

SELECTED POETRY

CORDELIA HEANEY

ON DESIRE

my broken doe's legs
stumble down
this street, the uneven keel
of a land-bound ship, dragging
the trap that's grin is sinking in,
just focusing on getting home

never were strong enough
to stand up to the weather,
it never held before we'd be back
talking strategy, shifty details
kept us paddling 'left, left, left'

can't shake those doe's eyes
you wore, sweet, in the morning
when the riverboat sang
and I had to go to work soon, soon enough
to tell you everything, when right then
I knew I wasn't going
anywhere

BONE

I suppose I should look into it, find the cavity where I can hide you, underneath my wing – if I had wings I'd keep you there so warm and small but not small at all, full-grown and equipped with hard shoulders that heft the weight of all that logical thought. I'd know what type of day you'd had by the clench of jaw and hand that walks with you as if your body were a telegraph, messages shimmering up the wire. You said 'I want to bury you like a bone' and I would have said 'but I already am buried whenever you leave the room, until you return' if I had had the wherewithal to say so, if I knew what it would mean to say so, if words would keep you warm beneath that wing I'd have.

PROFILE

I currently live in the Bywater, where I fall asleep to the sound of the train and wake up to the sound of my neighbor's chickens. I love living here—that I can find almost anything I may need in this small gridded series of streets, that Desire runs parallel to Poy, that I am so close to the river that I can walk down France and see the cruise ships parked on the water at night like hulking, glittering castles.

PUBLICATIONS

Cordelia Heaney has an MFA in Poetry/Creative Writing from New School University. She has been published in *Loop Magazine* and *eleonorbull.com*.

CONTACT

We are all animals in the softest, kindest sense.

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delicate

WHY I LIVE BELOW SEA LEVEL

SUSAN GISLESON

the way this city works
a place with secrets like cake flour
a powder that is almost a liquid
peopled with men
with names like Mr. Sincere Lee
and Rivers Lelong—calling roll
it would be Lelong Rivers
men who buy bowling alleys
after they return from pilgrimages
and women with names like
Muffin and Precious

who restore homes and churches
respectively

the way this city works
we're all cogs in the machine
but the cogs lead to levers
that operate fiber optic eyes
with fiber optic eyelashes
that wink provocatively
at the couple in the shadowball
or the boy playing baseball

at a field where beer is served by 14 year old girls
or an old woman with a grocery cart
filled with birdseed for the monk parakeets
that she feeds everyday
at five o'clock
they circle the park
while they wait for her
darken the sky with their want
and litter the earth with yellow green feathers

the cogs move levers
that push steam through a series of tubes
at first a wail and another
until they knit a melody that becomes richer
with each building note
and all of a sudden

you are no longer walking
but sashaying on the asphalt
that's melted and distorted
from oak roots, heat and debris removal trucks
here the road seems himalayan
and you

in red leather mary janes
dancing no puncturing
these self same streets
beating out a rhythm
behind a ten foot fat cat
held by the most beautiful woman in the world
wearing a straw fedora
and linen shirt
toddler in shiny mexican wrestler mask

this is what we do
when the heat opens envelopes
here we turn termite printed splintered lathe
into constellations
make tarpaper valentines and
molded drawers from "This and That Salvage"
into automotons
of a bird feeding her heart to her young
we feast
in this place where you have to look up
to see the boats
as if they were flying

PROFILE

When Susan Gileson returned to the city after the storm, she excavated the contents of her submerged Buick: several abalone shells, two cuckoo clocks, and a gold pogo stick. This was the genesis for her Self Amusement Company. Susan is a neurologist's consort, mother, art educator, costume designer and the events coordinator for Press Street—a literary and visual arts collective located in the Bywater. Born and raised in New Orleans, she is unable to live anywhere else.

PUBLICATIONS

This is Susan Gileson's first publication.

CONTACT

Water can dissect anything.
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hardens