dropped,
cutting through that silence
of a one knee proposal-
all before even a first kiss)
everything.

6

10

Dear Ms. Advice Columnist *Anita Kestin*

I read somewhere that if a friend constantly reneges on meetings he or she has already agreed to (because “something better” came up), you have a right to a trade-in. Can anyone tell me how to do this? In this case, we’ve been friends for many years so I’m guessing I can’t find a replacement friend who knew me in seventh grade, but hell, I’d settle for someone who knew me at 19. I’m not overly finicky.

I went to Amazon but they have a three week limit on returns.

Ebay is a possibility but I’m worried I’ll get someone who not only stands me up but also leaves me with the dinner check and drinks expensive vodkas. I guess I could risk it during COVID- what do you think?

Wait a minute... What if I get someone traded in because they love to ghost people? That would be as Trump says: sad. Or the opposite- a stalker, like an awful boyfriend I once had. My finger’s twitching, ready to click, but now it’s paused as I reflect a bit.

Time, perhaps for an entirely different approach. Do you have a friend contract of some kind I can use when I meet someone new? Maybe I can start afresh from now on with a transparent set of expectations.

None of this is for me you understand. None of my friends would do this to me, I mean ever. I’m just asking for a friend.

OL

J

Non-Conversations in a Pandemic

Alexandra Grunberg

I say that I'm depressed and you ask me why I am feeling sad and I don't feel sad I don't feel

If you are not developing a hobby or finishing your novel or bettering yourself during this

I watched the sunrise this morning because I did not sleep last night and it felt like I was

The internet keeps going in and out and it makes it feel like a friend because friends are not

anything at all I wish I could feel sad because even sadness would break up the monotony of

time I don't have any sympathy for you because I learned how to bake my own sourdough

the last person on the earth and the world was too bright for me to try to go to sleep but it was

as constant as you expect them to be and it feels like I am sharing a video with a friend when

constant distance I want to feel sad I want to feel devastated I want to cry again it would be

loaf and yes it was scary but it was also very fulfilling and if I can do it than anyone can do it

not so bright that I could pretend I was waking up and this was all a dream that was finally

the reaction video to my favourite comedy routine keeps buffering like the host is still

so lovely to cry and cry just try over for the dream to end I need to sleep not sure how to feel

f



Q

*THE NAIADES APPEAR AT THE DEATHBED
OF JOHN WILLIAM WATERHOUSE*

Jim Newcombe

It is true that when they came
they were not so unfamiliar
as I had expected, though I
didn't guess at first
they'd come for me. They were
as the painters had depicted them,
tawny, lithe, fresh-visaged.

And their song, ah their song,
more of the syrinx than the larynx.

The pain I felt in every wasted
fragment of my body ebbed and
eased away. I was young again.
The branches of the trees parted
and filled with light. There was
a sense of déjà vu but perhaps
that is true of all endings. There was
no resistance on my part; how
could there be? I was entering
the unknown which inhabits all women.

Consider that I who had loved life
conformed to my final transformation.





The calendar of a dying man (part 2)

Nikki Dudley

WEEKS WEEKS WEEKS

November							2020
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
1 Draw your features with words.	2 X	3 X	4 A calligram of you	5 X	6 X	7 the plague, pages and pages	
8 X	9 between	10 the	11 spaces	12 X	13 I store [you] like acorns	14 ... acorns lost in the soil, untold	
15 worth when the shroud soaks	16 the contaminated blood	17 X	18 from every pore	19 X	20 I cannot exist without U	21 Can U exist?	
22 X	23 Arterial blood snatches you from me	24 and me from you and future from me	25 X	26 and what will be your future?	27 X	28 Oh fuck.	
29 The last page was torn	30 from my book						



About our contributors

Alexis Noga

Alexis Noga is a student at Denison University studying Creative Writing. She is has been published in Blue Marble Review and Denison's Exile Magazine. @LexiNoga

Kristin Garth

Kristin Garth is a Pushcart, Best of the Net & Rhysling nominated sonnet stalker. Her sonnets have stalked journals like Glass, Yes, Five:2:One, Luna Luna and more. She is the author of seventeen books of poetry including Pink Plastic House (Maverick Duck Press), Crow Carriage (The Hedgehog Poetry Press), Flutter: Southern Gothic Fever Dream (TwistiT Press), The Meadow (APEP Publications) and Golden Ticket from Roaring Junior Press. She is the founder of Pink Plastic House a tiny journal and co-founder of Performance Anxiety, an online poetry reading series. Follow her on Twitter: (@lolaandjolie) and her website kristingarth.com

E. F. S. Byrne

E. F. S. Byrne works in education and writes when his teenage kids allow it. He blogs a weekly micro flash story. Links to this and over forty published pieces can be found at efsbyrne.wordpress.com or follow him on Twitter @efsbyrne

Robin McNamara

Robin McNamara lives in Waterford City and with over 45 poems published worldwide, including having poems published in America with Starving Writers and in the UK with Saccharine Poetry.

Robin is a regular contributor to Poetry Ireland and Black Bough Poetry poetry prompts as well as being a guest prompter with Poetry Ireland.

UCD Library have a selection of his pandemic poems in their archives as a record of poems written during this period.

Robin also regularly contributes to Spillwords, where he was nominated twice for poem and author of the month.

Timothy Tarkelly

Timothy Tarkelly's work has appeared in Back Patio Press, Tiny Essays, From the Depths, Peculiars Magazine, and others. He has two poetry collections published by Spartan Press: Luckhound (2020) and Gently in Manner, Strongly in Deed: Poems on Eisenhower (2019). When he's not writing, he teaches in Southeast Kansas.

Alyssa Jordan

Alyssa Jordan is a writer living in the United States. She pens literary horoscopes for F(r)iction Series (her sign is Sagittarius with a dash of Gemini!) Some of her stories can be found or are forthcoming in The Sunlight Press, X-R-A-Y Literary Magazine, LEON Literary Review, and more. You can also find her on Twitter @ajordan901 or Instagram @ajordanwriter.

David Wasserman

David Wasserman (he/him) is the author of [Tiny Footcrunch](#) (Unsolicited Press, 2018) and [Dealing: Tarot Poems and Pictures](#) (Unsolicited Press, 2019) - the latter in collaboration with Project Runway's Helen Castillo (art) and in support of NYC non-profit Literacy, Inc. His work has appeared in [8 Poems Journal](#), [Plum Recruit Mag](#) and [The Daily Drunk](#), among others. David is editor-in-chief of the forthcoming [Second Chance Lit](#), teaches elementary school and lives in Connecticut, USA. Find him online at davidwassermanbooks.com or [@davidwasserman1](https://twitter.com/davidwasserman1).

DS Maolalai

DS Maolalai has been nominated seven times for Best of the Net and three times for the Pushcart Prize. His poetry has been released in two collections, "[Love is Breaking Plates in the Garden](#)" (Encircle Press, 2016) and "[Sad Havoc Among the Birds](#)" (Turas Press, 2019)

Richard LeDue

Richard LeDue was born in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada, but currently lives in Norway House, Manitoba with his wife and son. His poems have appeared in various publications throughout 2019, and more work is forthcoming throughout 2020, including a chapbook from Kelsey Books.

Anita Kestin

Bio Anita Kestin, M.D., M.P.H. is a medical doctor with a varied career and gray hairs to match. For most of her career, she has worked in a traditional academic setting but for the past ten years she has worked as the medical director of a nursing facility, as a hospice physician, in the locked ward of a psychiatric facility, and in public health settings.

She is also the daughter of Holocaust survivors, the wife of an environmental lawyer, the mother of wonderful grown children, a grandmother, and a progressive activist. She is attempting to calm her nerves during the pandemic by writing.

Alexandra Grunberg

Alexandra Grunberg is a Glasgow based poet, author, and screenwriter. Her poetry has appeared in [Honey & Lime](#), [Red Eft Review](#), and [From Glasgow to Saturn](#). You can learn more at her website, alexandragrunberg.weebly.com.

Jim Newcombe

Jim Newcombe, the son of a librarian and a Rolls-Royce manager, was born and raised in Derby in the heart of the English midlands before uprooting to London in 2006, where he has lived in various districts ever since, currently nesting south of the river on Telegraph Hill. He is essentially self-taught and has been passionate about words and pictures since earliest boyhood, being able to recite hundreds of poems by heart. His writing has appeared in numerous publications, including [Agenda](#), [Acumen](#), [The Recusant](#) and [Literature Today](#)

Nikki Dudley

Nikki Dudley is managing editor of [streetcake](#) magazine and also runs the [streetcake](#) prize. She is the leader of the [MumWrite](#) programme. She has a published novel and a collection out with [Knives Forks and Spoons](#). You can read more on her website: www.nikkidudleywriter.com and find her on Twitter: [@nikkidudley20](https://twitter.com/nikkidudley20)

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