

# *The Quaranzine 2*



*Writing inspired by the Coronavirus Pandemic.*

## **Featuring...**

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Dan Eastman / Elizabeth Ellen

Cavin Bryce Gonzalez / Josh Hebburn

Graham Irvin / Charlotte Knight

TJ Larkey / Zac van Manen

Crow Jonah Norlander / Giacomo Pope

Josh Sherman / Zac Smith / Tom Snarsky

*Edited by Zac Smith.*

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# *CYNTHIA COVERT*

**by Graham Irvin**

A WOMAN IN SOUTH CAROLINA  
GOT ATE BY AN ALLIGATOR  
AFTER WALKING OUT INTO A POND  
TO TAKE A PHOTO OR JUST SEE IT  
EVEN THOUGH HER FRIEND TOLD  
HER  
THE GATOR ATE A DEER A FEW DAYS  
AGO  
THE WOMAN SAID  
I DON'T LOOK LIKE NO DEER  
RIGHT BEFORE IT GRABBED HER  
AND TOOK HER AWAY FOREVER  
THE WOMAN SLIPPED AND TURNED  
AROUND  
SHE SAID I WON'T BE DOING THIS  
AGAIN  
AND THAT WAS IT  
THAT WAS THE LAST THING  
SHE EVER SAID  
HER FRIEND TOLD THE COPS

THE WOMAN WAS DRUNK  
SHE HADN'T ACTED RIGHT ALL  
NIGHT  
SHE CAME OVER TO GIVE HER  
FRIEND A MANICURE  
THEN WADED OUT INTO THE WATER  
CALLED BY THE REPTILIAN GODS  
FOR SACRIFICE  
HER FRIEND HAD TO WATCH THAT  
ALL  
WITH CHIPPED AND BUSTED NAILS  
BUT I CAN RELATE RIGHT ABOUT  
NOW  
RIGHT ABOUT NOW I FEEL DRUNK  
ENOUGH TO LIVE FOREVER  
WHAT COULD POSSIBLY KILL ME  
DEATH IS JUST A BREAK FROM  
MONOTONY  
HELL I'D DO IT JUST TO FEEL  
SOME WARM MUD BETWEEN MY  
TOES  
GOD BLESS THE REPTILIAN GODS  
GOD BLESS THAT LOVELY WOMAN

# *3 Quarantine Poems*

by **Dan Eastman**

## **Small Talk Before a Zoom Conference Call**

your dogs must be so excited  
to have you home all day

yeah, sometimes they get up  
without warning  
and start humping each other  
and now i get to watch.

## **Trendsetter**

no one else at the park wearing masks  
maybe i should say something  
no, no one likes a cop  
i'll just take mine off.

## **Finding Purpose Within the Existential Vacuum**

viktor frankl  
wrote that  
we cannot  
control events  
only our reactions  
to the events  
i am holding  
my work calls  
and ignoring  
the news  
and writing  
poems  
for a zine.

# *DON'T TALK DOWN TO ME*

**by Charlotte Knight**

At the time of the flood, I was already living in a floating house, built for the purposes of low impact mitigation. When I'd welcome in guests they'd comment on its buoyancy, or on the stack of oars and pristine life jackets I kept in its kitchen. One guest went so far as to question what it was I was preparing for; this soon became a taunt amongst my social circle. Even when the conversation was not steered towards floods or housing, I felt a certain judgment upon me. Once a man called to sell me a picket fence and I calmly told him, *hey, no thanks, the garden's going under anyway. No point in dressing it up.* I heard whispers all around me for weeks after this encounter. *Aquaphobia is defined as an irrational fear of water, or the specific consequences of entering it,* a neighbour informed me as I watched her on the road. And as the road began to turn into a river I called back from my window, *hey, don't talk down to me.*

# *Trumpbux*

**by Crow Jonah Norlander**

We bought a hideous piece of brightly  
colored plastic  
from one of the less detestable online  
stores  
to scar the yard, forsaking our usual  
penchant for artisanally  
handmade wooden shit so my two-year-  
old son has something  
to climb up and slide down without  
risking infection

“Property is theft” he shouts  
jumping with chunky legs, getting air for  
the very first time  
dunking the tiny basketball into the  
attached rickety hoop  
toppling the whole structure to the ground

### *3 Pandemic Poems*

**by Cavin B. Gonzalez**

#### **HE ATE IT**

went fishing the other the day.  
finally caught a bass.  
a guy screamed across the lake when i  
reeled it in.  
he said, “ya gonna eat it?”  
  
i said nothing.  
i circled the lake toward him.  
  
i moved closer to the man who, in turn,  
started backing away.  
and then i chased him around the lake.  
in circles.

coughing madly.  
waving the fish at him.  
are ya gonna eat it?  
are ya gonna eat it?  
are ya gonna eat it?  
**ARE YA GONNA EAT IT?**



## **Mask On/Off**

charging people in the grocery store  
screaming SIX FEET DISTANCE....

BACK THE FUCK UP before  
whipping out my guitar and shredding  
over the PA system.

## **Q-Diet**

no schedule means  
drinking NyQuil at  
3pm and 8pm  
and 6am and –

# *Corn Pops*

**by Josh Sherman**

Poured some Timbits cereal  
into a bowl for breakfast  
this morning,  
and I was reminded  
of Corn Pops  
They look like Corn Pops  
but with sprinkles  
and kind of taste like them, too  
But I'd never be eating  
Corn Pops  
Not even under quarantine  
Not even if the COVID-19 pandemic  
destroyed  
food-supply chains  
and they were all I had  
left  
in an otherwise bare  
cupboard  
Know why?  
One time, when I was, like, 12  
I was pouring a bowl of  
Corn Pops

and out with the cereal came  
an earwig  
Not only did I throw the bowlful  
out  
I have never eaten that cereal  
again  
And for years, every time I pour  
cereal  
I've poured it slowly  
to survey the scene  
for earwigs  
And then I rake the bowl  
with my fingers  
to make sure I haven't  
missed anything  
– and that was just a cereal  
experience  
two decades ago

Now imagine the impact of  
my past relationships,  
childhood trauma,  
and that thing that person  
said to me  
that one time

*Selected Quaranzine DM's, Or,  
Wearing a mask makes it harder  
to identify your corpse*  
**by Some Buds**

i need something for  
the zine to break it up  
right now it's all poetry  
and a couple short stories  
i want like a weird interview  
or something

*Zac Smith*

Do a fake interview with  
Dr. Fakeci

*Dave Eggers*

is that like  
a joke about  
the doctor dude  
ohh

*Zac Smith*

Or obvious dumb facts like:  
Doctors say inject coronavirus  
directly into eyeballs is unsafe  
And use that bad grammar  
Doctor says eating covid  
is bad for health

*Dave Eggers*

9/10 doctor say coronavirus  
is actually covid-19

*Zac Smith*

9/11  
9/11 doctors says  
covid did 9/11

*Dave Eggers*

hahaha  
god that tao tweet  
about 9/11 and aliens

*Zac Smith*

Having unprotected sex  
with covid leads to unplanned pregs

Yeh baby  
Loved it  
Adding some spinach to  
your coronvirus is beneficial  
for heart health  
Good conspiracy tweet:  
just figured out that 9/11  
means that 9 out of the  
11 world trade center towers  
were destroyed in the attack.

*Dave Eggers*

hahahhaa  
o one evwr talks  
about wtc 11

*Zac Smith*

eating covid is safe as your  
stomach acid kills it  
but you must hold your breath  
if you have covid in your  
lungs, buy new lungs

*Giacomo Pope*

Be careful if buy covid online  
due to scams  
Covid-19 kills more people  
every hour than nitro glycerin  
Covid did blockbuster video

*Dave Eggers*

If orally taking Covid, remember  
to clear your throat  
Wearing a mask makes it harder  
to identify your corpse

*Giacomo Pope*

Before snorting covid first  
clear nostril passages of all  
grime  
If doing covid in the ass  
first use the enema  
Then do all these dumb fuck  
things we've been posted and use  
simpsons dr nick image

*Dave Eggers*

\*\*\*

giac i'm still thinking about this  
>Wearing a mask makes it  
harder to identify your corpse

*Zac Smith*

turns out the guy that cop killed raped  
and attempted to murder his 9 yr old  
niece lol. so much evidence and  
everybody still protesting the feds saying  
its a cover up

*Cavin B. Gonzalez*





# *Party*

**by T. J. Larkey**

My girlfriend called from work, panicked, asking if I could go over to her mom's house and check on her. I was in my boxers eating seven-layered-dip flavored Combos and I said, "Yeah, I've got some time today," then got dressed.

On the drive over, my girlfriend called again. She said, "So the firemen just left, they can't take her to the hospital because it's risky, but her heart is still beating really fast."

"Shit," I said.

"Yeah, but, she's now saying she thinks she might have accidentally eaten some edibles that Nick brought over a while ago."

Nick is my girlfriend's brother, has a marijuana card, and knows the motherfucking score.

"Oh no," I said. "Nick gets that potent shit, that could be bad."

“Correct, but Mom also said, at first, that maybe someone spiked her Mike and Ikes because she got them at the dollar store, so anything she says right now is suspect.”

“Was she just snacking like crazy or what?”

“Don’t.”

“Just living it up? One hand full of Mike and Ikes and the other fulla dat dank?”

She hung up.

When I got to the house, I jogged to the front door, realizing that this was very serious and not to be taken lightly, then knocked. Mom came to the door in a daze, told me very sweetly to keep my distance. We sat on opposite sides of the living room. I started talking softly, assessing. I asked if she needed anything, got her some water. Then I asked, “Do you want to just be silent, or, if you want, I can put something on TV?”

“I don’t know,” she said. “I can’t really move my eyes too fast or I get dizzy. And my neck is so tight, it’s weird.”

“Okay,” I said, examining her. “Well, you do have your shoulders pinched up by your ears, so maybe it’s just that.”

She looked down at herself. “Oh, wow, yeah I do.”

“And that could be one of a few things,” I said. “But I’ve been told that you might’ve accidentally, or maybe on purpose – no judgement – gotten yourself high.”

“The chocolates,” she said, almost to herself.

“Yup, the chocolates. I think it’s that. Because the other thing I’m noticing is your mouth is really dry, you should drink some water.”

“I... I don’t know,” she said, and looked slowly, with just her eyes, at the coffee table where I’d set her water down. “I don’t know if I can move that far.”

“I believe in you.”

“I can’t let the chocolates beat me.”

“Nothing can beat us.”

She smiled briefly. Then it seemed like everything became clear and she could see the world for what it was again.

She said, “When the firemen came they wouldn’t even come inside in case I had it. They took my blood pressure and heart-rate out in the front yard. Can you even imagine if they knew I was just high? They’d probably be pissed!”

“Nah... Get blazed, in the middle of a pandemic, then call the fucking authorities on yourself!?”

They’d probably be thinking what I’m thinking – that bitch knows how to party.”

*this zine is halfway over*



*please wash your hands*

*note to self*

**by Zac van Manen**

I bought a new notebook online and had it delivered to the flat in a paper bag and when I opened it, days later, the first thing I wrote in it was the date and ‘I have no idea what the fuck is going on.’

# *UNDER BLANKETS*

**by Lily Arnell**

My lungs are not corroding  
They've built themselves a makeshift  
womb  
In which they will rekindle  
Their love of mucus production  
They are soaking old dishes  
They are learning basic jazz rhythms  
They have a landline  
Which they never answer  
Because it doesn't have caller ID  
The left has become very good  
At folding fitted sheets  
The right is trying harder to listen  
When the left gives it instructions  
On how to clean the bronchial tubes  
They sauté nettle leaves  
Before making miniature adobes  
With the clay they used  
To plug the leaks

*oh no 5*

**by Zac Smith**

i'm looking at my toddler  
my toddler is trying to say new words  
words like *beep* (like the microwave)  
and *pop* (like the toaster)  
and i think about the snow/ice region of  
    Final Fantasy X  
there was like a hotel  
some kind of...robot...boss  
my toddler doesn't say many words  
my toddler likes to hold my hands and  
    jump off of furniture  
my toddler hasn't been to a playground in  
    three months  
every video game has a snow/ice region  
i don't know why i'm thinking about the  
    snow/ice region of Final Fantasy X  
i think about words i know  
i think about the word *atrophy*  
but in my brain it's spelled more like  
    *arttrghrffrmp*



*from “Towards a unified description of knotted light”*

**by Tom Snarsky**

An article about the New York doctor who died by suicide after weeks of treating patients for COVID-19 is interrupted by an ad for foreverspin tops. Admired, Loved, Cherished, Get yours. Dr. Lorna M. Breen believed in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. She volunteered and was an outgoing presence in the hospital where she worked. She had no history of mental illness, but her dad said the last time he spoke with her on the phone she sounded strangely distant; he knew something had to be wrong. Dr. Breen had had COVID-19 herself and recovered, which meant she went right back to the front lines to treat patients dying almost too fast to be placed into beds. I wonder what her heart felt like to her toward the end, pumping oxygen- and

antibody-rich blood through a body that wasn't immune to a second infection, that might itself have to endure the whole thing again someday. It's impossible to tell from the article how much of this blood was part of the scene where Dr. Breen was found, or if before it was done she maybe felt like a top left spinning too long, its looping precession carving an impossibly gentle, meandering curve into the layer of antibody-poor blood stretched thinly across America's surface.

*NATURE POEMS*  
**by Giacomo Pope**

**i.**

With concrete breath  
Spring gathers early  
Dead without shadow

It is a green-leaved  
Autumn without markings  
Or punctuation

**ii.**

On a silent road between  
Cavities I smell hot  
Dust, loose bark  
And flowering lavender

**iii.**

With delicate indifference  
Between flowers, a butterfly  
Dies without urgency

You paint your lips in  
Morning light and watch a line  
Of ants rescue each wing

**iv.**

Purposefully  
Asleep by water  
Burning

**v.**

I see sweat as light  
Reflected from skin

Surrender drips  
From a hand  
Wrapped in cotton

**vi.**

Mist blossoms across  
Glass from quivering  
Fingers turned toward  
A wine drunk beetle  
Dancing childishly  
Against its surface

**vii.**

Unpicked,  
A daffodil  
Decays

*MGK*

**by Elizabeth Ellen**

*for Colson*

I felt dead inside now all the time  
Unless I was looking at Machine Gun  
Kelly online

And then I felt alive  
(Alive in the way that makes you want to  
get a bunch of tattoos, I mean)

I did everything in life backwards  
I figured getting tattoos was just one more  
example of this  
(getting tattoos underground during  
quarantine, i mean)

I felt dead inside  
Reading other ppl's poems  
Abt leaves and the sky and rain and  
mammals who roam the earth  
Idgaf abt nature  
Like that  
Idgaf abt nature in general

I couldn't imagine writing a poem  
Abt nature

I only felt alive watching MGK videos  
While drunk in my basement  
Sitting on my basement floor

I only felt alive reading poems that didn't  
fuck w  
Nature

I went for a walk  
I was listening to the new song by  
Megan thee Stallion and Beyoncé  
I saw someone (a feminist) had tweeted  
something about Beyoncé's rapping  
skills

I heard on the radio Jay Z and The-  
Dream had helped Beyoncé write her  
rap lyrics

I wanted to believe Beyoncé could write  
her own lyrics

I misheard one of the lyrics as "now watch  
me sweep up these earrings"

I liked the line so much I was going to use  
it as an epigraph for my story  
collection

Until I got home and googled it and it  
wasn't anything abt

Sweeping up earrings

I only felt alive reading/listening to  
Ppl from Ohio

I googled MGK and saw he did an annual  
concert

In the small town in Ohio where I'd  
grown up surrounded by  
Amish ppl and regular ppl who had icicles  
in their bedrooms in winter

I only felt alive while thinking abt  
Driving around the rural Ohio shitholes  
were I'd grown up

All the hills and streams and cows  
Fuck, I just made this poem abt nature

Fuck, I don't know how to not feel dead  
inside



I guess this is why/when ppl start getting  
tatted up

I guess this is why/when ppl start listening  
to/fucking w MGK

I guess this is my life now

Drinking in my basement  
And thinking of what new tattoo I'll get  
next

While fucking w MGK

# *Michael Clayton*

**by Mike Andrelczyk**

I worked at this shitty restaurant for a dude with a gambling problem. He used to compare everything to that movie *Michael Clayton*. I'd tell him dude I haven't seen that so I don't know. Recently while in quarantine I watched *Michael Clayton* and it was exactly like working at a restaurant in Delaware.

*Quarantine Haiku [Qaranzzzac  
Remix]*

**by Joshua Hebburn**

Essential worker stocking essential  
kombuchas.

Blonde in the supermarket gutter.

The fridge: egg salad, sad, pickles.

Sunday. Dirty socks, clean socks.

Your package will arrive guilty.

Wait. Okay. Wait. Do it.

*Two Pandemic Poems*  
**by Daniel Bailey**

**Cocoon**

We waited for the chrysalises

Inside the mesh bag

Virtual learning and the struggles thereof

Self-quarantine and the struggles thereof

Getting drunk and the struggles thereof

Maintaining a relationship and the  
struggles thereof

Parenting and the struggles thereof

Bob Dylan and the 17-minute song

The Tiger King and the oblivious nature  
of spring

I reset the universe

Unplug it and plug it back in

Everything still in its stupid place  
When they arrived it was like nothing had  
arrived  
Just a dusty oblivion trapped  
Without release  
Still fluttering in the mesh bag  
The Cave  
As taught via Zoom

**Asymptomatic Carrier**

Will get through tomorrow  
Will get through the next day  
Will get through the next day  
Will get through the next day  
Will get through the next day  
Will get through the next day  
I am traveling the world  
I am traveling the world to tell you

I love you

I need to know the message is received

Hence the traveling

I am on an airplane, crowded in

I order drinks

I forfeit my powers

Wake up wherever

Dazed, glad to be away from America

Protesting my own Americanness

I ask directions to the nearest river

I am directed to a taxi which takes me to  
the river

I say I love you to the river

I say I love you to the people near the  
river

In the river

Boating the river

Fishing for fish  
Reeling in heavy mud-clodded sticks  
Casting again  
Those oozing across the water on  
wakeboards  
Letting the slow current tug them along  
  
I say I love you to the sky whose clouds  
Will one day rain on my home  
I love you to the hospital, now empty  
I love you to the end of it all  
You see who I am, no asking  
Shouting I love you into the river below  
With no reason, I love you  
The last American  
I have already divvied the American  
Godshare

Across the globe  
It will arrive in 1-2 months  
I have already razed the cities  
The farmlands remain  
I have alerted world leaders  
I have said I love you into so many dead  
I have left them on beaches, in gurneys  
I have mastered the art of the funeral pyre  
Deer nibble on the toes of the dead  
Hawks prey upon your cats  
Vultures nestle in your ribs  
As the last American, I did not fulfill my  
    duty  
I forgot to pray, as we do  
Allow me:  
Dear God,



Please hear our thanks and allow us  
forgiveness  
I've nothing more to say at this moment  
As I'm hoping to give my undivided  
attention  
To this river in... I honestly don't know  
where I am  
This river in this part of the world  
  
A different God lives here  
With different views of water and blood  
I feel unqualified to be believed by any  
god  
I have said I will get through this day  
I have given my love  
I find a roach on the ground  
I let it dance across my fingers, my palm

It eats the salt of my sweat  
It cleans my body of its crud  
Spins the wheel of who I am  
It lands on Spin Again  
But I am in the river  
I am floating downstream  
Bumping into ducks  
Batting away plastic trash  
The last American  
Waving to the sky  
Tasting new water  
Bobbing up to say, I love you  
Sinking a little  
Knocking against a rock, I love you  
Leaf falls, I love you  
Branch smash, I love you  
Kayak slap, I love you

Waterfall, I love you

Reach the sea, I love you

Evaporate, I love you

Vibrate in cloud, I love you

I refuse to fall to the earth again

I'm sorry, but I will stay here forever

*FOR MORE EXCITING  
CONTENT, GO TO:*

[crowjonah.com](http://crowjonah.com)

[elizabethellen.net](http://elizabethellen.net)

[neutralspaces.co/cavinbryce](http://neutralspaces.co/cavinbryce)

[neutralspaces.co/daniel\\_eastman](http://neutralspaces.co/daniel_eastman)

[neutralspaces.co/daniel\\_bailey](http://neutralspaces.co/daniel_bailey)

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[neutralspaces.co/mikeandrelczyk](http://neutralspaces.co/mikeandrelczyk)

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[quarrellary.wordpress.com](http://quarrellary.wordpress.com)

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[twitter.com/lottietheknight](https://twitter.com/lottietheknight)

[twitter.com/maneszjt](https://twitter.com/maneszjt)

[zacsmith.net](http://zacsmith.net)

*thank you for reading*



*please don't die*