

ISSUE #9

Amusement

“A man who can laugh at himself is truly blessed, for he will never lack for amusement.”

- James Carlos Blake

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All This Safe Passage

The concentric circles
as I move,
each rippling out
as the soul
understands
and includes,
arriving and arriving
at the one point,
the old lament
disappears
in the faithful focus
on the curve ahead.

-Theresa Henson

Stephane Salvi - Step Sniffer



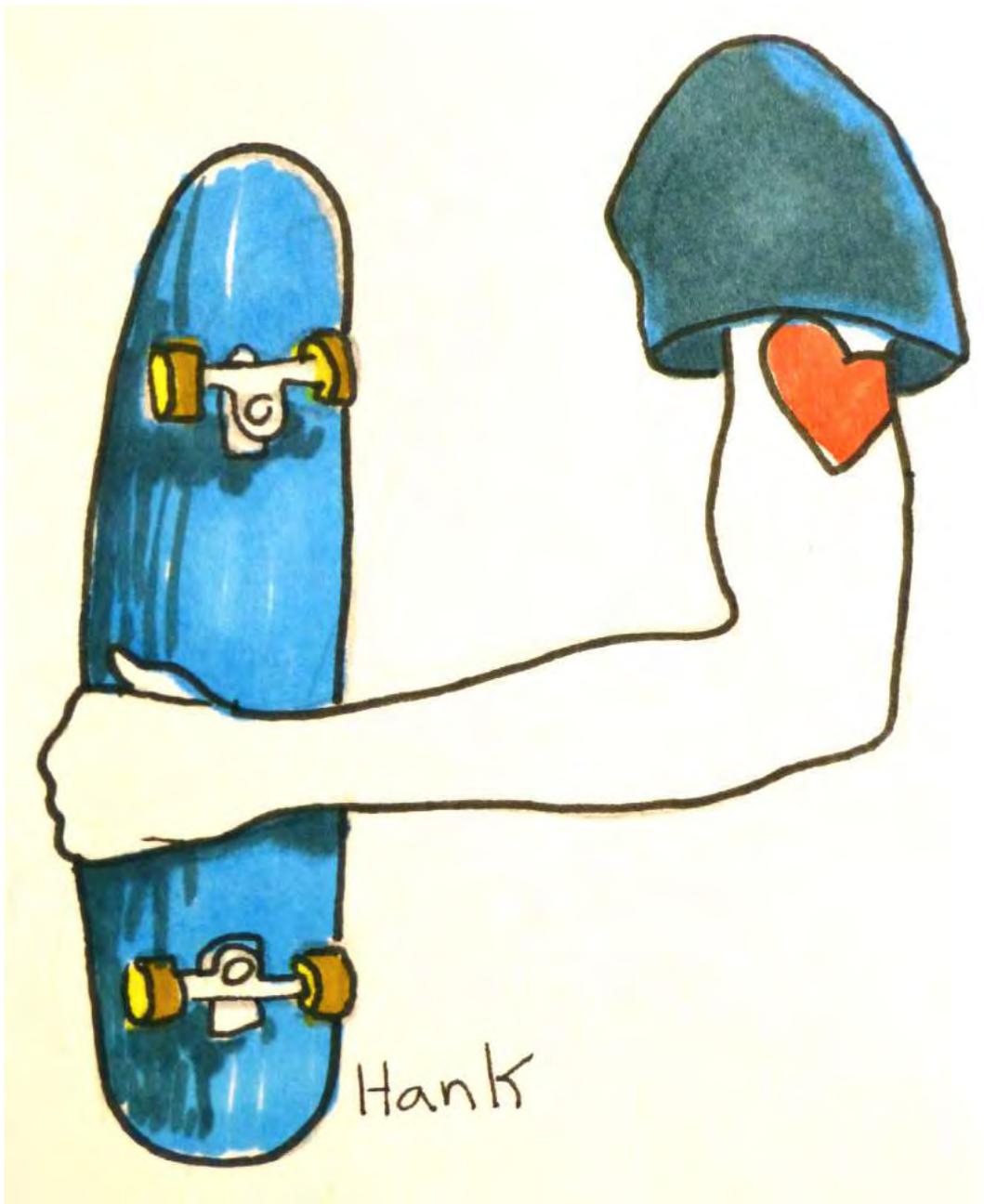


Marc Falzon - from *Where the Promise Lies*

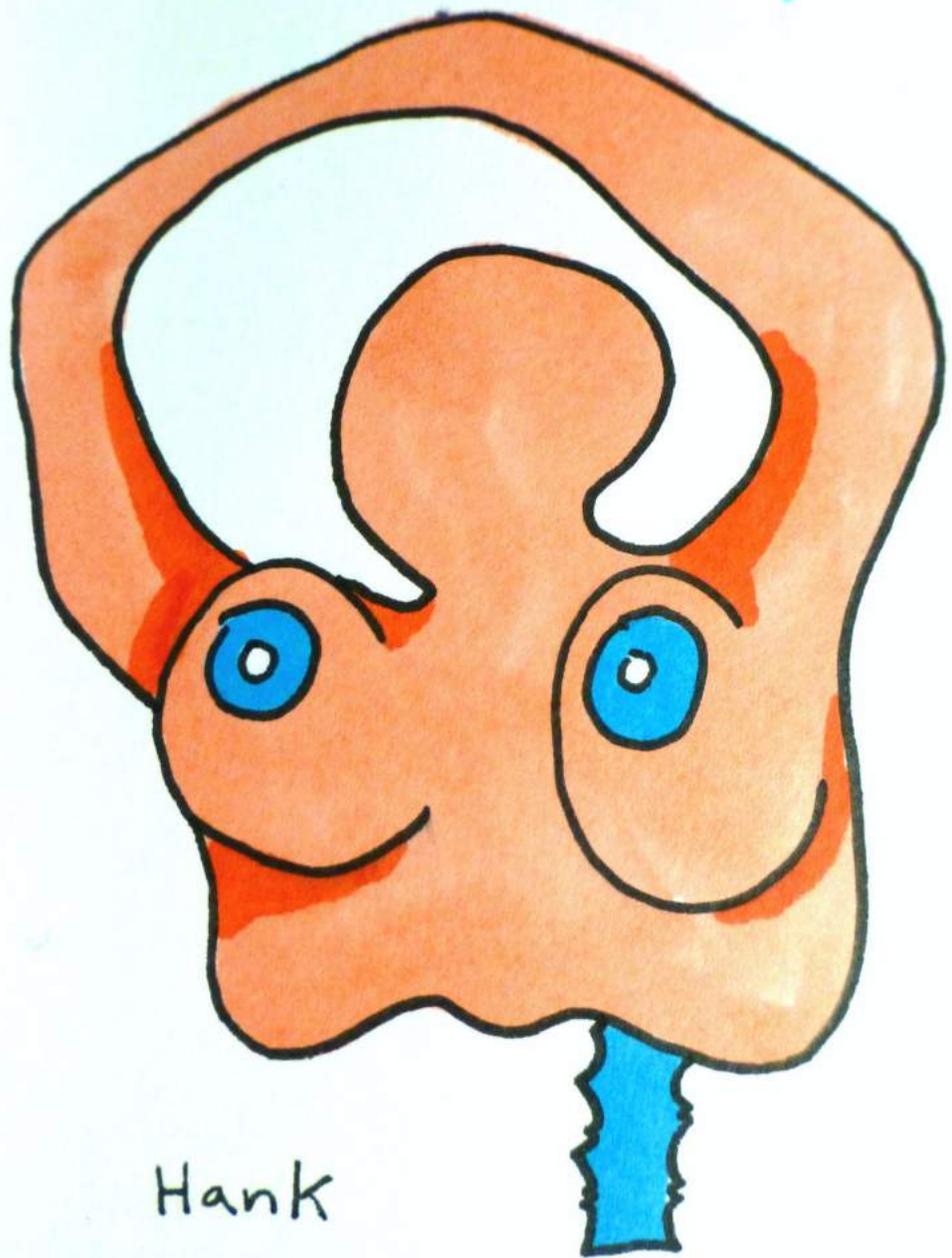
Marc Falzon - from *Where the Promise Lies*



Sophie Sherwood



Hank Mattson - Skateboarding Saves



Hank Mattson - Dance

Nips

A man's nipples are his jewelry.
They sit daintily upon his chest like
two dark leathery pendants hung
from a microscopic gold chain.

A woman's nipples are the same
but often way bigger like skin bazookas
ready to blast the world with nutrients,
pleasure, love, agency and power.

Thinking about them is making me hungry.

I close my eyes and imagine
all the nipples in the universe
together in one giant mandala.

Its like looking at the milky way
through a big purple telescope.

-Alex L. Swartzentruber



Lybra Ray Olbrantz - Martini Yogini



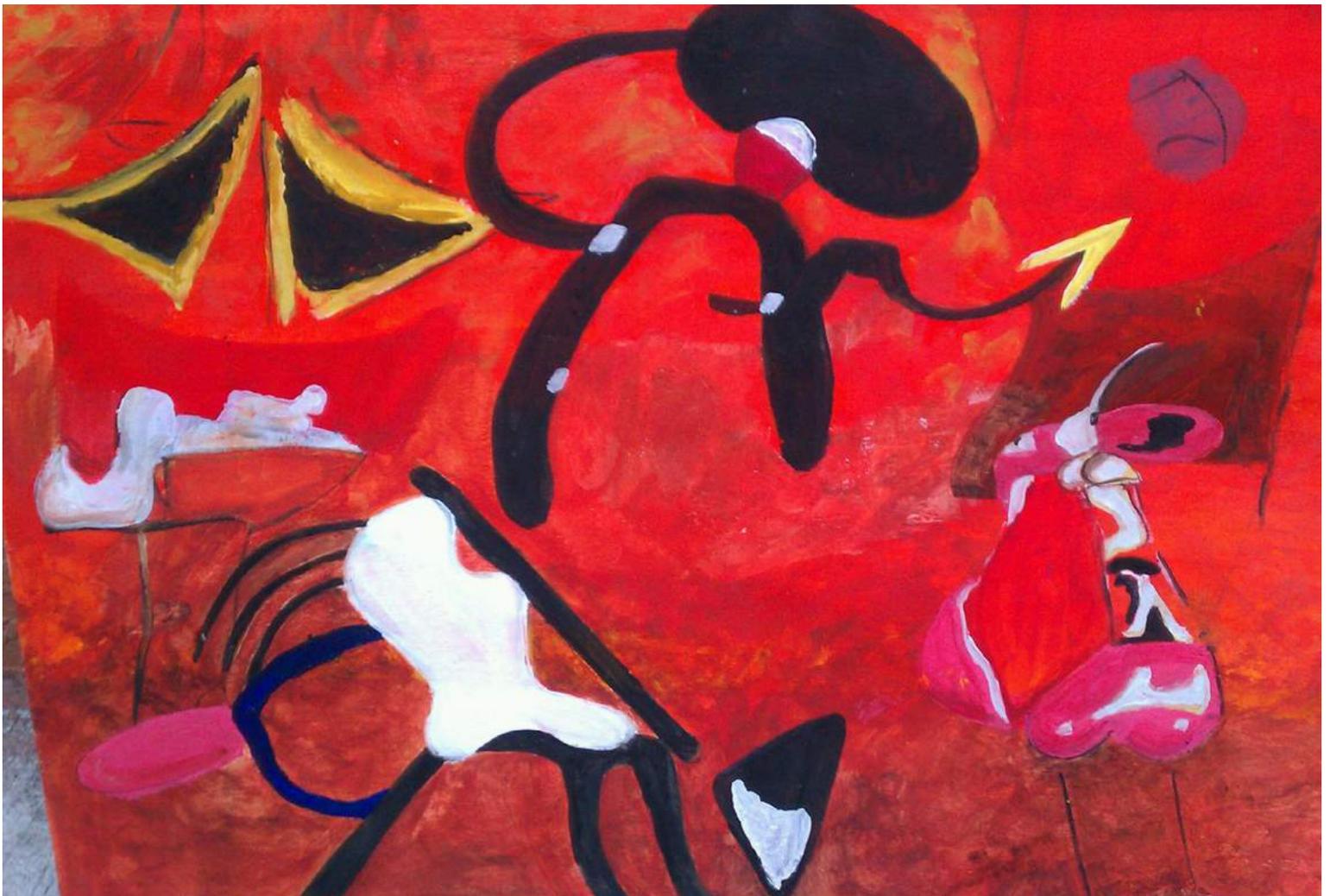
Megan Tresca - I don't get it

Just a Moment

- M. Zane McClellan

I used to hate this thing for its ticking,
and now I hate it for its lack.
When I look at its red eyes malevolently,
I can swear that it's looking back.
I've been stuck in this room for hours,
or maybe it's even been days.
The nurse is the only one who tells me a thing,
"Just a moment" is all that she says.
She has too many patients,
and hasn't enough time for me.
I decided to pull out this catheter
and go to the front desk to plead.
The buzzers and bells started conniptions,
I thought I was being besieged.

When the doctor abruptly ripped back the curtain,
I was more than a little relieved.
"Thank goodness," I said to the doctor.
"Can you tell me what's going on?"
Removing his glasses, pinching the bridge of his nose,
it seemed I had done something wrong.
He took a deep breath then sighed.
Without a word he eased me back down.
Shaking his head from side to side tsking,
he was wearing that ritual frown.
I started to ask more questions,
which he raised his hand to forestall.
My jaw dropped to hang open as he said,
"just a moment," then went out to the hall.



Halima Abdul-Jaleel - *Amusing Surreality*

Beach Poem 1

I need a way to write underwater
this summer when I'm in the ocean.

I'd bring my journal in with me
or maybe my phone

if I didn't know any better.
I washed both of them on accident

once. You can probably imagine
how unforgiving the water was

upon the delicate pages and circuitry.
At the beach this year I will find a way

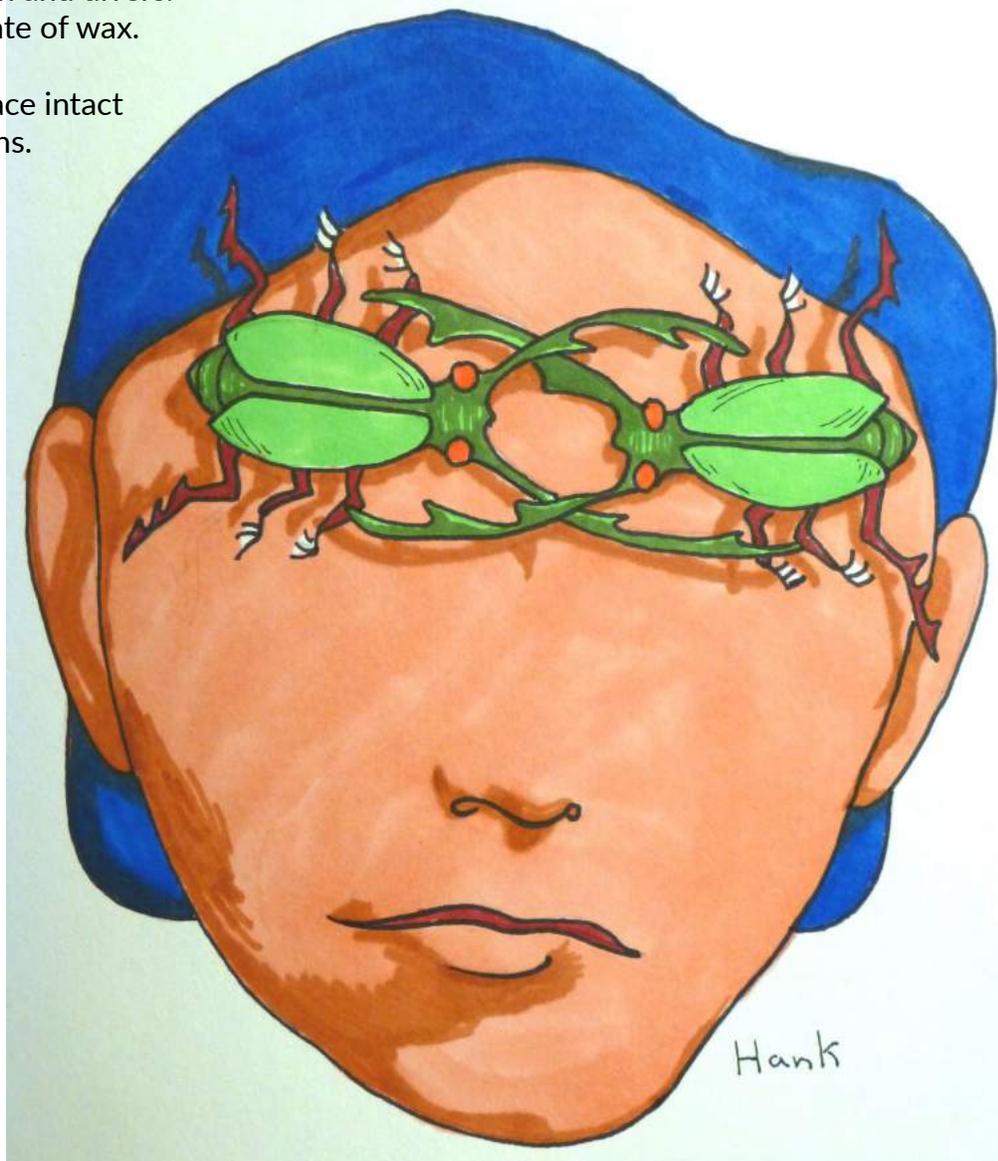
to write soaking poems while underwater.
Maybe I'll use my finger against the ocean floor,

and leave a sunken message for fish and divers.
Or maybe I'll do an etching on a slate of wax.

This way I could return to the surface intact
my messages sketched in the depths.

-Alex L. Swartzentruber

Hank Mattson - Beetles Kissing





Lybra Ray Olbrantz - *Lionel All the Time*

You laugh

Friendships
Gossip
You know the name of the girl
kissing a boy in the hallway
You laugh
You moved away
To that boring town you love
We laugh together
Awkwardness
It is a strange thing
To meet again
A shy hug
You grin
I grin

-Lena Soko

Megan Tresca - *Cream*



Sophie Sherwood





(right) Stephane Salvi - Charlie
(left) Irena Azovsky



(left) Sophie Sherwood
(right) Irena Azovsky



When it comes to toast I like to boast
that 9-grain bread does the most.
A flavourful explosion plays my tastebuds host
with succulent crust dancing around this buttered roast.
Knapsacks packed we coast;
pedals underfoot before suns arose.
Planetary alignments on nights such as these,
gleefully gliding through nights barren streets.
Dumpsters alive with such clatter
(they patrol these streets)
so we scatter!
Alas, a ciabatta and whole grain in tow,
I'll be damned if I don't eat the whole loaf!
Tidings such as these, memories like a ghost,
HOW I LOVE THEE!!
My sweet buttered toast :)

Ode to a Loaf

-Lybra Ray Olbrantz

Barry Johnson - *Equalibrium*



There were long periods
Of isolated madness,

And oh, the lovely lions
Dancing on air

Between drops
of honey -

Night and Day -Michael King

On the back
of a turtle -

In the eye
of a hurricane

(1)
Metaphors of Adam
to the tune of history
And consumer eyed
Caverns of a close-up
Turquoise button
on the sidewalk

(2)
The wise ass
Blew it's values
On the faces
Of Cheering clowns

The mobs, and randy milling
Nationalists seeking
After greatness
And a diet coke

(3)
Bright tongues
Locked in war,

Singing deep
Vanished -
Where a nested
Hawk with no head
And faithless sleep
Rests with the stars

(4)
Foolishness dwells
In the prudent man,

And so it is not joy
That will pose a ransom
For simple strange beauty,

It is the wilderness
Of the soul,
Wherein, the beast of fear
must be slain

(5)

Lena Klyunkina - *Bičiulis*





Lybra Ray Olbrantz - Age of Enlightenment

Marie Cheng- Heart Home



Halima Abdul-Jaleel - Brilliant Minds

Tania Qurashi- Me and You

A Horse-Chesnut Tattooed

-Daniel de Cullá



Crossing Columbus Square, in Burgos
I see in front of me a nice girl
As an Eden' fruit.
Smiling, she stop me, asking:
-Where do you go, Darling, so early?
I stop smiling her and looking at her eyes
An eyes plenty of Sky
Although she'll say to me later
That she gives drops on her lacrimal.
She say to me:
-Come ; Sit on this wood bench
Of the Espolon avenue
If do you have time, of course;
We have to talk.
-Yes, naturally. I want it.
We sit. Talk. She, first:
-I remember ever what well we enjoyed
The last feast of Villarcayo
Being me the sweetheart of a King
Or a Head of Government.
I was hesitant
without she would be given account, answering:
-Oh, Yes, Yes, Oh, no, no, go pretty girl
Follow, follow, my Love.
-Well made me love, Love;
-It's the truth, Rachel, I said to her, lying
And trying to get out of my memories.
-It had to be in the convent of the Mount of the Abbess
I said to her.
-Thus, she replied
On Earth we see ourselves before in Heaven.
The two smile.
- We have to love ourselves, she suggested me
Smiling again and again.
-It's ok, I replied; asking to her:
-Now, what do you do?
She explained:
-Now I'm working in a dental clinic
Very close to here.
-Nice, I replied to her
It has to be interesting to go to your surgery.
-What a fool you are, she said.
Paused a moment, and laughing, continued:
-I have to show You one thing that You gave to me
Because you've been the leading man who adored
But you not showed up, until today, greenhorn;
-Oh, Yes, Yes, Oh, no, no, I replied to her
Being my color doubtful.
-Yes, cute, she replied.
You gave to me a horse chestnut
Of the two in which You drew an Eros
Front of me
And in the convent of the Mount of the Abbess
Do You Remember?, loving ourselves.
An Eros tattoo with indelible ink
Saying to me: "this for you, my Love
That this one I'll send
To the Museum of Miniatures from Mijas, in Malaga.
-Oh, Yes, Yes, Oh, no, no, I replied to her, smiling
And ordering:
-Get up, Rachel, my White Pigeon
And walk by the Arlanzon River
With kisses.

Cover Letter

I'm out here looking for a job
as if I had drunkenly left mine
on the ground somewhere.

I retrace the steps of last night
from one bar to another, still no job.

Im calling out for a job,
as if I were hunting
for a runaway dog.

I cup my hands around my mouth
and call out, "A Job! A Job! A Job!?"

I'm walking down the sidewalk,
forming a visor with my hand
as I peer into the horizon.

Squinting at the sun in search of a job,
I form my fists into a telescope.

One day I will yell, "JOB HO!"
from the crows nest of my unemployment.
I will drop to my knees on the floor,

and kiss the cool tiles or fuzzy carpet
like the sandy shore of a deserted isle.

-Alex L. Swartzentruber

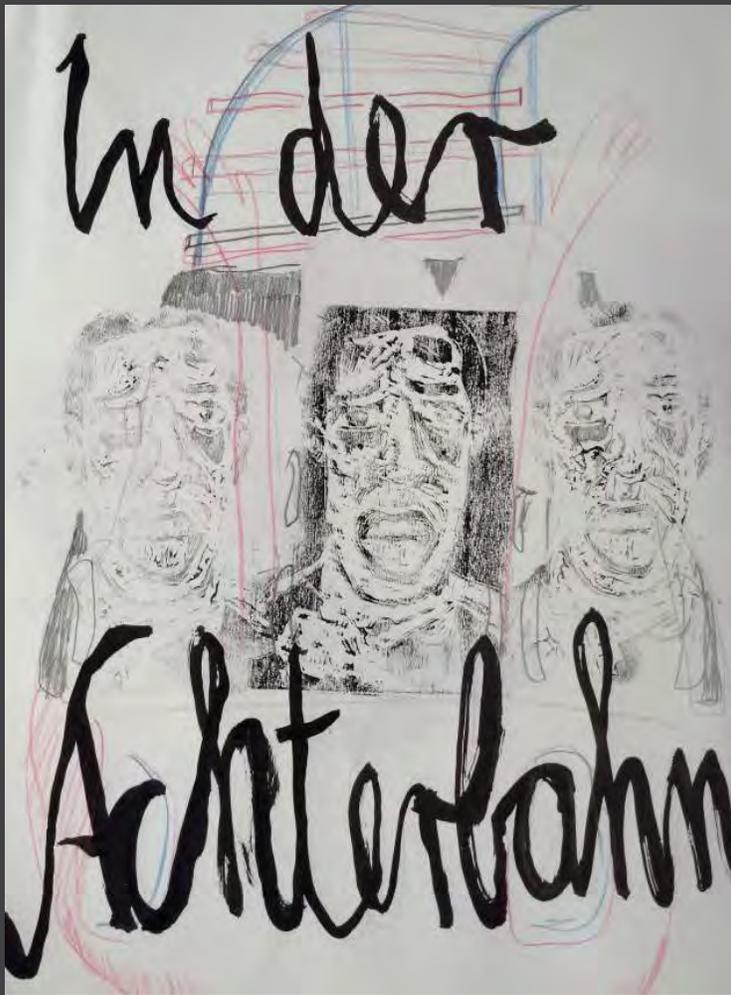


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Megan Tresca - *Who stuck the knife in first*

(top left) Irena Azovsky
(top right) Daniel de Cullá
(bottom) Marie Cheng - *Cat Comic*



Napoleon - Rollercoaster



Tania Qurashi - Loveseat



Irena Azovsky

ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE MORE OR LESS

(rap)

All you need is love theoretically
that should be enough
well it better be

repeat

all u need is love
and some family
and some friends and stuff
to share your memories
if you don't have them,
did it really happen?
i don't know man,
maybe you just imagined.

all u need is love
theoretically
probably also help
to have some cheddar, B.
all you need is a roof over your head and shit.
probably also have a cabinet full of bread and shit

all u need is love
theoretically
also probably helps to have some shoes on your feet
and a shirt on your back would be cool too
and a jacket for when it gets cool, dude.

all u need is love
theoretically
probably also help to have a bit of chemistry
with some one you trust
and they trust you back
all you need is love,
yeah, plus other stuff like that.

all u need is love theoretically
that should be enough
well it better be

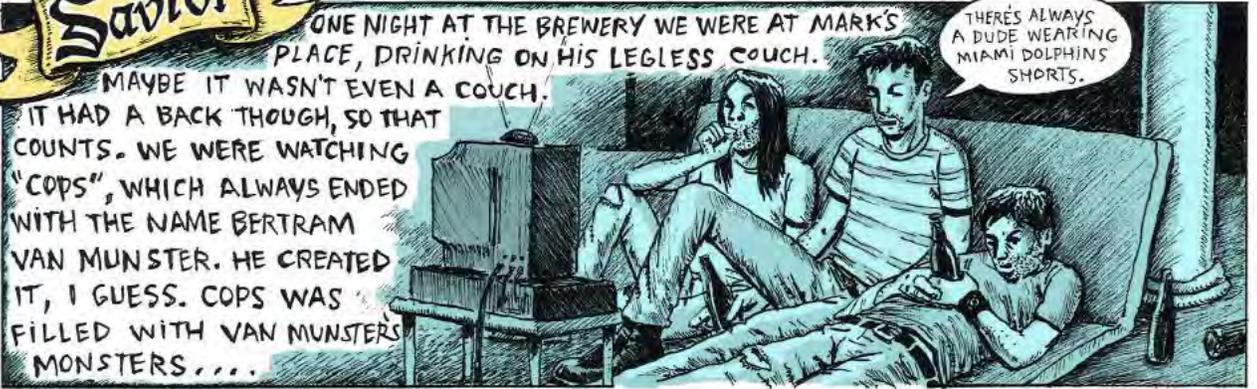
all u need is love theoretically
that should be enough,
will it ever be?

-Alex L. Swartzentruber



Lena Klyukina - *The Crazy One*

Savior

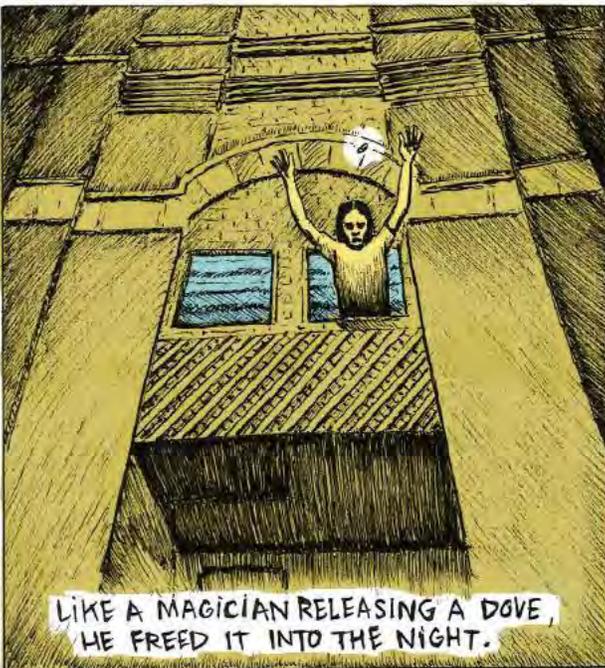


ONE NIGHT AT THE BREWERY WE WERE AT MARK'S PLACE, DRINKING ON HIS LEGLESS COUCH. MAYBE IT WASN'T EVEN A COUCH. IT HAD A BACK THOUGH, SO THAT COUNTS. WE WERE WATCHING "COPS", WHICH ALWAYS ENDED WITH THE NAME BERTRAM VAN MUNSTER. HE CREATED IT, I GUESS. COPS WAS FILLED WITH VAN MUNSTERS MONSTERS....

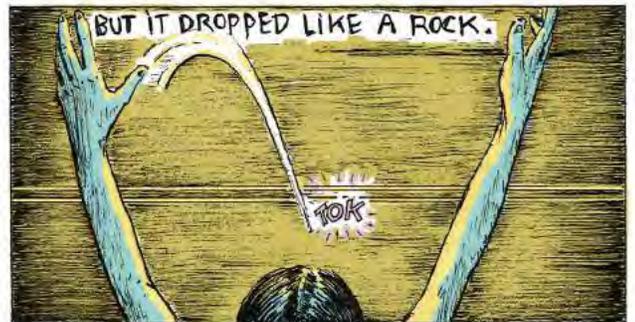


SUDDENLY, A HORRIBLE RACKET FROM ACROSS THE ROOM. THE CAT HAD SOMETHING...

ALAN RAN OVER AND SCOOPED IT UP, A CICADA! THOSE SUCKERS CAN SCREAM. IT WAS HURT, BUT HE BOLTED TO THE WINDOW.



LIKE A MAGICIAN RELEASING A DOVE, HE FREED IT INTO THE NIGHT.



BUT IT DROPPED LIKE A ROCK.

TOOK



AND WAS IMMEDIATELY RUN OVER.

CRUNCH



ON THE BRIGHT SIDE...

AND THEY AREN'T EVEN IN MIAMI.

...COPS WAS ON TWICE THAT NIGHT.

PAST LIVES

1.

When I was a Blueberry,
I didn't look at Facebook.
I just flexed my purple skin
and grew as big as I could.

2.

When I was a mosquito,
I never had zika
but I was annoying
because I wanted to eat ya.

3.

When I was an airplane
I never dropped bombs.
I carried bags and babies,
your dads and your moms.

4.

When I was a cheese slice,
I went down quite nice
and swam in bath of alcohol
at the end of my long night.

5.

When I was a toe nail
I was one of the sharpest.
I loved to snag on socks
until one day I was ripped off.

6.

When I was an art film
I was very independent.
Almost no one watched me
but I did exist.

-Alex L. Swartzentruber

Dario Ré - from *Sharing a Tart* from Diane Borsato





SUNSET BELLS GO FULL OUT

Arise, blessed souls!
Bring out your pumpkins from your graves,
ignite the candles and bougies,
looking at the deceased souls, coming out
by your flowery headboards
with the angels of heaven, racing.
Follow them to see who comes first
to the courtyard of "Halloween"
where life and death battle
in this present autumn season
when Glory rests
on Mount Sunset under the Earth.
Get yourselves ready, because the first ones to
arrive
will pray for the beautiful souls.
Those who rest in peace, or not

and we, in presence together,
when we had had breakfast
we help the busy gravedigger
open and close the graves.
Tolls of the bells ring out from the churches
where the holy water falls from Sky.
I can not go, I'm busy,
maintaining a broody hen
with her only born chicks.
She went with my soul, and her want is rested under
her apron
I hear the words of pumpkins
That listen the pumpkins' words
Carrying a "leave me here", calming down
At the HaHa Cemetery
of Albert County.

-Daniel de Cullá



Lybra Ray Olbrantz - Argentina Foreverr



Lena Klyukina - Moon phase celebration

PLAYGROUND

-Julie Smith

Come with me
I'll show you things
That you would never have believed

But Baby please
Don't scream at me
When you can't have the things you see

It's my playground
We go 'round and 'round
And the carousel will prick you like a spinning wheel

Boy, get on the seesaw
But hey, be careful
I can't seem to hold you up with all your heavy lies

The swing squeaks
Hear the shrieks
Of the rusty chains when you jump off

You're scared of the ghosts
Of the haunted house
Believe me, the nightmares you give me are worse

Danger zone
Do not cross, we're not alone
Why did you have to bring her along?

She wasn't invited
And I'm not delighted
She'd better stay away from what's mine

Her hands on my toys
I can't stand her voice
I need to get her out of this place

She can't get all the fun
Basic bitch better start to run
I'm calling my dolls to chase her

But they turn, it's a scheme
Towards me and I scream
Are you in this ploy against me?

She stares at me with her dead zombie eyes
Darling, help me, don't you hear my cries?
I freeze as I see she worked her black magic and you are
turned into plastic

Lifeless and still, you lie on the ground
And I sink to my knees, my chips are down
My playground is hell, my little game gone all wrong

The only way out is to take my last breath
Game over, the next level's called D E A T H
But dying by your side is my highest score

I take my matches you carried with you
Light one and drop it down in the fuel
From now on, my love, we'll play alone

Irena Azovsky



Tania Qurashi - Love Bugg



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