

The Malcontent

Fire 1994

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For Kenneth Patchen

Eyes at the bottom of a screen
A window to the deafening rain
Peering through that water lens
The world compares to Mr. Patchen's ideal

I wish I could be at another place
Or a different form of painted grace
We were one, the heart we shared
And then she died

I looked into the picture pool
A one-eyed beast and pony played
Their plead intrigued more than their joy
And was affected through their love

Maybe I don't wallow in the real
To live in dreams too fake to feel
To fantasize the sweetest days
With creatures that live too far away

Bryan C. Strniste

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Caesar's Memos

Ancient filing cabinets
 You see them everywhere
 battleship gray
 jeep green
 putty
 sienna
 older than Dick Clark himself
 certainly more durable than
 the Sphinx

Think about it
 How many new filing cabinets
 have you seen?
 No, not "heard of"
 (They're probably lying)
 Do you suppose they're all
 recycled?

Circling round and around in some
 ageless, endless karmic cycle?
 Maybe the filing cabinet you're
 looking at now
 was once famous

Maybe Gregory Peck strode
 purposely past it in
 "The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit"

Maybe Cary Grant slammed it
 in "His Girl Friday"

Maybe Foster Brooks threw up in it
 (How many bottles of scotch
 has it hidden?)

Maybe Jimmy Hoffa's in there
 Maybe J. Edgar Hoover kept
 his stockings and garter belt
 in there behind that file
 on JFK and Marilyn

Maybe Napoleon kept a bottle

of Pepto-Bismol in the
 bottom drawer while at
 Elba
 Could be
 They say he liked that shade of
 slate green
 and had a pechant for
 faux brass handles
 Lord knows the thing's
 old enough

Ben Ide

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Venus

Darkling twilight
 Pinprick bright
 A distant match head
 Flares in an azure field
 Burns like a star
 Not a star
 This planet
 Heavenly muse
 Sings me to sleep
 Calls to me
 "Look, the dawning"

Another vigil
 Spent fevered eye
 Rest 'til daylight
 Wanes again

Ben Ide

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Broken

I couldn't fall asleep last night, just tossed and turned until
I thought my head would
Explode. Too much thinking, trying not to worry, to make a big deal.
Really.
Got that tingly feeling again.
Hate it so much.
It sets me apart even though I keep my lips tightly sealed.
No one has to know, no one will really care,
Just nod their head and say "Oh."
Everyone here wants
To kill kittens,
To shake up the cute,
To squeeze the life from adorable things.
I never realized just how many people feel this way.
I want to
Kill
Something too, but not the way they do.
I was having such a good time and this had to sneak up,
Fucking
With my world when I finally got it back.
It hasn't even been mine for a week.
I hate this Enemy of mine.
I have to make it my
Friend
To disarm it,
To make it go away,
But I don't want a Friend like this.
I wasn't even thinking of it and now it's
Here.
It makes me so
Angry.
I feel so Different from
Everyone Else,
But in a bad way, not even in a cool way,
And that sucks.
Really.

Janine Wilkins

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Gunshot to the Head

BANG!

The cerebellum exits the cranium
and splats against the ceiling,
creating a morbid Rorschach blot...
Pieces of the cerebrum
are forced to fly
like blood-dripping sparrows
to the far ends of the room...

The brain stem remains
intact in the skull
as the rest of the entity
falls like a redwood
severed from the limb
which roots it
to the ground...

THUD!

James Thomas Bichsel

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Vampiric Feast

Death beckons its still voice in the cold night air
I listen, I listen; you do not hear
to carry the weight is a burden to bear
but you look into the night - unaware
I strike, I strike; plunge fangs into your neck
drain you of blood, then leave you weak
lying on the ground, willpower will break
I run home, run home... unaware

James Thomas Bichsel

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Suicide Scene 2

He walked into the mall,
gun concealed-security never cared...
He walked through the aisles,
sluggish and head lowered-customers never cared...
He stepped into a department store,
stared at cotton boxers-manager never cared...
He locked himself in a fitting room,
clutched both penis and pistol-security camera never cared...
He squeezed his dick,
and scattered his brain-everybody cared...

James Thomas Bichsel

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Dedicated to Melanie

Do you realize
 how simple it could be
 for me to fall
 in love with you?
 -I hold myself back-I truly know that I
 would rather know
 you than fall down
 -to your merciful
 and radiant love which
 could shine like a
 flourescent light...
 -I hold myself back
 from entering the void,
 realizing
 I don't know you...
 -But, I'd like to...

James Thomas Bichsel

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Chairs

Chairs
 This job is all about chairs
 I sit in chairs
 I get out of chairs
 I push chairs in
 I move chairs into position
 I put chairs back
 And motion
 This job is about motion, too
 Chairs and motion
 Heck
 I have three office chairs
 With wheels on their feet
 So I can move while
 I'm sitting
 Three
 I'm always moving
 Never sit still
 All these chairs
 And I never sit still
 Can you believe it?

Ben Ide

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Let The Wind Roar

Let the wind roar
 as it blows,
 blowing, blowing,
 for kites to sail in
 the air in March!
 Let the wind roar,
 as it blows to lift
 the kites to sail!

Beth Hoyer

Copyright 1993, Beth Hoyer

Legacy

On the shores
 of the holy Nile,
 a land by the name
 Egypt.
 So rich and glorious,
 with gods they have left,
 a legacy forever,
 for eternity.

Beth Hoyer

Copyright 1993, Beth Hoyer

Flight

The Priest asks me my name, "Tell me again why you're here," he says. I think about the consequences. I hear my own voice saying that I've completely lost control. He accuses me of depravity, and drives me from the temple. I stumble through the waterfall, the shards of broken glass, silver flower petals blotting out the sky. I close my eyes tighter in the sunlight, as I stand on the edge of the cliff. I wish I could melt in the morning rain the way I did last summer. The world is a dream, only this moment exists. There is no reason to stop. I step forward, and fall to heaven.

Ed Hoyer, Jr.

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Recycling

You write with compassion about deceit. You want to believe that greed will save you. You read a list of possible perversions, and drive the crowd into a frenzy. I notice that you get younger all the time, despite my constant warnings. I imagine leaving you, but there is no way to forget the tune of fear and loathing, being and nothingness. "Feel free to lay the blame on me," I say reluctantly, and the screaming suddenly stops. We ignore each other, and dissolve to dust. We will do this forever without hesitation, weary cliches in the abyss of life. It's not true that death is the final pleasure.

Ed Hoyer, Jr.

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The Gift

The woman I love accuses me of controlling the weather. I pretend I don't remember anything, as dark clouds roll over the landscape. Her laughter haunts me and her perfect skin fascinates me. She claims to desire me. I don't believe a word she says. The lies don't matter now. I know why she came here. I control her with my eyes. The only gift I can offer is my pain, and there will never be enough. Death is another possibility. I will kill her with my bare hands. The air on this summer night sears my throat. Her flesh is soft, my fingers are steel. This is the moment I was born for. This is the first peace I've ever known. And I will never know peace again.

Ed Hoyer, Jr.

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Peace

Let there be
peace for all
Nations together
joined in harmony
as friends
and forgive
each enemy as
a friend.
Let there be peace!

Beth Hoyer

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No Cigarette Tax at the Indian Reservation

Weird coincidence,
 You being behind me.
 Wanted to talk to you
 After
 Your White man
 Death
 Comment.
 I liked it.
 You walked ahead.
 I thought I'd say
 Something
 Next time,
 But,
 There you were,
 Right behind
 Me
 As I read a
 Letter
 From a
 Stupid friend.
 I'd
 Never
 Seen
 You
 Before, and
 Now,
 Here
 You were
 Again.
 Weird coincidences
 Happen
 Too
 Much
 In
 My
 Life.

Janine Wilkins

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Not Your Shrink

Passivity and Stupidity
 Cloud
 My brain.
 I'm
 Not
 God,
 I
 Refuse
 To be
 Everyone's
 Savior,
 But
 When I see
 My eyes,
 Eyes that
 Aren't mine,
 With that
 Lost,
 Hopeless
 Look
 In them,
 I
 Can't help but be
 Me.
 Dear Abby,
 Here to Help,
 I've said
 My
 Peace,
 But
 Why
 Don't
 I
 Feel like
 I Have
 Any?

Janine Wilkins

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Bleeding For Books

Blood sprung forth so
 Fast.
 A slit,
 A slash,
 And then...
 Red.
 I'm
 Bleeding
 For
 Books.
 Ludicrously
 And
 Truthfully,
 I'm
 Bleeding
 For
 Books.
 I
 Don't
 See
 You
 Doing what
 I'm
 Doing
 Oh, I forgot...
 You're
 Too Stupid
 To do
 Anything
 At all.
 I'm
 Bleeding
 For
 Books
 And
 I
 Want
 Everyone
 To.

Janine Wilkins

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Don't Leave Yet

Spinning,
 Semi-conscious, half-awake,
 Roommate paints the box
 Black.
 The Past calls me to
 Reminisce.
 Cartier's jewelry is gaudy, but beautifully lit.
 Wasted when the Lover calls,
 Feel like shit when
 I Don't Know
 The color,
 The shade,
 Of the fifteen-dollar
 Lipstick
 I'm supposed to know.
 You're a salesgirl, for
 God's sake,
 Don't give me attitude!
 And as the
 Homeless People
 Lay
 Dying,
 I
 Buy
 A
 Prayer
 For
 Love.

Janine Wilkins

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When you just have to know . . .

Grim Information

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Yet Another Modest Proposal...

How often have we been forced to live with the daily monotonous doldrums? Those recurring dreary periods of lackadaisical lassitude that all but entirely encompass our lives at that point in time. Where do they come from? What is their purpose? Why do they affect us the way that they do? All of these inexorable questions have a real purpose and meaning. With this proposal, The answer to the What, Where, and Why of the POLL 's (Periods of Lackadaisical Lassitude) continued existence will be answered.

Ever feel tired, irritable, and not in a mood to do anything? Yes, that is a sure symptom of the POLL syndrome. Every day, millions of Americans suffer from chronic POLLitis. Yet, hardly anyone realizes the significance or dangers that POLL contains. The moments, usually lasting somewhere from 5 to 20 seconds, can commonly run into a few minutes or so. However, there have been documented cases that have lasted an hour or more. This fact shows how POLL affects one's lifestyle in the home and at work. Productivity during these periods are slim to none, and there is little to no attention span. People that are chronically affected usually suffer from 20 or more attacks daily. There are documented cases that show some cases in excess of 100 attacks per diem! Obviously, this is the bane of the creative, and of upper management (which usually have no connection whatsoever!).

Extensively Intensive Research has shown that the POLL syndrome has a basis in the early genetic developmental stage. How intensely one is affected depends upon many factors including the following:

1. The POLL factor of male parent's X and Y chromosomes.
2. The POLL factor of Female parent's X and X chromosomes.
3. The Inversely proportional ratio of the projected size of the zygotes head to the phase of the moon it will be born under.
4. The number of times a person's hair color will change in one's lifetime.
5. The bio-rhythms that an individual gains during one's lifetime.
6. The culture an individual was raised in and around.

1&2.) As obvious as can be, the parental units' genetic codes have an important role in the POLL of their offspring. The child's sex also plays a role.

POLL is more active in males, which leads to the conclusion that the presence of the Y chromosome acts as a catalyst in the development of the POLL syndrome.

3.) This factor is self-explanatory, as everyone knows, the moon affects the tides, and since the human body is 98% dihydrogen oxide, there is a clear connection.

4.) The number of times one's hair changes color varies almost as much as the genetic codes between two non-related people. A little known factor is that this includes the absence of hair as well (for posterity's sake, baldness will be considered non-absorbant hair.) This, in turn, leads to an even greater percentage of possible times of hair changes, and number of times hair changes.

5.) As one develops and matures, their body's biological and mental clocks change and develop. This results in the adult bio-rhythms that the body gives off. These bio-rhythms are in conjunction with the moon's cycles (see #3), and have an effect upon the number of times the color of your hair changes (see #4). These are the governors of the adult lifestyle. They control when one likes to eat, sleep, and produce hormones and enzymes. The blueprint for these bio-rhythms is contained within the thalamus and the hypo-thalamus.

6.) The cultural level of the individual is of utmost importance when it comes to POLL syndrome. Different cultures have different patterns of behavior which can and does affect ones behavioral patterns and bio-rhythms (see #5). The exact differences are as varied as the cultures that one may come from are.

Robert Lutinski

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(Editor's note: This report is incomplete. The author succumbed to POLL before it could be finished.)

Amen Ra

Amen Ra, King of Gods,
the sun god, Pharaoh of Egypt.
Shine your light every morning
on the holy Nile,
your kingdom long ago.
Oh, Amen Ra, Amen Ra,
rule it well.

Beth Hoyer

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The shifting
 Of a distant but
 Wonderous presage
 Makes me realize
 Things aren't half bad
 With what I
 Consider to be abominable.
 So as long as the
 Moon comes up and
 Pricks the sky with stars
 I wish a wish on each one
 For each and every one
 Of us.

Bryan C. Strniste

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Reprints

Two pieces that originally appeared in **The Malcontent** have been reprinted in **Pendulum**, published by the University of Pittsburgh at Greenboro. *Estee Lauder Makes Cheap Mirrors* by Janine Wilkins, and *Circles* by Ed Hoyer, Jr., appeared in the Spring 1994 issue.

A Note on Shadowpanths

The second part of **Shadowpanths** is undergoing rewrite, and was not ready for this issue of **The Malcontent**. The author hopes to have the further adventures of Eric Skyler finished for the Fire 1995 issue of **The Malcontent**. Thanks to everyone who expressed their interest in **Shadowpanths**.



The Editor is accepting poems and stories for the Ice 1994 issue of **The Malcontent** which will be published in December 1994.

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