

T4T ZINE ISSUE 1



# Table of Contents

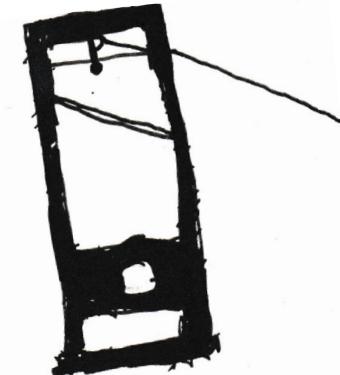
- Front Cover Don't be Docile by Cherri  
2 die a kings death by Nickle  
3-4 Why it's important to resist early the intrusions and assaults on the institutions America relies on by Kara Murphy  
5 CW: Solipsism by Taiga  
6 War Season, 500 Years Long by Fox Moon  
7-8 this piece doesnt have a title. Feel free to come up with one :P by <https://www.tumblr.com/headspace-hotel>  
9-10 Carrier Pigeon by Echo  
11 Therian Shots by Zachary P.  
12 Survival/Progress by Tristan Marlowe  
13-14 The Name I Killed by Quinn Fleur  
15 Inward by Brynn Montgomery  
16 How Queer by NEB  
17 Elegy for an Empress by Candace Bríghde  
18 As a Treat by Fox Moon & Viktor Moon  
19 damn... by Nâomi-Fayt  
20 untitled by Harper Ziskind  
20 Self Portrait by Charrlotte "ZeeAnna" Antoinette  
21-25 Untitled by Viktor Moon  
26 The robot by Mick S.  
27-30 Wildflowers by Echo  
31 Sometimes Flower by k Jasmine  
32 Remembering the Queer Elders Who Saw Me by Corvus  
33 The Dark Night and the Rising Sun by Fox Moon



## die a kings death

Nickle

OO YOU HEAR  
The PEOPLE sing



HE WANTS  
TO BE  
KING

Then he  
Shall Die a  
Kings Death

# **Why it's important to resist early the intrusions and assaults on the institutions America relies on.**

*Kara Murphy*

The history of repressive regimes shows the earliest stages are aimed at basic civil infrastructure. First they are infiltrated, then their missions are corrupted and turned to other purposes, and eventually they are eliminated.

The DEI committee for the city of Monroe has been a small entity. Its mission is to remove the barriers of inequality, and ensure that all voices are heard.

It has been led by Council member Surluta Anthony and she should be thanked for her service. Monroe has a troubled history with race relations. The job of easing those tensions and reconciling the people of Monroe is not an easy one.

The last few years have seen the city of Monroe face increasing division and discrimination aimed at the LGBTQ+ community. Starting with the very first year of Union County Pride the city council took up an ordinance trying to restrict the performance of drag to adults only. A move that is unconstitutional and legally unenforceable. Current members of the city council James Kerr, Gary Anderson, and Julie Thompson voted for that ordinance, even after being informed by the then city attorney that they had no legal basis for such a move.

Of course current Mayor Robert Burns is infamous in this area for his bigotry, and his vilification of the LGBTQ+ community. He first showed up in downtown Monroe as part of the bigoted protestors outside a local business that had drag performances. He carried signs and spoke often about our community “sexualizing” and “grooming” children. Assertions neither he nor anyone else has been able to justify. His words and actions have seen Monroe’s reputation dragged through the mud, appearing in local and regional news media in rather unflattering ways.

Robert Burns has championed the most extreme conservative republican lines. He has denied that systemic racism persists in Monroe and in the US. He has asserted that his particular brand of extreme conservative Christianity should be enforced on everyone by force of law. And he has attacked DEI programs and institutions here in Monroe and in the US.

Currently extremist Republicans are attempting to ban any DEI programs or institutions in local municipal governments. This is wrong and beyond their purview. The people of Monroe have a right to look to their history and to at least attempt to make sense of it. To take the lessons that history has taught us and to prevent the repetition of its worst sins.

There is a defeatist and nihilistic mood that is infecting those who could resist the infiltration and elimination of our institutions. They consider it too difficult, and unworthy of their attention or energy in fighting. But we are not fighting just for a DEI committee. We are fighting for the right to govern ourselves. If we preemptively surrender to every demand of this regime we are signaling to our citizens, to everyone else whose voices could be silenced, that we won’t fight for them.

How can we expect them to fight with us if we can’t fight for them now?

## CW: Solipsism

Taiga

A colleague posted on social media, “if trans women aren’t women, why do people we trust sexually assault us as kids?” but assured everyone that they were only using humor to process their trauma live in public, so I guess it’s okay their joke reinforces the beliefs that people “become” trans from sexual abuse and that men can’t be survivors.



## War Season, 500 Years Long

Fox Moon

The world roils, the heart breaks  
Peace is found in close moments  
bodies pressed together  
protecting the warmth between us  
Life is so good, so beautiful  
Love is the Great Healer

May everyone be blessed with this

To slip out of shackles in the deep dark night and  
run through the forest howling for the Moon  
the heads of our jailers on spikes

And soon but not soon enough  
no more blood in the river  
no more limbs in the rubble  
The sun rising over green earth  
birds leading the hymn

We pray and fight and rest and fuck and love  
for the liberation of all beings



<https://www.tumblr.com/headspace-hotel>

**this piece doesnt have a title.**  
**Feel free to come up with one :P**

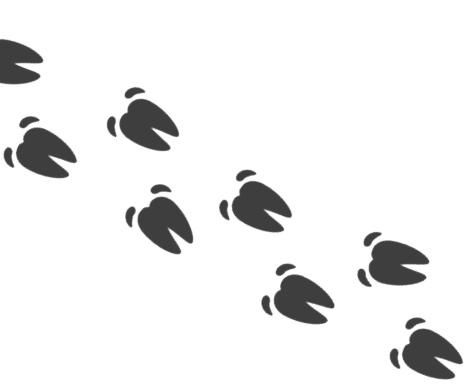
In the future, children will think our ways are strange. "Why do old people always grow so much milkweed in their gardens?" they'll say. "Why do old people always write down when the first bees and butterflies show up? Why do old people hate lawn grass so much? Why do old people like to sit outside and watch bees?"

We will try to explain to them that when we were young, most people's yards were almost entirely short grass with barely any flowers at all, and it was so commonplace to spray poisons to kill insects and weeds that it was feared monarch butterflies and American bumblebees would soon go extinct. We will show them pictures of sidewalks, shops, and houses surrounded by empty grass without any flowers or vegetables and they will stare at them like we stared at pictures of grimy children working in coal mines.

We will be feeding our grandchildren strawberries and raspberries we grew in our gardens, dragging them along to the farmers' markets for tomatoes and eggs and goats milk and pickles and pecans and salsa and sunflower seed butter and jars of honey, as they complain and drag their feet because Gramma always stands around talking to people for like an HOUR.

And we will say "When I was YOUR age, fruits and vegetables came from a supermarket and they were bred to get shipped 1000 miles in a truck and sit on shelves for weeks, and they tasted so sour and watery it was like eating paper compared to these ones. It wasn't even legal in some places to grow your own food" and they will roll their eyes like yeah yeah just because everything was miserable in the 20s doesn't mean I have to have a smile on my face standing in the hot sun while you listen to that one guy talk about his bees FOREVER.

**But they will go, because there might be baby goats.**



# *Echo* **Carrier Pigeon**

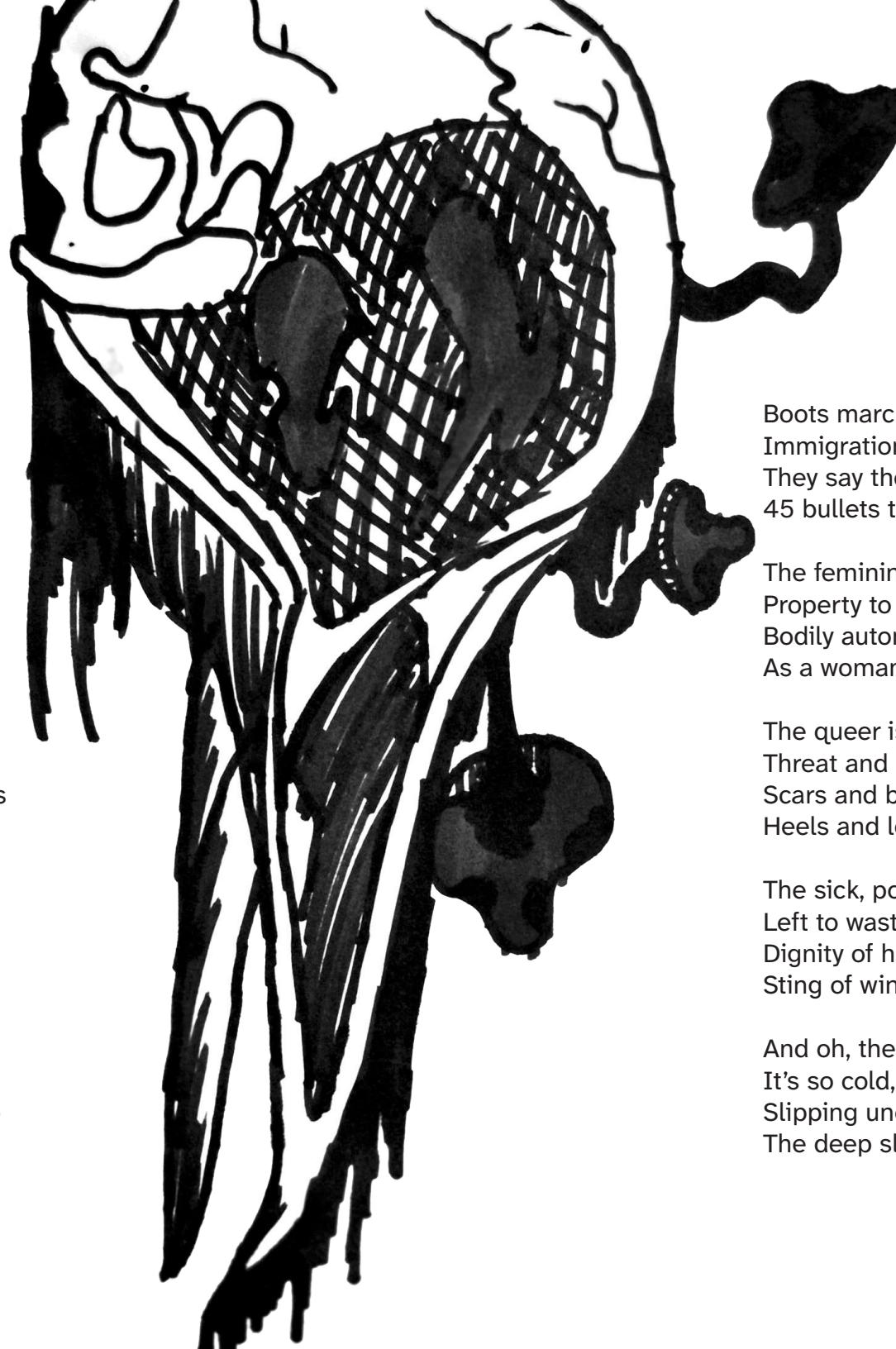
And so the carrier pigeon  
Dove of peace if there ever was one  
Lies discarded  
Abandoned, wrapped within the cold

The world watches  
Bloodshot eyes flickering  
As bodies pile,  
Lives ripped apart

Do we learn?  
Do we grow?  
As the ouroboros we devour ourselves  
Pledging honesty in false tongues

How does one render the tar,  
Singed bone and sinew,  
Desperate pleas for mercy,  
To gentle touch once more?

Our planet breathes in time  
In a cacophony of voices  
Here by chance and scientific miracle  
- yet we burn it  
...we burn it all



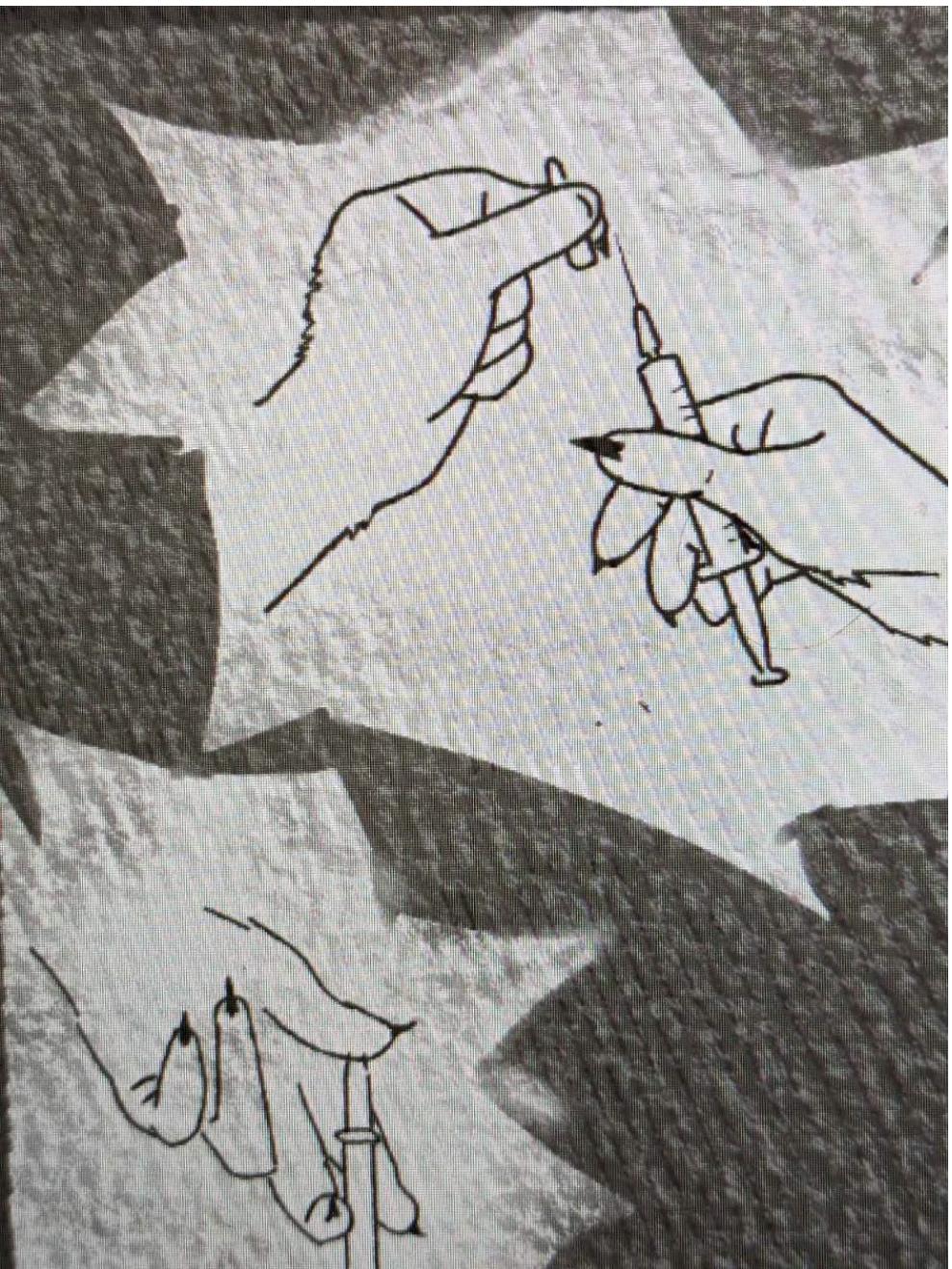
Boots march down the avenue  
Immigration, cops, and soldiers  
They say they'll make America great again  
45 bullets to the face

The feminine is disdained  
Property to be owned  
Bodily autonomy grasped  
As a woman's hair trying to flee

The queer is beaten ruthlessly  
Threat and predator, they call us  
Scars and broken bones  
Heels and longing glances stand despised

The sick, poor, elderly, young  
Left to waste away  
Dignity of human  
Sting of winter within the cuts

And oh, the street is so cold  
It's so cold, numbing us out  
Slipping uncognizant into fascism  
The deep slumber of death



## Therian Shots

Zachary P.

# Survival/Progress

*Tristan Marlowe*

I opened a door in summer '24,  
with an easy injection that drew a bead of blood  
after a lifetime of answering to the wrong name,  
shifting uneasy in the wrong skin  
I survived it, and did not think I would

I closed a door, a few weeks more  
walking away from the place I'd given my youth,  
driving away, a bitter laugh when  
the dead end shrank away in my rearview  
I survived it, and did not think I would

I boarded a plane that flew me west, me,  
who barely leaves the house, who goes tight-throated in a crowd  
I endured the distress that gave way to euphoria, music and joy  
shimmering in desert air,  
I survived it, and I did not think I would

Now I pace between doors again  
between home or the great unknown  
I pace, in clumsy middle age,  
trying not to mourn  
the boyhood I never had, the years I gave away  
The first beard I grow will be grey and still  
I try  
I try to survive  
I try to survive it, and I think I will

# The Name I Killed

*Quinn Fleur*

Pictures on the wall that carry a name I killed  
Avoiding my name has me thrilled  
At least it's not out of hate  
“Give it time, you've got to wait”

Will those photos call you when you're lonely  
I was your child in name only  
You weren't there to hold me  
All you could do was scold me  
Only because you couldn't control me

The mirror is the only place  
That I can never erase  
Inspecting every new chin hair  
“You know no one really cares”

Will the mirror finally show you flaw free  
Or can you learn to be happy  
“No one likes their reflection”, you say  
I love my transsexual body, I disobey

Walking on eggshells  
While I'm putting on my t gel  
Want me to tell you how I got that scar?  
“That's just how they are”



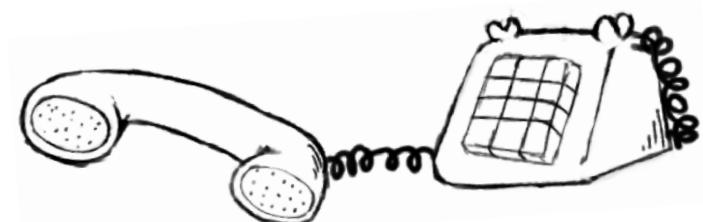
Will you ever learn to accept me  
Or will you never admit you affect me?  
“Why don't you call anymore”  
But I know you don't like me at my core

Struggling to dress  
Whether to pass or express  
Is my gender a hard sell?  
“I mean you are wearing all pastel”

Will you ever let me be?  
Will I ever be set free?  
From these expectations and assumptions  
“Excuse my presumption”

Even strangers on the street  
Old friends from highschool I meet  
Can't help but ask if I have a dick  
“Wasn't that your name when you were a chick?”

Signatures in their yearbook carry a name I killed  
Using this new one has me thrilled  
After 20 something years of feeling shabby  
“I've never seen you this happy”



# Inward

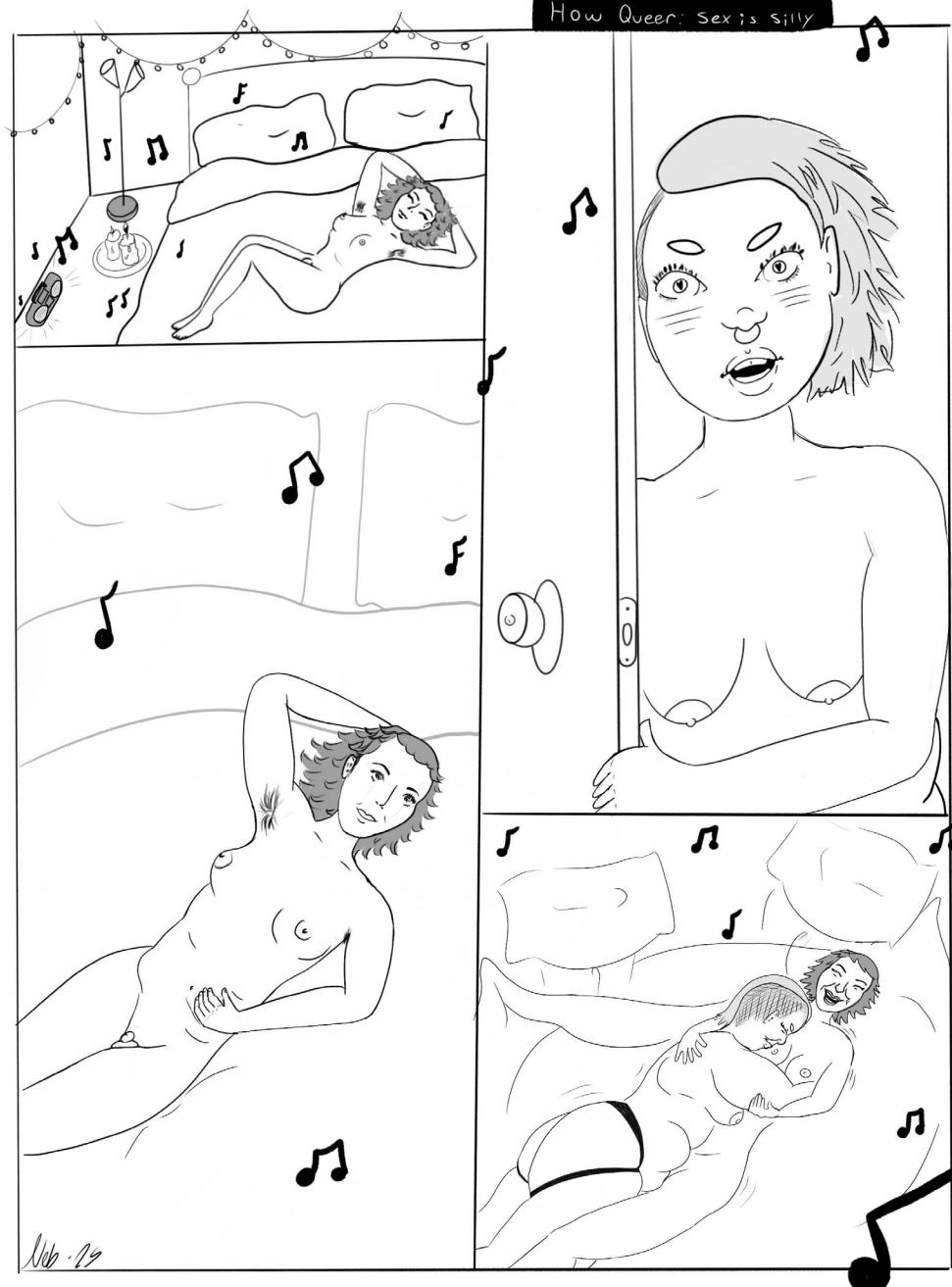
Brynn Montgomery

I pulled away, quiet and small,  
Retreating into myself,  
While you stood there, feigning confusion,  
Wondering why the warmth had gone.

You couldn't see the damage—  
Or maybe you refused to.  
I thought what happened months ago,  
was just a storm we'd weathered.

But now I see it for what it was—  
Control dressed as care,  
Anger masked as love.

It wasn't my fault that I shrank.  
It was yours.  
And I'm walking away now,  
Finally free from the weight  
Of what I didn't want to believe.



**How Queer**  
NEB

# Elegy for an Empress

Candace Bríghde

O Majesty, thee we hardly knew.  
Empress most high, to whom we were true,  
rest now in peace, 'til day of doom  
when God shall reckon where thou shalt room:  
in bane of hell or heaven's boon  
(the scriptures say we'll find out soon).

i know i would that thou room with me.  
in the glow of hell we could be free.  
the Good Shepherd in heaven can count his sheep  
while we party all night with no need for sleep.  
in the infernal fire's perpetual gleam,  
we never need worry we'll run out of steam.



# As a Treat

Fox Moon & Viktor Moon

I'll have Adam's apple  
throatful of your fruit  
Deliciously criminal body  
banned by envious fear

Practice comfort food  
with fistfuls of flesh  
Counting wrinkles & fireflies  
as ancestral worship  
Split open, pubescent crone  
baptize me in your laugh  
Drip joy unceasing  
delight in being

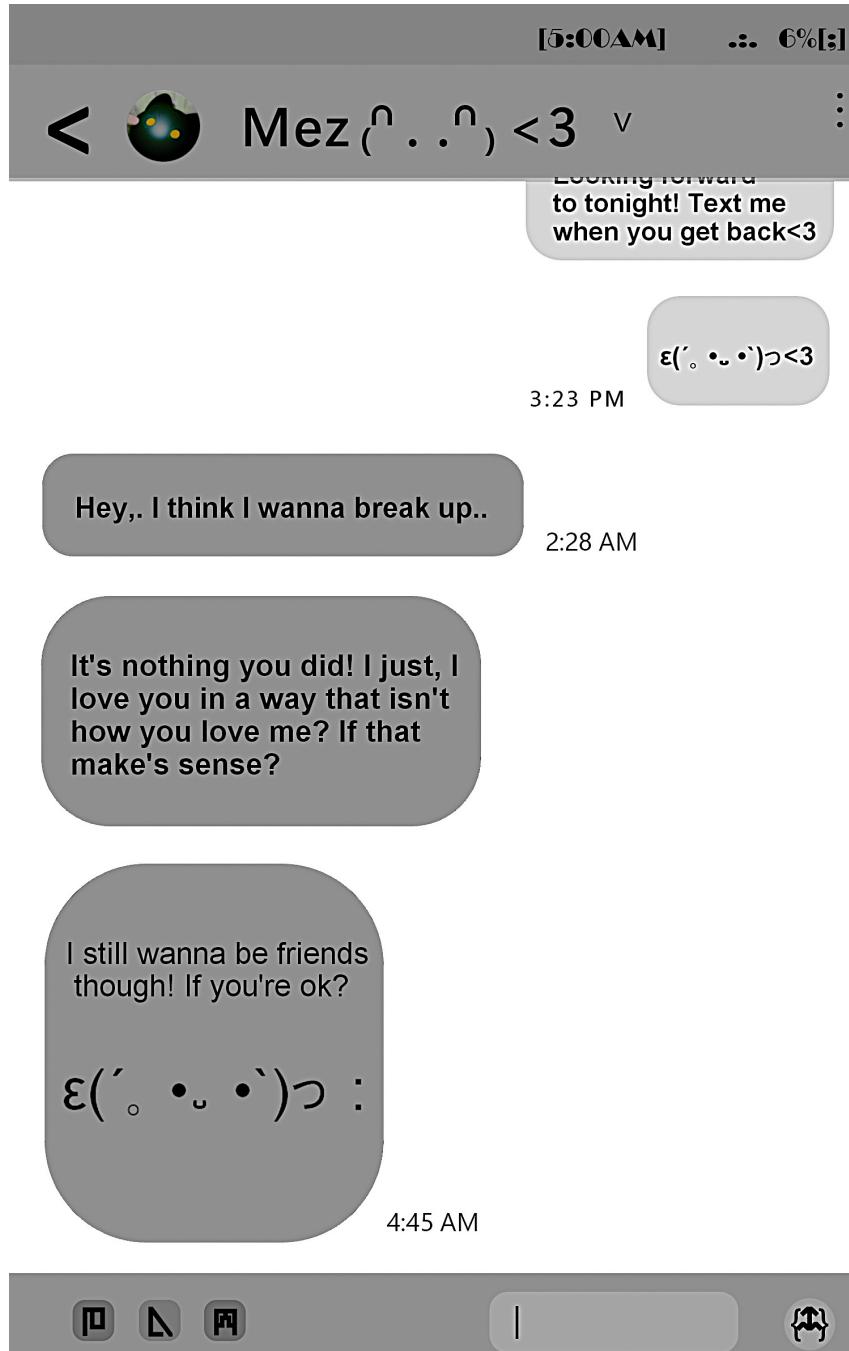
A gilded mess  
an eternal transcendent display  
Miscreant innocence  
within tangled embrace

Cozy up, sweetness  
to a dangerous security  
Faerie Thing,  
transfag daemon.

PARIS IS BURNING

# damn...

Nâomi-Fayt



# untitled

Harper Ziskind

in my dreams i am falling and falling

i scratch myself in the uncertainty of lucidity

a direct method to confirm the angel that has fed me

never before have i been so awake

# Self Portrait

Charrlotte "ZeeAnna" Antoinette



# Untitled

Viktor Moon

1.

When putting yourself back together meant

arms into sockets, slings,

relearning how to breathe,

sit, stand,

walk, write.

Holding my own heart in hope.

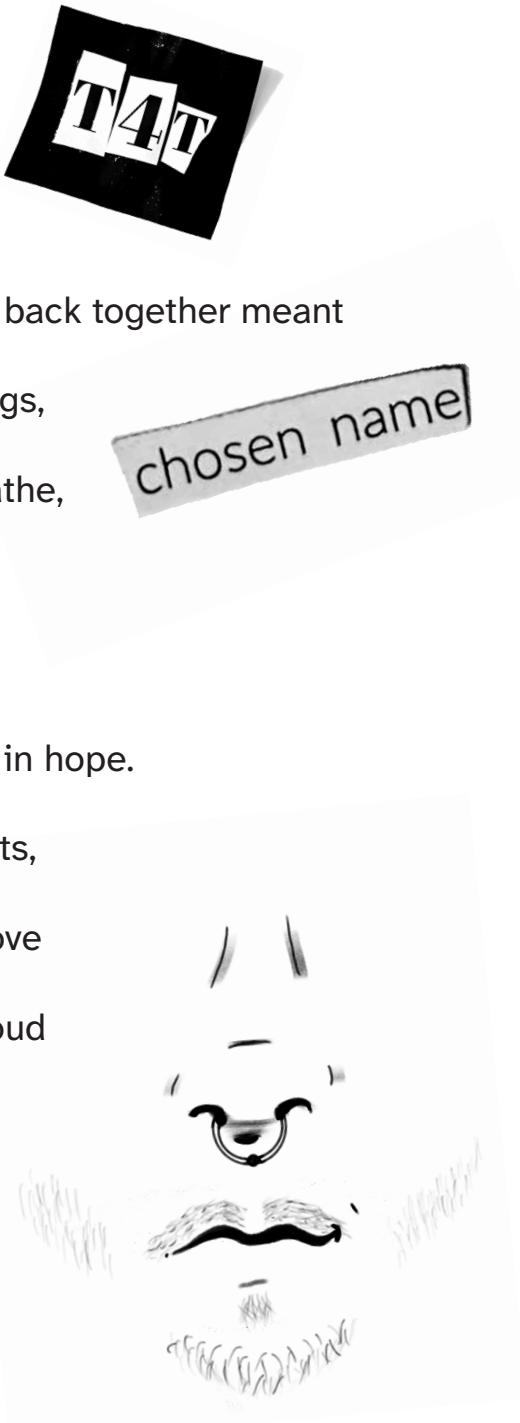
Hope for joy in my joints,

and a deep knowing love

to which I will read aloud

a poem,

or two.



2.

Guttural time with the soul,  
alone.

Never before manifested noises,  
repatterning patinaed wounds.

Goodbye divot —

Choking traded for  
fountains of my former fears.

Sun shining on me  
like it won't oppress

Our interdependent planet  
someday.

For this moment,  
I am content.

**TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS**

3.

### cw: reappropriating queer slurs

My clothesline colors teach me,  
in whose hand-me-downs I'll play.

Button tops stripped off by the sea and  
unclothed, I am no one to portray.

Winds fling away a spattered flag,  
swill and viscera trying for my body.

Happy am I, a sunbathed fag,  
unregulated trans hottie.



4.

Rubber thighs, warm  
from cruising sands of time.

Fluffy rubbing,  
wrapping from gap  
and front to back.

My love for you,  
innermost delicate spot  
is a playful practice.  
Ungripping from the  
steel pole of intruders,

Unclinching stale holdings.  
Each self-possessed massage,  
Each weekly needle, mediation with myself and fear,  
a radical self-care praxis for release.  
Soft, solid,  
lumpy, hairy.  
Shy unfurled butterflies for thighs.



What pieces of soul shamed

have replaced me since the beginning?

Intensity of Southern stars overhead.

I have always been here.

Body, how you are enjoyed!

Webs of playful sensuality —

that could not be taken.

Not always, but implanted

pausing, scanning.

Freak or foe.

Nerves wore out, thinned

by a cautious exhaustion.

A wearied self,

but what now of that ease,

me, a friend.



## The robot

*Mick S.*

I saw a robot struggle up the stairs today  
After cruising down the street  
It tried to climb the steps, then failed  
And layed down in defeat.

And so I hurried over  
Tried turning it upright  
I begged for it to start again  
Until it finally complied.

But after climbing up the steps  
It rocked from side to side  
A crooked kind of ambling  
Replaced its perfect stride

Soon the whirring slowly stopped  
And then the engine died.  
I needed it to start again  
So frantically I tried

I deconstructed every part  
I scrutinized each wheel, each screw  
I tried and tried to fix it  
Till there was nothing left to do.

I know I have to put it back  
But the task feels far too great  
And so I sit beside the parts  
And patiently I wait.

**radical  
compassion**  
**transgender**  
**community**

# Echo Wildflowers

Who i am now  
began at age 14.  
At least, that's when I mark it  
When I first gave myself a name  
Tattooed my nonbinary nature  
Into my very skin

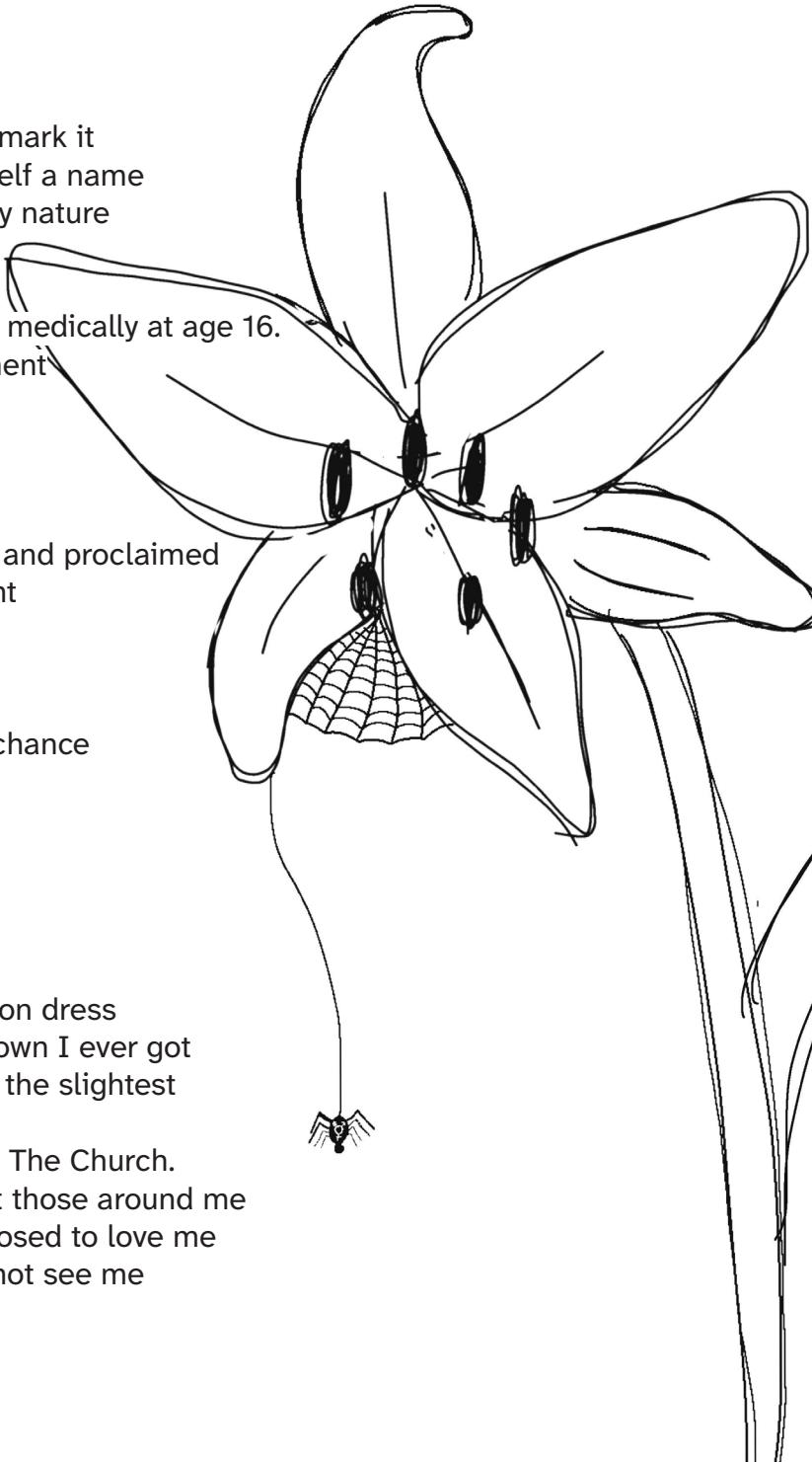
I started transitioning medically at age 16.  
I do not regret a moment  
I was lucky.  
Testosterone at 16.  
Top surgery at age 17.

Settled into who I am and proclaimed  
That I needed different  
From what I got  
I took it in stride

Its a one in a million chance  
To be given  
Such blessed scars  
The way I got them.  
I know that.  
I transitioned early.

A First Holy Communion dress  
And the first button down I ever got  
Will never compare in the slightest

I lost a piece of me to The Church.  
To the knowledge that those around me  
Those who were supposed to love me  
Could not and would not see me  
As a human being  
Any longer.



To the whispered indignation  
Looks and passive aggressive gifts  
Outright denial of who I was

My skinned knees and thin frame  
Hugged those baggy blue jeans  
Old friends when the open air  
Burned my skin  
The worst part is  
They remember themselves as  
“Supportive”  
“Safe.”

Sunday school is a place  
I learned to be of punishment  
It spread  
Black, thorn-laden webs of inadequacy  
And self-doubt

How could a God exist when the stories make no sense?  
How could a God exist when I am in this much pain?  
How could a God exist if this is what his followers do?  
How can a God exist without wanting something in return?

The way the questions progressed  
Staring at my ceiling  
Talking to myself to soothe my head

Alone as I was  
Terrified and heartbroken as I was  
Their signs reading  
“Homo Sex Is Sin”

I have a better relationship now  
With that which we don't understand  
But the righteous All Mighty Father  
Cloaked in the blood of the innocent  
Will never be My God.

When the first bathroom bills appeared  
I was just starting my transition  
Fear bubbled up,  
Backdoor deals and outdated stereotypes  
Deciding my fate

The money keeps on rolling in  
Special interest groups  
Profiting off of their ignorance  
Our suffering

This country at large decided our rights  
Were not a bottom line  
The almighty dollar  
Overtaking life

We have history  
We learn from our elders.  
We fight for our lives,  
The lives of our children.

Bite, lick our wounds, guard  
Until we are safe  
Its not safe to be trans right now.

I look down at the chest  
I've come to adore  
Something I'd longed for,  
Something that allows me to make My body a Home  
A safe place for me to be in



This skin is sacred,  
Marked and mottled,  
Bearing signs that I am alive  
And healing.

Insecurities plague these bones  
In loving other trans people  
Loving what our community does  
Protecting  
Healing  
In vivid, tangible action  
I realize that I am lucky to be here

We are not alone

I do not regret  
The choice that was never a choice  
A life that has brought me color  
Warmth  
A persistence that I bring to all around me

Bathed in dawn light for the first time in decades,  
A part of our bodies shed like a second skin  
Filling in, wildflowers in spring.  
How authentic,  
and worthy of love.

Trans grief  
Trans joy  
These are emotions we are allowed to feel  
As human beings  
You Are So Loved.

gender roles are

DEAD

## Sometimes Flower

k Jasmine

\*  
Sometimes I feel so beautiful  
Sometimes I let my old guard down  
Sometimes I shed my old skin  
Sometimes I grow anew;  
growth that's so immense  
Sometimes I feel sooo strongly,  
be it in beauty or the abyss

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LIBERATION

## Remembering the Queer Elders Who Saw Me

Both of these are short recollections of interactions I had during my first year of transition in Mississippi, during Trump's first term. I treasure them as part of the oral history I have had the privilege of bearing witness to.

- Corvus

the old lesbian is a regular at the pet store i work at. her wife is always with her, pushing her chair. they come to look at the fish, or get things for their fish tank- it's good to have something calming to watch, she says. she tells me they're gay, tells me she was a nurse in the 80s. 'These boys were crying for their mamas but their families wouldn't walk in the room. All I could do was try to keep them comfortable.' i look at her hands, knotted in the blanket she always has over her lap even in the mississippi summer. i wonder how many hands she's held that nobody else would.

the trans elder calls me a strong young man when she asks me to get her wheelchair out of her truck. she's still showing up to community events even in her old age, still doing the work as far as we've come. she tells me about her friend that was in a car accident, during the 70s, off i-20. the paramedics wouldn't touch her when they realized she wasn't a cis woman. 'Maybe she would have died either way, it's hard to say.' i think of her and her friend every time i pass the exit it happened at- cuba, alabama. i wonder if she's still showing up to events, still sharing bits of history for the next generation of transsexuals, eyes far away as she recollects lost sisters.

# The Dark Night and the Rising Sun

Fox Moon

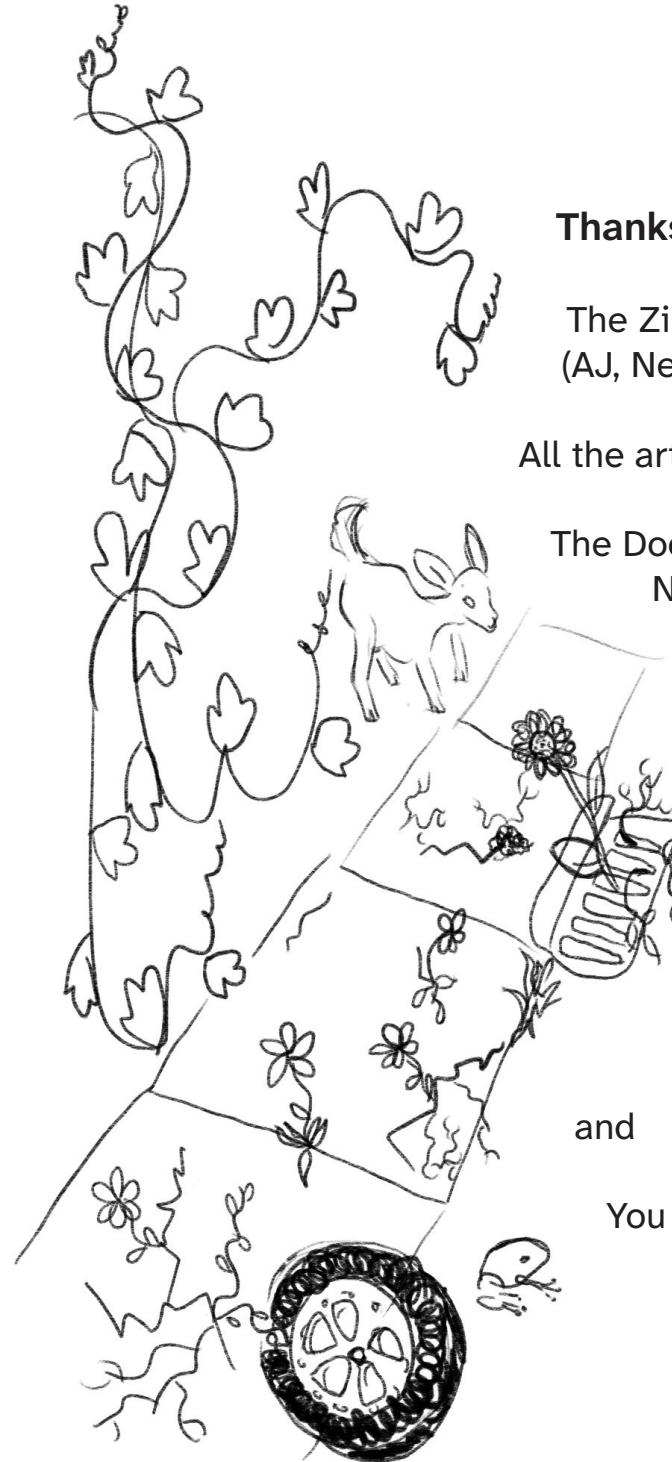
Deep breaths, Love. Big stretch. The sun is rising, the shadows receding.

We have endured another long, dark, cold winter, made longer by incessant attacks from the greed-driven colossus that claims to represent and defend us, while it desperately devours everything and everyone as far as its Eye can see.

Guided through these darkest nights by the flames of ancestral wisdom we see glowing in each other's hearts, we have navigated to the equinox, mourning. As the sun warms the earth, we honor countless losses, personal and global, and tend the spirits where they dwell in our altars, the land, our own bodies.

The days will lengthen from here, the trees have already begun to bud and bloom. Hope and determination flow more freely. The ancestral dreams we nurtured through hibernation season are being born into consensus reality as we come together with renewed energy to continue building the free world we know is not only possible, but absolutely necessary.

The colonial behemoth is frantically sounding its own death knell, and it will not be allowed to recover. Its flailing will continue, dangerously and destructively, to be sure, but we are not deceived by its assertions that we can't survive without it. As it crumbles under its own egregious weight, we are creating something both new and ancient, closer to the ground. This is the cycle of life. No amount of hoarded riches can purchase Death's exception. All empires fall, and this one's time has come. Its rot must become compost for the Gardens we are growing.



Thanks to

The Zine Team  
(AJ, Nebulae, Fish, ZeeAnna)

All the artists who submitted

The Doodlers (Jacob, Echo,  
Nebulae, ZeeAnna, Fish,  
k Jasmine, Harper)

The T4Tclt  
community  
(discord almost  
400 strong!)

Our Open  
Collective  
supporters

and

You for reading!

T4Tclt is a trans-led organization committed to building gender expansive community in Charlotte. We focus on cultivating safe community spaces as well as supporting the community through mutual aid and transformative justice. We host regular weekly events in and around the Charlotte area and on our private discord.

**Not sure if T4Tclt is right for you?** Everyone is always welcome at our events, so come see if the vibe feels right! For lists of upcoming events, find us on instagram or check out our calendar and monthly newsletter on our website.

This is the first edition of our community zine, created by and for our community members. Want to submit for our next edition? Just email, message us on instagram, or let us know on discord.

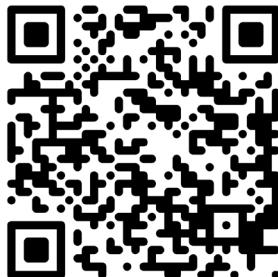
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Instagram: @T4TCLT

Email: [t4tcharlottenc@gmail.com](mailto:t4tcharlottenc@gmail.com)

Discord: Ask at one of our events!

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MADE IN 2025

