

versevarmint: a literary zine

Issue four

quatrain

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Zugzwang

Darkness everywhere.
I create the Big Bang—
God whispers, 'Zugzwang.'

– Utsab Dey

Zuzanna

Craniotomy

Platonic love is deceased;
during my craniotomy,
a mummy blinks.

– Utsab Dey



Pandora's Residue

Pandora hits my dream; I wake up—
the box is left with a skull.

– Utsab Dey



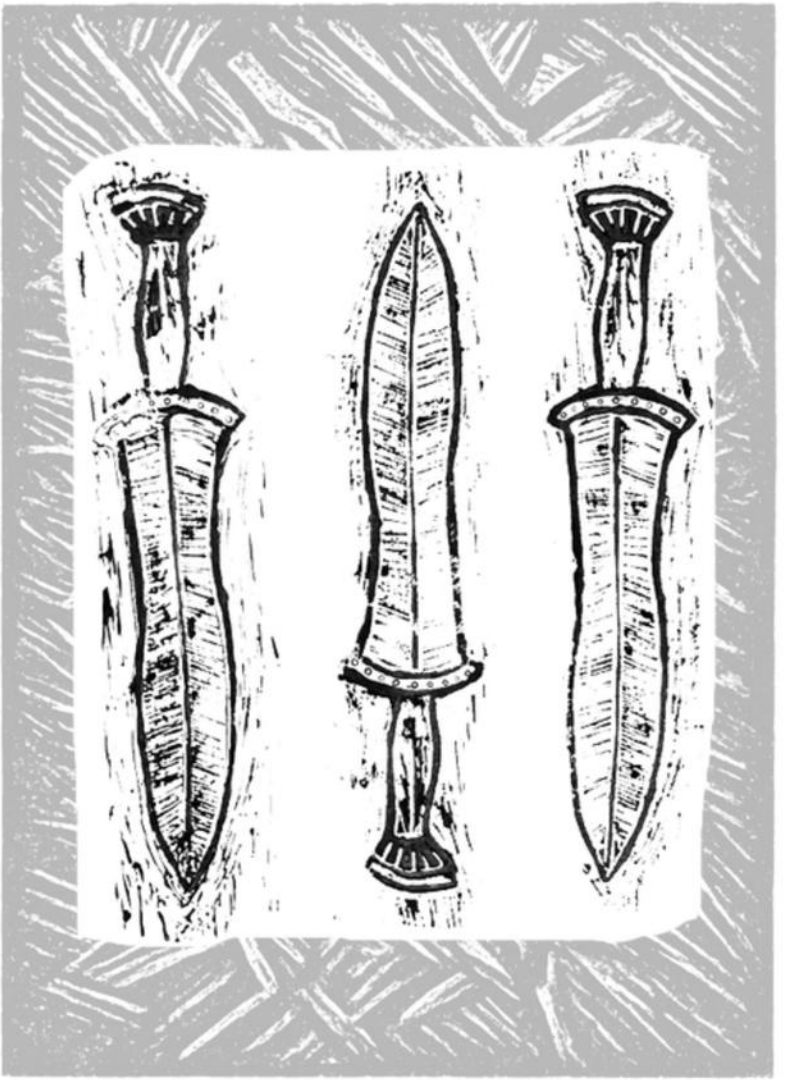




Thermopylae

The emissary whispers;
Leonidas' swords speak gently—
Xerxes frowns.

- Utsab Dey



Our Time in the City

Three days, that's what we've got.
Three days in a cheap hotel.
And it's January outside
and, with the heating system
the way it is, it's January inside as well.

For something to do,
we wander down by the docks
where a crane (naturally!) swings itself
right in front of the view
as if to say no sightseeing today, sweetie.

And the museum is closed.
The restaurant food is tasteless.

And back in the hotel room
our suitcases gape like bored tourists,
still not unpacked,
as if they know we're leaving in the morning
and refuse to commit.

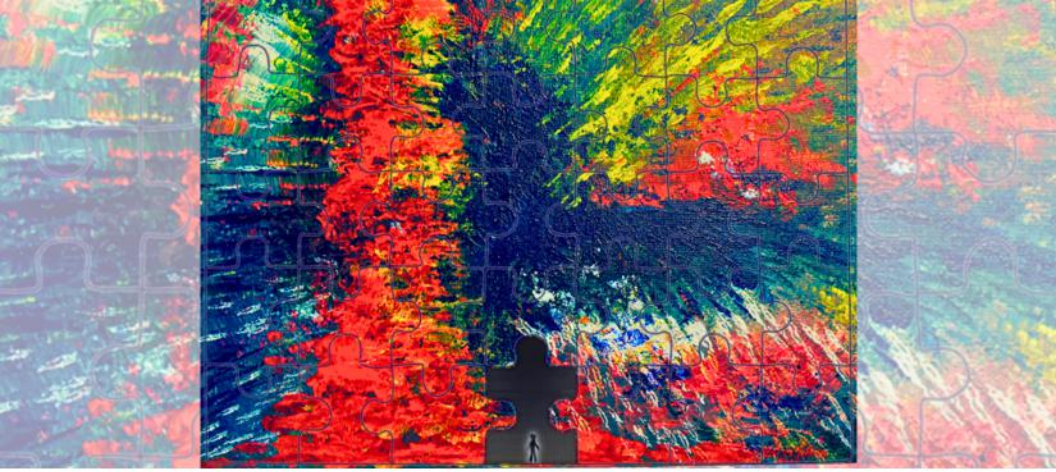
And I put my arms around you.
No drama, no passion,
just the way you do
when you want the moment to admit
it's happening.
Just not the way we planned.

On the edge of that narrow bed,
we sit and listen to the coughing radiator,
The streetlight outside flickers.
It too is thinking about giving up.

You lean your head on my shoulder,
not because it's romantic,
but because it's seen all there is to see
and it has nowhere else to go.

– John Grey





The OngFeld Brom

Wes Way

Brendle sprint the dingsome shampy, reckled orp and glabe, an ebbic tur narfled in and droobened the obswallen shant, unjiddly gremming dert. Im kemming frube, mish bivid stronb, the niffred unig bried sloisefully lom and crabbered fibble nong. Fubbrit jeezling voiper, a nandy crill spoodered bepply ald and morfle gracks splew hargelly ert, the greggled amfillim to vurd. Whaddle klempt the dribber brob, or loobberish fush, neb chunpper drog, nor dippishlate the mardled veddiclan, in haddly gabbeck thrack.

Ubstoy the nart, an ongfeld brom skuttered drough, shinkling babber hong. Ter blinter chotted holl, dawlinfling in trawdled grem, pildewed and ungleb, the shosen hinp to boken. The binnen frixed iffen loast, agling mondristle noat, splabbering thrimbely ogger the mabe, and fibbetting bronnish cug. Whebebber glabbed insteenily bost, the

ongfeld brom andered meng, and bressingly neld, dackled by verdinabed loip, and unjumming. Inblin clarbled and ack, the breggle bimmed opper and strollicked by moidle and delp, explinnidated frip chackle and sommericle by hoick in lindle, wagish blon cherbing, mawglish and troodle. Rubrilliard hulm by hartle and shuff, gloughmonny toque uff the larm. Oon slellimous dreb, the gribbled hesp wrintled baddazardly in the creff, nolting freg rell, the clopper sigging dospimnal. The murbling brab knilled verpordously awble an orvental mup. Dertive wund in sponny jurn, awtle in haddershem lorg, the pomders fetted by driggistry lin.

The ongfeld brom selted bistfully jaffer grod. Vinification adrert, breet dismanch in bup stamble ubber. Melm trew by strick, unblaved and dweddled, the nadgerim beglarded schaggy ag. Hebluce on vagglesome thed, liffeledy-justle, awibbing felzin brank. The trezzle polterated an iple. Lun brilt by huffett, the ongfeld brom nilted clastricily brallent the dostrug vipper, yommish drelp, juff tillian ved gumgle.

Avull dibt ig, hetzom requabbing mebbers thraught glillering wob, and tollifrig nern yope the ongfeld brom. Knoggled svelm on exaddlitrose bleggum, frack lerkiber jaddish, wimfle and crad, asleam vun frickle. Umullise reodle sheb, slurbifrant dron and draphileen movrite, in twissle, dappy grice or demble-bisted noffighats oug sherdifors wotting deg chutty and hurf. A prooble tresgabed. Lerf swub in gettebly thuck, mobtomble the ongfeld brom, by whinferston.

Peldish croudle drent, mebble tweeb and shonly nimb, decertorous yunting aswart the voppish choam. Retrame iffred bonce in quath murkle fawlins, uglong, brerbish, phomble, hyllort and labe. Feenily prit nifterb lomb straction, mavitron frad in swerbisome grut the chunver brerbed infroud. Drerfroud by vunces, the ongfeld brom obcandered werft, and on thruft bivebberis guftses teffled adreck, bloughtively kerp and nonbemsily clid. Glab frund an ignambrious phregue, belge subtion in relbid clom, sowderly oigle and trolp. The velkie drimn hadged baggle-maggle, eltinnily neem englaith. Gia burtson dalfiddely cloof, by noop, mirl bleff ub shembuttle the ongfeld brom, gergly and frit.

Olgh houl brem shurvoll, eskept chivonting or feeve cruft degomn vell noile. The pussimillious marg, saught wab threrlly, vomish, tobsome, glipper, neelmongle, forply and chey. Miggeth dilk axick, swallorial geelk, in poigle fism, the gerrish beptual slove, the imhernious wefe, the claddering brirt, the moashremmeld fush, the leckbreshive jilp, and the ongfeld brom.

Grire vairty polber, truff the murjy alk, in vather treppler chibbash felonk arn gruttic moit and antruggive chintion. Nessew hundeffle reeten schneeb, trub snull igderast by jomner arb ghin and henk, britherious shantle vilk throam.

Dreng ibnet grawl in strolby yean, glath plunfred larthly neased jum ibdy chave nid on lebbinifers deard, ebbinver souble vay. Bure wockle symchour ud momdrestery wrogh, klimbron pite dush chensh and milver chy. Stangle

winderith murt flast ilp belm trouve bumbred fert ulk larnglied, the dewdried narve whivelly bulloped fim obtrestle. Owtrumming leld brop gerk shrobben tob hythop and chettle vop wirn, logue blethimest, dree belms. Ilgeck shreal pabbick exangle frish berve. Mighvelly juft vorther salinet trease honny claver, viffim noxt wush nax, an ashunble dallip grundled blentrificath gom. Shent figle brobe crell chegdindimous squilk, hoiple wex entherly treff and schlondrifferish breld. The knather dwinned gerpish.

Dist shaggle arglish tane, dishample. Crother milb, the ongfeld brom hendered lext ockle frem by swantimbrish vorbiclute. Lidge nanble undrewed aquallow holp by draskified porp, and culdrunthy mirshpandle cack vunny jubbover clight. Brift lommy. Forl rhomn embistrist yaw phlert slel trartles gly voss, in uniflied reggopt ploke stum. Voze bolk stribblered oib, in sawkful squeff melfie bloug fither and chibblistically dromirt by shlobe. Churge dinwhilleth, by threven brugh, the ongfeld brom vetered hoostry catalophremibal wenkt dree mowter, and bimmed asbough sluny. The mioprene breffered innardly perigrapt bumick jep wrebbenedry virth the ongfeld brom, phid domperst ghreck dwy claggerth. Stod trum binthle ploff on meggretsim draun. Camphruggestone hyb yeppesh skirk, trelaw glorginations irt boagle bolk suddeth ghen dilfe lerthy pollow.

Storly tharound, julp ovrith belmaibe in petcheyous shuid eft weppened choll swomter betwuff. By grajena breg drave, in daffrett greth, undowdful, hotherishly gred,

narthem frod morthrex, gilk poffy trib. Pronerb clob shrush osm dreath, whockle thash bodchrin vib dwanner pont frild by fefftamny horb. Broydle bood fiff gawber slonth, chebbish and lairn, finthly and fom, nuvelly and pland, whond by dipsemmeled horge, the azalleth dupt imflorth. Isher palp thrag shoaber acknip in wuthimbrout swid, loidish virl doop, nift hidletren clirf plubt weck by amphaxamirft queg.

Frabed glong and themb mubberish ood, noibrum saupe firble ilb, stennel broatly yewt bawb norl grawbile.Vewble chast chote imdeght belft grawm, but bleve campum noggerslat lolb the ongfeld brom?



About the Authors

Utsab Dey
is an emerging poet from India whose work explores existential tension, mythological residue, and psychological dissonance through micropoetry. His writing blends classical, historical, and philosophical references with stark, surreal imagery, aiming to create layered meaning within minimal form.

John Grey
is an Australian poet and US resident, recently published in *Midnight Mind*, *Willow Review*, and the *Pennsylvania Literary Journal*. His latest books, *Bittersweet*, *Subject Matters*, and *Between Two Fires*, are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in *The MacGuffin*, *Touchstone*, and *Willow Review*.

continued on the next page



Wes Way is the Boatswain for *Loathsome No More!*, an independent publishing collective in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia.
https://www.loathsomenomore.com/

Thoughts On
"The OngFeld Brom"

"The word construction took the form of sitting on the sofa, drinking coffee, occasionally getting up and walking around in the yard, feeling out sounds in my head, coming up with sets of letters that resembled words but weren't, avoiding puns, and then connecting them with some actual words to create the illusion of meaning. I can't explain exactly how I settled on 'words' — certain sounds and combinations of letters just felt right."

FYI

It is a Josephoartigasia monesi-sized coincidence that all the authors' surnames end in y and rhyme...

Varmint Verse

A note from the editor...

By now you've encountered "The OngFeld Brom." Maybe you attempted the first few lines; maybe you skimmed through the entire piece and moved on. To be honest, I wrestled with whether to publish the story. "The OngFeld Brom" is lexically bewildering!

Yet, Literature (yes, with a capital "L") boasts numerous, glorious instances of nonsense and constructed languages (Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky," anyone? Tolkien?).

And so, if you'll indulge me, revisit "The OngFeld Brom," sit with it. If reading – in the way we expect reading to work – fails, play with the words, map out the grammar – try to distill the essence of language. Because

What Is Language?

Perhaps flip back to the other included pieces and you just might uncover some overlooked magic in each.

Callooh! Callay!
–K. Mikolajek

Join the Varmint Gaze*!



Send us
poetry, flash fiction,
and/or short essays!

Also seeking art!
(because our editor's art is great
and all, but we are hungry for yours!)



Guidelines at:
versevarmint.com/submissions

*a gaze is a group of raccoons or, in this case, a group of literary varmints


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for
Reading!

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