

A friend shows an interest in poetry  
by Alice Allan

'Poem me' he used to say. As if  
to poem was to call, or fuck, or hold.  
I'd poem him, but nothing ever stuck.

Not Eileen Myles, or Tennyson, or Schuyler.  
Not Michael's work, or Ursula's. Not Keats.  
I wrote a book for him. That didn't stick.

I tried the Mary Karr, 'A Perfect Mess,'  
knowing he would hate it. And he did.  
'This is the most Alice shit I've ever seen.'

'The city feeds on beauty,' Mary writes.  
She doesn't waste her time on education.  
He's long gone now. I kept the poems, the city.

poetrysays.com

where the end begins  
by garrett carroll

Where the end begins  
is never the same.  
Familiar faces and hugs  
begin to tear and scratch, destroying the body,

leaving rib cages in shambles like archaeological  
prisons and the bones like metal bars with no hindsight  
to heal.

garrettc Carrollwriting.wordpress.com

Humanity Lament  
by steven bruce

Any moment now,  
from the eagles in our hearts,  
maggots will burst free.

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bowl of black petunias  
by michael lee johnson

If you must leave me, please  
leave me for something special,  
like a beautiful bowl of black petunias—  
for when the memories leak  
and cracks appear  
and old memories fade,  
flowers rebuff bloom,  
sidewalks fester weeds  
and we both lie down  
separately from each other  
for the very last time.

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The Last Time I Slept Outside  
by Brian Bruce

The last time I slept outside  
It was in the grass on the corner.  
Deep, green, a velour blanket  
Blue shimmered in the streetlight.  
I lay down, fell down, face down.  
Smiling into the chlorophyll smell.  
Digging my fingers in  
And holding on.  
Riding the spin.

YT @BookishTexan

Brotherly Shove  
by Michael Centrone

I witnessed your mind lose, brother  
Super Bowl Sunday '02  
It finally cracked under pressure—  
a life's worth  
And I can't help but feel guilty, penalized,  
told to feel otherwise —  
other players committed harsher fouls against you  
Still...

I cheered some of the bullying  
as a young rookie,  
making fun of what I feared,  
didn't understand  
Now I can relate  
but it might be too late

michaelcentrone.medium.com

Scar  
by Jason White

the scars tracing up and down  
her wrists  
are only hints  
at what bleeds  
below her skin  
with breath of decay  
she stares down  
the knife in her fists  
turn my ribs to shards  
my skin to ribbons  
"you did this,"  
she cries  
tears of ammonia  
blackened smile of rage

YT: @jasonsweirdreads

...and it's big!  
by Matt Wall

you can say  
whatever you want  
to your friends  
or online  
but know this...

you dated a poet  
a book is coming

www.ihatemattwall.com