



CREATIVE GUTS

Episode 3, Proteus
(an erasure poem from *Ulysses* by James Joyce)

through my eyes. of all things I am
nearing tide,
Limits of the bodies.
aware before
against them Go easy.
Limit of
a gate
a door. Shut
closed
You
audible. over
in the dark. at my side
at the ends
made eternity
Wild

Won't you come
?

SUMMER 2026: CURIOUS COLLABORATION

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CURIOUS COLLABORATION

Hello, Readers!

Collaboration is the act of meshing two or more unique visions to create one whole. Collaboration leads to the expression of new ideas, wherein the end product is influenced by all parties; that whole could not be achieved by one person alone.

The word collaboration comes from Latin—by way of French— from two roots: “co”-together and “labor”-work. The poems in this zine embody a multitude of ways to collaborate. Some amend previously published works, some were written by multiple authors contemporaneously, while others present a collaborative subject matter.

You, dear reader, are collaborating with these poems as you read them. You impart your unique perspective on these poems, and in turn form a unique interpretation of each poem. This interpretation is a collaboration with the poem, which allows it to grow beyond the words on the page.

We'd like to give a special thank you to Water Street Bookstore, in Exeter, NH, for hosting a community day in our honor this past spring. Those funds raised have contributed to the publishing of this zine. Learn more about our friends at Water Street Bookstore at www.waterstreetbooks.com.

The entire Creative Guts team thanks everyone that collaborated with us by submitting poems or reading this zine. We hope you enjoy and that this collection awakens creativity, curiosity, and collaboration within you!

So with that, show us your creative guts!



Laura Harper Lake
Chair, Founder, Host



JJ Rowan
Zine Curator & Volunteer



Butch Laker
Zine Curator & Volunteer

JJ ROWAN & BUTCH LAKER

Collaboration

Collaboration is pouring from your glass into a pitcher.
Others may pour into that pitcher a lot, or a little.

Collaboration is pulling words out of a doorway by way of a window.
Others may pull different words from different windows.

The conclusion?

Open additional doors or windows.

BRIANA GUINAZZO

Episode 3, Proteus
(an erasure poem from *Ulysses* by James Joyce)

through my eyes. of all things I am
nearing tide,
Limits of the bodies.
aware before
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Won't you come
?

ELISE MORISSETTE

Birdsong

To chant the song
Of Nature's symphony
And be filled with
Word, rhyme, and chorus
We are compelled to sing this;
This something that swells and moves us
To praise, to rally
To let all who listen know
The things that drive us
That connect us all
In one, unified act

Forest

Reaching, bowing
Knocking, bending
Spreading out like
Arms in embrace

We branch out in ways
That are subtle at first
Budding new parts of ourselves
As we grow into
What we are meant to be
Knocking, bending
To life's rhythm and dance
Reaching, bowing
Spreading out like arms in an embrace

ELISE MORISSETTE

Forage

Walk on hallowed grounds
That greet with ancient remembrance
The terrains change from
Roots, rocks, soil, and sand
But the gifts from the earth
Spark life none-the-less

Gather up these treasures
Hold them close
Feel their joy of creation
Know that all that was
Will be again
One way or another
In this world that takes care of us
And remember to give back
All that she deserves

Decay

To fall apart
And breakdown more
Is like when you melt
At that same sad song

To crumble into
Another bygone pile
Of good earth
Like the mountains fall

We beings are mortal
As coincidentally as Earth spins
Around the Sun itself
Dancing under celestial waves

Waiting for our time
When time waits for no one
But then a new day will dawn
And greet the world
That rises after us

YR GOULD & ACE MAGNOLIA

Seeking

Upon the stony shores I see
a sense of dread, a sense of calm
fog-dark sky, sun-stained stars,
what lies past the horizon I see?

This World Without Sun
This World Beyond Time
This Space Past Itself
Memory alone, fading

Fading from view, A stretched-cloth mountain atop a field of pine
Ever onwards, ever traveling, ever seeking
Something I will never find

Upon the stony shores I see
a sense of love, a sense of peace
storming life, illuminating warmth
what lies beneath my feet?

This World of Water
This World Beyond Civility
This Space I Occupy
Memory washes over

Waves of the past rolling in and out, Permanent as the tide
Ever onwards, ever traveling, ever seeking
Something I was born to make

ACE MAGNOLIA

Stranger On The Bench

There was something so much more human about her.
She was there when I came and there when I left,
With her yellow crutches, my favorite color and a tool I know well,
And her knitting needles wrapped up in colorful yarn
Listening to something on her over sized headphones.
I wondered how long she'd been there, how many people she'd seen,
what she was making.
What kind of music does she like? Was it a podcast? Do you love space?
Do you have a phobia of spiders? Do you smile at the sky when no one's
looking?
Do you play in the puddles left by thunderstorms? Do you laugh
unrestrained because you've chosen to be happy?
Are you like me?

LAURA HARPER LAKE & JEN KIMBALL

A Burning Field

(an erasure poem from Only Bad Options by Jennifer Estep)

Hubris billowed
then transformed,
ice-blue eyes in genuine shock
as his damage appeared.
Her anesthetic tipped dagger
had slammed down, burning and cold.
Armour snapped,
his weapon down,
in a burning field.
His soothing wrist went to her side with care.
She went still as he said,
“You were my reason, my escape, my ground.”
Then he transformed again.
She silently shouted.
She thought the chance to be more
wasn't real.

BRIANA GUINAZZO

Wetlands

On request
I clear the pastures
Hills, Valleys
Barren.
Gone is the thicket
Flora & Fauna,
Continue, explore
Lush, picturesque.
Weed the foliage
Tame the wild
Stunt the growth
the view of age.
The sanctity of their God's garden,
Torn up
Cut down
Pluckpluckpluck.
Expose the wetlands
And the limbs for good measure too,
So God's men can
Close their eyes and pretend
I'm once again the young creation
An adolescent to screw.

JACY HAYS & ACE MAGNOLIA

The Spirit of the People Hungers as It Waits in Line for the Food Truck

I am I and You are You	Their brightness is shown in song
And who we are is beautiful apart	and dance
And beautiful together	In brush strokes and handshakes
So too are the strangers we weave	In words gifted in the blessings of
through	kindness
Touching lives so briefly yet an	A spark of which the light-
impact is made	bearers rekindle
	With each new member of the
	human race
Bow to the princess	
Bow to the fool	
Dance with the lady	Time marches forward
Knights quest for the rule	Though the ones who make
What does it matter?	history study the events of
Why would it not?	yesteryear
Here and now, then and there, the	Sometimes the works and efforts
answer is the same	of these people
	Are profound in the eyes of many
Over and over we rediscover this	And sometimes in the eyes of a
truth	group of friends at a ren faire
And on a sunny day like today	
What better is there to do?	

JILL TEETERS

Far From The Door

Tap, tap, tap
(soft and hesitant)

Tap, Tap, TAP
(louder and persistent)

The bedroom door creaks open
cautiously
and tiny feet tip toe across the
floor.

A glance at the alarm clock
confirms
it is, indeed, the middle of the
night.
And I am glad that my side of
the bed
is far from the door.

As usual, he goes straight to his
daddy

Poke, poke, poke

with his chubby little fingers
no response

Push, push, PUSH
with his palm flat out
Success!

the sleeping bear stirs,
just barely coming out of sleep

“Daddy” the little voice
whispers - drowsy and sweet

“Dad-DY” he says again, this
time with more urgency

“Daaaaddy I think”... he says,
as his father fully wakes and
looks up at him

“I think...

“I think I’m gonna be....

And the vomit erupts
all over his favorite parent.

As I fly out of bed to help my
sick boy
and rescue his drenched daddy,
I continue to be ever so glad
that my side of the bed
is FAR from the door.

AUDREY WEBB

Waiting

(an erasure poem from *The Shadow of the*
Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafón)

I remember early summer,
trapped beneath dawn,
hiding like a shadow,
no secrets.
I asked heaven to reply.
In the air,
a deafening silence.

Plans

(an erasure poem from *The Heart Goes*
Last by Margaret Atwood)

Sleeping, to begin with,
would only be fair.
Luckiness
needs
more
space.
Drive away fast,
screaming,
like a snail.
Keep the windows mostly closed.
You’re a demon,
no kind of reasonable.
The best thing is to be
somewhere else.
Keep on believing that.
Round and round in circles.

AUDREY WEBB

Family

(an erasure poem from A
Thousand Splendid Suns by
Khaled Hosseini)

The word happened.
It must have.
The day visited her to pass the time,
cherished
graceful
shattered.
The creators are culpable.
Claim other people.
Cradle the green wheat fields
and never pick fruit with
enchantment.

Itinerary

(an erasure poem from Moby
Dick by Herman Melville)

Little or no purse
I sail the world
A grim mouth
A damp, drizzly soul
quietly taking nothing but time.
Cherish the same ocean with me.

Still Here

(an erasure poem from the
short story "Mbiu Dash" by
Okwiri Oduor)

We were all welded together,
building a good story
in our town.
We set aside
our tears,
slipped into the field,
followed the grown folk
we all believed.
No doubt that's exactly how it
happened.
Someone turned himself into
a soul he did not seem to like.
Eyes closed,
we knew the truth.
We felt ashamed.
All curled up
on the ground,
everyone in the town
got no place to go.

BRIANA GUINAZZO

Voice

(A Mash Up of: "Imperatives for Carrying On in the Aftermath" by
Natasha Trethewey and "Dog Days are Over" by Florence + The Machine)

Do not hang your head or clench your fists
the dog days are over
when even your friend, after hearing the story,
says, My mother would never put up with that,
the dog days are done

Fight the urge to rattle off statistics: that,
happiness hit her
more often, a woman who chooses to leave
is then murdered. The hundredth time
like a bullet in the back

your father says, But she hated violence,
stuck from a great height
why would she marry a guy like that?—
don't waste your breath explaining, again,
by someone who should've known better than that

how abusers wait, are patient, that they
can you hear the horses
don't beat you on the first date, sometimes
not even the first few years of a marriage.
'cause here they come

(continued)

JILL TEETERS

As Long As You're Breathing

Inhale gratitude
Exhale fear

Inhale joy
Exhale sorrow

Inhale calm
Exhale anxiety

Inhale peace
Exhale trauma

The breath is always there
What you do with it, can make
all the difference

It can ground you
Giving you the foundation you
need to face the day ahead

It can lift you up
Allowing you to rise above the
swirling river of worries in your
brain

The breath is internal
And universal

Inhale

Exhale

Sit with your emotions
And trust your breath

Calm or tense,
smooth or ragged
Breath is life

As long as you are breathing,
you are here.

ACE MAGNOLIA

Stranger By The Rock

There's a poem somewhere
In the art I'm seeing
I'll try to write it
Maybe you'll see

The rock has always had graffiti on it
It hasn't but it might as well
It's human nature I think
To paint the rocks

I noticed your red sweatshirt from afar
I think you're wearing black shorts
Maybe you had a bike
I can't tell from this distance
You were standing
Then you sat
Leaning against the rock

When I looked up again you were gone
And for a brief moment I felt the sadness of abandonment
The transience of a soul is a precious thing
We can't remain the same nor in the same place forever

Then I saw you had just moved to sit in the shade behind the bushes that
block my view
You are nothing to me
I am nothing to you
But I think we are enough to each other
Stranger by the rock

ACE MAGNOLIA

Thousands of Years, Thousands of Miles

My ancestors and I have the same pet.
Mine eats out of an aluminum can,
Theirs most assuredly does not,
But we love our pets the same and give the chin skritches as most cats love.

The people on the other side of the world and I look at the same moon.
The stars around it different,
But the moon is the same.
It is a good moon for contemplation.

Some people on a forum and I play the same game.
I and some enjoy the world building,
Others the aesthetics,
But for whatever reason we are all here to talk about something we love.

The children I work with and I love to play together.
The things we learn are different,
How we express ourselves is different,
But we sing and dance and pretend without a care.

I think we're more the same than different.
I think we all get lonely and scared.
I think we all deserve to be happy and healthy and safe.
I believe that one day we will be.

BIOGRAPHIES AND PROCESS NOTES

BRIANA GUINAZZO

Briana is an English Major specifically in Creative Writing. Reading and writing are her life, the air she breathes. She is attending school with the end goal of becoming a librarian.

LAURA HARPER LAKE & JEN KIMBALL

A Burning Field was written only using words from these parameters established by Jen: using the book *Only Bad Options* by Jennifer Estep, select words from every fifth page starting on page 3, on even lines, the third word in, until page 175. The result was a pool of 466 words that Laura could use to craft a poem. She did so, using 72 words from the pool.

BUTCH LAKER

Butch is a New Hampshire based artist with a dogged passion for learning and a catted curiosity. He aims to prove that everyone can—and should—make art.

ACE MAGNOLIA

Ace has a passion for all things creative and fun. They are working hard at their career in Early Childhood Education. They hope one day to publish their own books featuring stories, poetry, and art.

BIOGRAPHIES AND PROCESS NOTES

ELISE MORISSETTE

Elise is a New Hampshire based artist. She explores themes of nature, nostalgia, relationships and experiences.

JJ ROWAN

jj rowan (they/them) is a trans poet and dancer living in the NH Lakes Region.

JILL TEETERS

Jill is a NH based college counselor and a member of the award-winning Northern Voices A Cappella chorus. Writing poetry is an additional creative outlet that brings her great joy.

AUDREY WEBB

Audrey enjoys creating works out of snippets she finds, whether they be pieces of fabric or scraps of overheard conversations.



Creative Guts is on a mission to awaken creativity, community, collaboration, and opportunities for gutsy creatives of all ages.

We do this through programs, zines, events, and a podcast that is focused on the pursuit of creativity. Our interview-style podcast explores the roots of creativity, dives into the hearts of creators, and discovers how creativity connects with the world around us.

www.CreativeGutsPodcast.com

Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn: @CreativeGutsPodcast