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Anapest

A JOURNAL OF POETRY EXCELLENCE

Anapest

Journal of Poetry Excellence

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Anapest

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About Anapest:

An anapest is a "metrical foot" comprising of two short/unstressed syllables followed by one long/stressed syllable. Daily Writing Tips released an article about the 36 poetry terms everyone should know, and many of them are ones that we hear on a daily basis when we are talking about poetry. We decided that we should name our poetry journal after a poetry term that is not often heard.

We do not expect the poets that submit their work to have a certain amount of anapest in their works or follow some strict guideline. We want to showcase elegance and excellency in poetry. Thus Anapest was born. We want to bring the wonderful world of poetry to people daily.

We are accepting poetry all year around, and would love to read the work that you have for us.



Not with a bang but a whimper

Ankita Anand | September 1st, 2017

It is not purposeful hard work

But making the effort

To go through every day

That kills us.

We die not so much of broken backs

As of hunched ones, and broken hearts

To survive that, to outlive the heart

Persistently getting nibbled at

By craggy incisors,

That is the test of gritted teeth.

Safekeeping Beauty

Ankita Anand | September 2nd, 2017

Stories of little boys
pinching butterflies
and sticking them in a scrapbook
seemed revolting.

The idea of fix-depositing beauty,
However,
continues to entice.

Sunshine tendrils float in front
but stay with you only as long as the eyes can follow them
without blinking.

The option of putting them in a safe-box
for leisurely perusal

would have been desirable

As much for soothing the self
as for sharing with anyone who needed it.

On The Brink

Vivian Wagner | September 3rd, 2017

I live in a village on the woodsedge.
Pin oaks and sugar maples lead past
creeping Charlie and dandelions,
beckoning me away from what's human
toward something larger and smaller, both.
The chickadees scold me fondly,
the pokeweed sets its purpling berries, and
of an evening, tree frogs whir their approval.
Everything speaks of borders.
Everything asks me to cross.

Plenty of Space

Vivian Wagner | September 4th, 2017

I built a cabin on Mars –
a nice little one out of red
boulders, beside a steep cañon.
I like how the wind
whispers on afternoons
over the sand.

I did a fly-by around the sun
once – a day trip from my cabin.
It was pretty hot, but the views!
Spectacular, I'm telling you.

I've got a cousin who lives on
one of Neptune's moons.
Triton? Nereid? Halimede?
I can't remember which.
We don't write much anymore
since the asteroid disaster.

I'm planning an extended
vacation exploring Saturn's
rings, though I hear that's
a bit of a bumpy ride.

And retirement? I'm thinking
outside the solar system,
to be honest – something
far away, light years, even.
I'll send you my address when
I find the perfect spot.

Little Boy

Vivian Wagner | September 5th, 2017

He threw a vibrant,
flashy tantrum:
shattered buildings,
flattened a city
burned clothing into skin.
His parents tried to
ignore him, but
he was too loud,
turning heads in
the grocery store.
They gave him this,
as consolation,
though he threw it on
the ground:
an oleander,
more powerful even
than his stomping foot.

On Taking My Daughter to College

Vivian Wagner | September 6th, 2017

We'll be driving soon,
through Appalachian hollows,
past cabins and skyscrapers,
over rivers and mountains,
between maples and oaks.
She'll leave her knife at home.
I'll carry money for tolls.
And together we'll watch the landscape
roll toward the future, because that's
all the landscape knows how to do.

“Is There Such a Thing as a Left and Right Sock?”

Ace Boggess | September 7th, 2017

[question asked by Jeff Carter]

Your toes will choose. They know
how to move along parallel lines
that stretch beyond the wisdom of your eye.

Which is the handsome twin?
Which the most silent corpse?
Can't you tell the difference?

An unlikely pair, they share too much
for their relationship to last
out of more than boredom with the wash.

Soon, one catches a case of holes:
you wonder which foot strayed
against another straining touch than yours.

“How Shall I Touch You Unless It Is Everywhere?”

Ace Boggess | September 8th, 2017

—Mary Oliver, “The Gardens”

“That tickles,” she tells me,
flinching, tugging my hand
away from blue lines
tattooed on her calf.

Not that I want her to twitch
or dance a frantic twist
from her prone position
belly-down on clean violet sheets.

I like to touch artwork
like holding a new book,
its unbroken spine, glossy
cover stock alight in embers,

orange-red, its scents
of glue & fresh ink
I smell on my fingertips
an hour later

as I will her concoctions of lemon,
honey, lavender. Not to say
I won’t spend time
staring at bare walls

behind the bends of her knees.
Sometimes I prefer to feel
the colors in my hands
like I’m holding an artist’s

rendition of the Milky Way,
scanning stars & gases,
searching for the arrow:
There you are. and fear, once more, being wanted no longer.

“Why Can’t You Be Like Everyone Else?”

Ace Boggess | September 9th, 2017

[question asked by Cliff Isaacs]

I’ve tried. I’ve watched
The Walking Dead & Game of Thrones,
read Emma Cline’s The Girls
in hardback, but I hear music on the radio &
think it was better in the 90s & the 80s &
all the times before—odd,
because I never felt at home
in those years any more than these.

I’m like an oak that burns off
half its leaves at the first cool breeze
before August has released its heat.

I come to trends too fast & look foolish,
slow & seem absurd,
anachronistic in my awkward time.

Yesterday, I watched the postman pass &
hoped I had a letter in the box.

Tomorrow, I will talk on the phone,
play DVDs, & sing Nirvana
at the peak of my screeching reach

as though anyone can hear me,
as though anyone hears anyone
not chirping robotic voices
from the mini-ENIAC at hand.

“Do You Sing in the Shower?”

Ace Boggess | September 10h, 2017

—internet questionnaire

I hear in my head:
songs of discordant
dialogue with folks
that should fear my words,
I think, but won't
because I never enter
this discourse aloud.

I take shorter showers,
let the stream erase me
quickly, before I drift
into arguments, angry.
I try to find a tune,
feel it in my gut
like breakfast eggs.

It struts & hums &
taps its foot.
It won't come out
amidst the rain &
citrus smell of conditioner.

I cleanse faster.
I take furious showers,
steaming, like strumming
punk-rock chords
on a beat guitar.

I'm smashing the world
from my center stage.
I glide through the mist
spit out by fog machines.
I curse. I scream.
I turn the water off.
I take a bow.

“Do You Remember Life Before Walmart?”

Ace Boggess | September 11h, 2017

—question asked by Wendy Scott Paff

My parents would drive an hour & a half to the nearest mall where we'd shop in department stores that don't exist today, me hiding in clothes racks, pretending a minute passed,

but only one. Then malls came to us, closer, & we—the we that turned into I & the I that became another we—hung out there, eating cookies while stumbling along corridors

between National Record Mart & Spencer's Gifts. The mall was a youth home where music lived, with magazines to thumb through from my knees &

books to read. I saw old joggers circling, policemen wary in one mean eye. The ear-piercing girl looked squeamish, &

the mall clown smiled her pissed-off smile. I like to think of it as my Earth in a parallel universe, one in which I wasn't me & no one cared if I were.

Reaching for Dawn

Ann Christine Tabaka | September 12th, 2017

The shades of dawn
falling like colorful feathers
plucked from the sky.

Sorrow, a distant friend with
sodden shoulder and sturdy
pose, no longer needed.

In hand, a timetable of
misbegotten deeds, to be
dispersed to the four winds.

The song was sung long ago.
The echo still remains, of
voices faint and far off.

I do not know the words.

Climbing the mountain,
altitude unknown, oxygen
thin as a noon shadow.

The pinnacle appears.
Breathing in the clouds,
Focus begins to dim.

Past fading into the future, as
the dawn now turns pure gold.
The summit is within reach.

Remembering Mom

Ann Christine Tabaka | September 13th, 2017

The smell of bread baking,
and strong laundry soap,
it clung to her like perfume.

Faced scrubbed clean,
hands red and labor rough,
the smile of an angel.

Patchwork apron tied tight
in a neat bow, always humming
that sweet tune as she did.

No one left to call out her name,
she preferred it that way, after
years of neglect and abuse.

She gave all she had to give,
and we took it in turn. How
I miss that dear woman today.

Wash Me Clean

Ann Christine Tabaka | September 14th, 2017

Rain wash down over me
and sing away my tears.
I walk alone on whispers,
fragile as faith confronted.

The tension reaching out,
with languid fingers of longing
grasping at my throat.
Conclusions never complying.

Prayers go unanswered
floating on a sea of doubt.
The litany of lust prevails
devouring the holy with the damned.

I beseech the ancient ones
to rescue my true self
and let the rain cleanse
my desires with its song.

Jigsaw

Ann Christine Tabaka | September 15th, 2017

Life ...

It is a puzzle

That we try to put together

Endlessly

We search through the pile

Of various shapes and colors

The events and circumstances of our lives

Trying to find the pieces that fit

Gingerly connecting them together

One by one

Trying over and over again

To make all the small fragments

Interlock into a whole

At times we try to force the bits

Of our life into place

That never works out well

And we must try again

Often we get to the end

And the box is empty

Yet, we are still missing that one piece

But eventually

There before us is a beautiful picture

That is us

Ennui Battling Entropy

Vernon Frazer | September 16h, 2017

interstitial enmity ploy
remanding the incandescent
to a storied somnolence

breathing
iridescent alphabets

non sequitur
beats the towel fire
at burning irrelevance

an offbeat snare
wherever encased
a castaway heading

breathes a crude embryo tonic

gestating
a muted fabric
in ellipse
a determination on
course to discover the dot

the nautical detection mantra

eluding the haunted vesicle statement
shaking the screams enlarging duress

in the cloying vacuum
left for the breathing seat
to peel
tantric doldrums

from the matter pledge

before the anemic onslaught
renders all thoughts endemic

and turns desire
a so-called fabric
of iconic threads

into a headlong hurling grove

where lanterns can repudiate
tonics whisper a sorry decree

before the filter legend
can reduce the venture's storied bile

to a truth tablet
grilled on the curb as a slow fillet

Stranded in Nostalgia

Vernon Frazer | September 17th, 2017

no embroidered chicken riffs
accommodate incendiary thought motifs

divergent as their prey
may claim to flay the where
every diversity straggler

who asks why
sits among the knot
the tie defends

ample strumpet blasts
from a past of of cartoon history
brassy as any class display

trumpeting grand ashes

*

when completes the topic
on time
 lifted
from a referential thicket

featured with pluck and bramble

cast of thou sands
from nostalgia hidden under
limbs on the slow rise

shifting like clocks in the desert

a dune
persuaded
as revealed
 (caught)
 floating oasis wagons

Taking It In

Vernon Frazer | September 18th, 2017

the fabric
of a strained exterior
stretches

inward
at the breath of nuance

sheds

particles to light

a more seemly path to thread

Sequence

Sanjeev Sethi | September 19th, 2017

Blemish is for the bazaar. Grief has a market.
In this hub sublimation is egomaniacal. Sec-
reted cinders burn the skin. Marketplace in
its munificence solicits air of anonymity to
bare its misery. It is advisable to peruse and
pursue lionizing by the laity to peg the quality
of compliments.

Nowadays

Sanjeev Sethi | September 20th, 2017

Profusion of poems lives on.
In your exile words issue their
ubiquity. My lips curl with
familiar and some not so
familiar nouns and adjectives
in a way to gatecrash our get-
togethers. Trail of your smell
tranquilizes me. The filiform
from lavishness of communing
ties you in safe colors, colors
that quieten. I'm done with real
people. Poltergeists keep me
pepped-up.

A Story Fades

Aparna Sanyal | September 21st, 2017

This is how a story fades-
Into unmade phone calls
and forgotten days
Visits updated hourly
daily
Fortnightly pencilled
tapered off
-A medicine, tonic that time forgot
This is how an ending begins-
With ink blots
marring the parchment-
An otherwise unblemished record
of our days, together
Untethered with a jerk
-This chain, rusting can no longer hold it
Once glowing embers
flicker, grow cold
A fire we sat in front of
that warmed, made us a cocoon
Once a bind, it made others separate
Inclusion by our whims
excludes you now
For this is how
your mark is erased
You are an- other now.
We run past
(Uncaring of the daisies
wilting at your bed side)
to destinations
'Not wheel chair accessible'
The excuses grow
Lengthen night then day
So, it's true then?
Life isn't extinguished
in a bang or sparks or even flame?
It sputters
then judders
Kafkaesque, untrammelled, your metamorphosis
creates shadows that lengthen-
Imperceptible tentacles of
gloom and distaste grow
Then shrivelling, it comes to a standstill
-Just a brown spot
where grass once lay

Are We Aging, My Love?

Aparna Sanyal | September 22nd, 2017

At the ophthalmologist, today
you face demons
born of the dreaded forties
A plus one correction
heralds your slow mortal march
Even your strongest steel toed boots
screeching against ages' asphalt
cannot halt it
And I with my cylinders and google eyes
Welcome you to the club
Of bodily imperfections, my love
Each day we pluck white hairs
One in six now
-Solemnly we take
a full accounting from our errant scalps
And if I look at you slyly
as you eat a bowl of too- much- carb spaghetti
with frowning concentration-
Your eyes have delicate bunches
Of veins at the corners
Flat paned against skin windows
Asking for a reprieve, to pulsate
Green- green- blue- green
-Create foamy wrinkles that crinkle
when you smile, and look up
My love, the skies' grey
to match your mood today
You don your shades
Hades shades- Stygian
Darker than my raven- black dreams
They hide your insides from my prying gaze
Hades shades- take you far away
To a place
of washboard abs, mountains crested
careless smiles, broken hearts
easily mended
An uncaring id that wouldn't believe
the delectation you receive
from evenings spent cuddling a baby in a recliner
and early nights by my side-
my love.

Bohemian Spring

Subhadip Majumdar | September 23rd, 2017

The half buttoned shirt of youth
And the sun burnt brown skin
Which still bears the scar of the first kiss
A beating of heart
A slow retreat to darkness
A bed with bit of warmth and never spoken dreams
I hold it all like spring
For you, when after all the bleeding
We might love again.

The Journey

David Mayerhoff | September 24th, 2017

The fanciful journey
Is the way
Of the trek
Through life's travails

Navigating
The rigors and trials of existence
Brings the mystic
To tears and the stoic to ecstatic emotion

The eddies and currents
That mark the flow of this endeavor
Is not for the fainthearted
Or for the avoidant of challenge

The story unfolding
In the bosom of despair
And the fire
Of passion

Pain a welcome guest
When faced with the
Boredom of endless vanilla
Without challenge or growth

The ride can be burdensome
The path fraught with obstacles
As many shirk their responsibilities
To themselves and others
Being caught up in the maelstrom

Unlike many actors
All are warned
Not to get lost
In the part

On Moving On

Rajani Radhakrishnan | September 25th, 2017

It had been a while
or maybe it hadn't,
she tried, once more, the way he had taught her,
savouring the moment like a grain of rice
still covered in its husk of quiet,
feeling its shape and size and taste,
letting its gritty voice fill her hungry mind
with exhilaration but
it was no use.

What was a moment, she wondered,
when each life had its own clock,
the violet kurinji flowers that bloomed
every twelve years on the slopes of the Nilgiris,
what was a week to them, even a month,
even the dead had their own cycle,
remembered once a year with ritual and feast,
the priest pouring oblations into a waiting fire,
what was time to them.

What is a moment but everything before it
and everything after and everything that can never be,
should a moment that began and ended with footsteps
be measured in distance or time,
she tried again to empty her mind, the way he had taught her,
each second growing hands,
each second a many armed demon
dancing in an unordered rhythm,
it was no use.

In the horizon a primordial sun
coloured the ruins of a two hundred year old temple,
its broken bell filled with bleeding cloud,
the footsteps had faded away into
forgotten prayers,
wouldn't everything be bearable,
she wondered,
if silence was just
the absence of sound.

Light Enough to See

Rajani Radhakrishnan | September 26th, 2017

With grandma, there was always a god
who balanced karmic echoes with miracle and punishment,
and spoke to her with a familiarity that came
from decades of negotiation and compromise. After all,
the day grandpa died, who made sure the rains stopped
so the buses could get to the village on time.
I had no time to cry, she used to say,
I was so busy praying.

I liked her god, but had never wanted him for myself
until the phone rang years later,
in a place too far away for those buses to reach.
When I stopped crying I prayed that someone
had been there to hold her hand when she died,
that her god had stuck to whatever deal they had made
whatever she had offered him
to take away the pain.

On the flight home, I remembered a story she used to tell
in a torrent of missing teeth and loud cackles,
about a foolish man who had dropped his ring in the dark
but was looking for it under a distant streetlamp
where there was light enough to see. Even god, she said,
shook his head in despair.

I could see her shaking her head up there, her god now
firmly by her side. Growing up, I had lost them all in the dark,
grandma, the man, his ring, even her god,
and now too late, too foolish, sitting in her chair, surrounded by
her absence, I searched for miracle and punishment
in a faraway light.

Design

Rajani Radhakrishnan | September 27th, 2017

She let her fingers slide over the rich brocade,
the saree that had belonged to her mother;
for ten years it had sat in her cupboard, untouched,
bitter memories tarnished in its glimmering folds,
she stared at the border of mythical birds, woven in
delicate green and gold, their eyes an all-knowing blue;
she would wear it tonight to her daughter's wedding,
it was time.

She threw one end over her left shoulder,
years ago, on a hand-worked loom, calloused fingers
had breathed life into six silken yards,
the silent birds now stared at her with her mother's eyes,
with that perfect reproach, perhaps she could
gather the moments lost in her wrinkles,
iron them out so they would glow like the peacocks
in the hotel's lowlight; outside, in the hallway,
she could hear her daughter laughing.

Divine birds that could separate water from milk,
the old weaver hadn't given them wings to fly,
she held the soft pleats for a moment
against her thickening waistline,
in the mirror, thirty six birds quickly looked away.

The Bus Stand

Rajani Radhakrishnan | September 28th, 2017

It wasn't much of a bus stand
but then it wasn't much of anything,
several hours into the owl's first cry,
its metal jaws shuddering, the last bus
disgorged its groaning load of human effluent,
bags tightly clasped to their bony, wheezing chests,
disappearing into the black-toothed yawn
of another unwashed night.

From a solitary food cart
rose the familiar smell of charred kababs
and the bitter breath of tea that had
simmered too long, on chairs and benches,
in filthy doorways, strangers slept with sleepless eyes,
a grotesque calm blanketed the waiting,
the betel stained lips of the insomniacs
singing wordlessly with a broken radio.

Lost along a superfluous dust-way
where journeys ended even as they began,
this was a transit house for threadbare dreams,
a pause to trade wretchedness
with beady-eyed stragglers;
even the sky seemed dilapidated,
the wind blowing the last stars away,
this wasn't a place for the bright and shiny.

The next bus is an unnerving apparition,
going ahead no different from going back,
they queued up below a flapping billboard,
a beaming tomorrow at eighteen percent flat,
an old man picked the promises crusted
under his yellowing nails,
the next destination wouldn't make much of a difference,
but then it wouldn't make much of anything.

Label Number One

Valerie Tumasov | September 29th, 2017

(Poems about Objects in Despair 1)

Even when you start to peel
you still stick
you still stick
you still are
relentless
Your black and white bars
are birthmarks, no
fences but silent words
your native tongue
of geometrics
Lacquering surface
You will prevail.

Kehrwieder

Valerie Tumasov | September 30th, 2017

(Poems about Objects in Despair 3)

Glass sheets in layers
Ice paper lucid don't break
A rolling inhale you're ready
to suck them in or
throw them off with a
steam of sounds a whiff
from the outside world
You're double, a non
space shift away from
each other, empty between
dirt and concrete, the
mindless spot, the tapping
of feet in elevated thought
no dogs, no skates, no bikes.

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