

Obliquity

By Steve Hood

As jets land, take off,
metallic structures light as
feathery organisms,

dystrophic refugees walk
out of drought zones, like
eukaryotic mammals.

Factory machines belch
plastic products, coal
power plants burn smoke,

as daylight chases time zones,
workers fall asleep, wake,
cars stop and go.

Cellphone heavy metals
sink to oceans' bottoms,
discussed in ivory towers,

while armed people compete
for adequate drinking water,
hide in bunkers of fear.

Circulate

By Steve Hood

I watched as a nurse
tried to staunch my father's
bleeding after his dialysis
treatment, puddle on the floor.

Cut me in shallow seawaters,
mix with lines of grandfathers
long ago in their graves,
but never will I leave children.

On the same day I watched
a nurse adjust my mother's
tube draining blood from her
stomach after cancer surgery.

Severed veins of a wet
wolf's paw in a steel trap,
river thunders down a mountain,
howl lonely in cold fog.

And in that long ago please
wipe my tears and kiss
my scraped knee because
the essence of my life leaks red.

Revolution

By Steve Hood

Earth rotates, cities trace circles,
orbits Sun, Moon turns round,
electrons ring atom's nucleus.

Babies bury parents in rich soil,
bugs and bacteria do their work,
grass grows, brown cow pie.

Solar System loops galaxy's hub,
round trip to the grocery store,
recycle bottles, bicycle wheels.

Spring warms edge of a sphere,
reinvent economic, art, politic,
spin Latin tango, twirl like disco.

Loyal Companion

By Steve Hood

Adolf loved dear his dog, Blondi,
but Eva hated her,
kicked her, sometimes.

Unique bond between species,
dogs of snowy death camps bark,
well-clothed in lush fur.

Before killed by a cyanide pill,
she looked into his eyes,
lapped water from a bowl,

and her five puppies, taken
from Goebbels' children,
were shot in a nearby garden.

Parchment

By Steve Hood

Numbers on a screen
blink in my airport eyes,
letters carved in stone.
Oil paint printed onto thin
pulp pressed from wood,
by Gutenberg for the masses
to read by candlelight.
Digital bits move, pixels spell
out the fevered dreams,
nightmares of humans.
Ink on paper fading brown
on a shelf of old friends
and musty adventures.
Smartphone sends
an email with Shakespeare's
sonnets attached.
Thumb drive to eye retina,
light leaps in space, refracts,
downloads to your mind.
Tweets from Tolstoy,
on a flat, plastic tablet,
plant redwood seeds.
I want to write a poetry book.
The last one, with the last
scraps of paper from a green,
Amazon jungle before
the world finally goes
aflame like a dandelion
in a campfire, like a parking
lot in Arizona, like a species
that smashed solar panels,
shredded hemp paper.
I want to be a chimp
on a branch with a quill
and a blank scroll, maybe
a dog-eared, tattered copy

Writing Raw

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of T.S. Eliot in Japanese,
surrounded by the rage
of orange African fires,
among my troupe in trees,
all playing video games,
just an idiot writing
alliterative similes.

Steve Hood bio: Steve Hood is an attorney and political activist. His work won an award from the Pacific Northwest Writers' Association and has been published in many places including Crack the Spine, Maudlin House, and the anthology Noisy Water. His chapbook *From Here To Astronomy* was published by Pudding House.