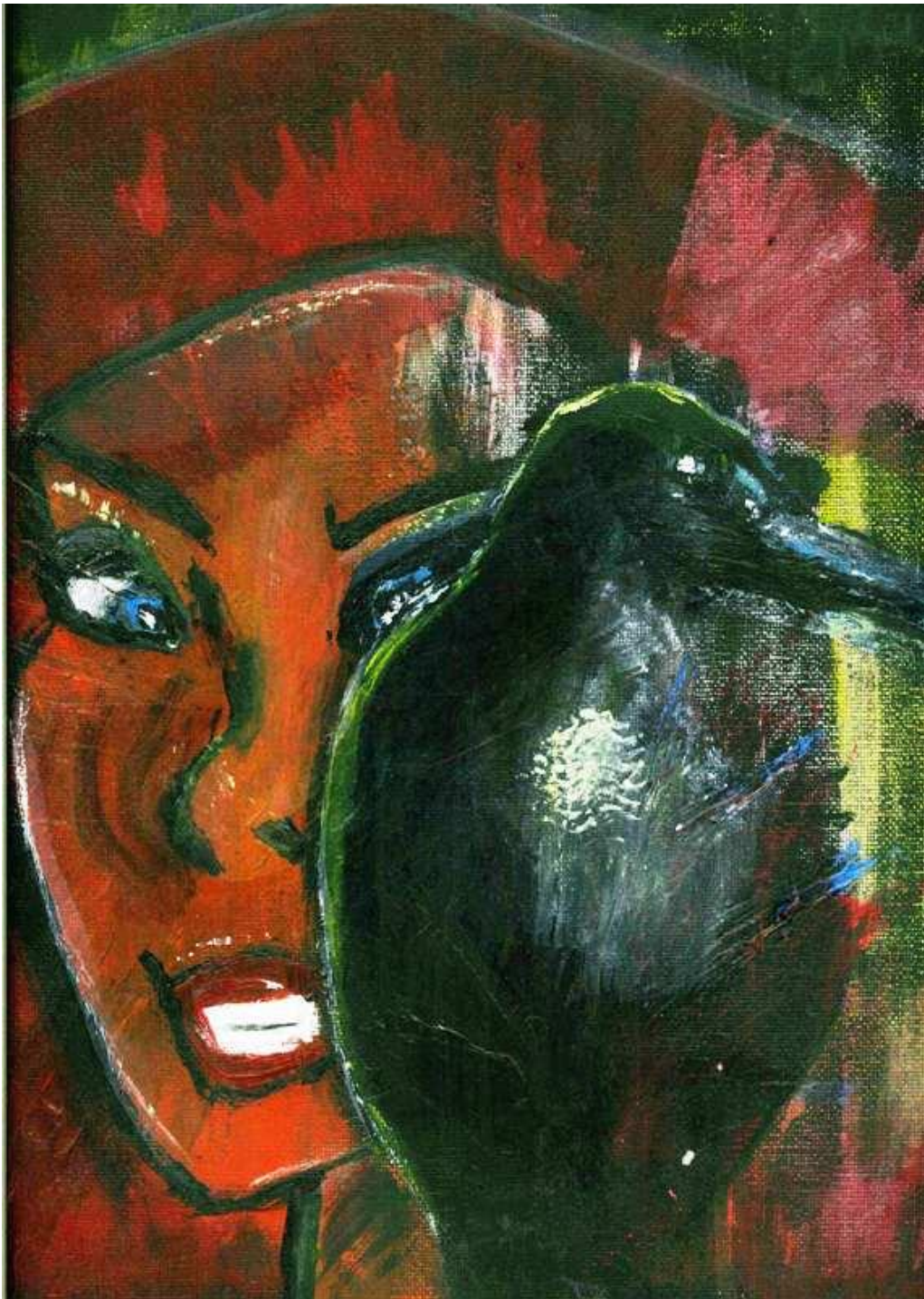


# POLAR STARLIGHT

Magazine of Canadian Speculative Poetry  
(Issue #19 – June 2025)



# POLAR STARLIGHT MAGAZINE

Issue #19 – June 2025 (Vol. 5#3. WN#19)

**Publisher:** R. Graeme Cameron

**Editor:** Rhea E. Rose

**Proofreader:** Steve Fahnestalk

POLAR STARLIGHT is a Canadian semi-pro non-profit Science Fiction Poetry online PDF Magazine published by R. Graeme Cameron at least four times a year.

Distribution of this PDF Magazine is free, either by E-mail or via download.

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POLAR STARLIGHT offers the following Payment Rates:

Poem – \$10.00

Cover Illustration – \$40.00

To request to be added to the subscription list, ask questions, or send letters of comment, contact Editor Rhea E. Rose or Publisher R. Graeme Cameron at:

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< <http://polarborealis.ca/> >

Note: The *Polar Borealis Magazine* website is also the website for *Polar Starlight Magazine*.

ISSN 2369-9078 (Online)

Headings: **ENGRAVERS MT**

By-lines: *Monotype Corsiva*

Text: Bookman Old Style

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# EDITORIAL

*By Rhea E. Rose*

*“Witchy woman, see how high she flies...”* (Eagles, 1972). Often, when I sit down to write the editorial for the latest edition of *Polar Starlight*, I listen to music which echoes issue themes. Songs and music are one way to find my inspiration; a way of diving below the surface searching for the primordial force driving the issue.

There’s nothing subtle about this issue’s theme. Witches, spells, magic, healers—women and witchery will always be bound. Good or bad, beautiful or haggish, the female aspiring or daring to behave beyond what society prescribes will always be marked as a magician of sorts, dark or light. The witch is an iconic symbol of unseen natural forces, feared and revered in all her roles.

Some quick research reveals the song by the Eagles quoted in my opening paragraph is about Zelda Fitzgerald—the long suffering (if somewhat spoiled Southern belle) and wife to F. Scott Fitzgerald. Wikipedia has an interesting story on her character and life, if you’re curious.

In this nationalistic moment of “Elbows Up” and “Let’s Be As Canadian As possible,” I wondered about Canadian witches, besides the ones found in the pages of this issue (metaphorically speaking, myself included), are there any famous Canadian witches? Shamans, priestesses or otherwise?

The short answer is not many, but three are noteworthy: Mother Barnes (Elizabeth Barnes) known as the “Witch of Plum Hollow.” She’s famous for having been a “psychic adviser” to Sir John A. MacDonald, a past Prime Minister of Canada.

A French-Canadian woman, Marie-Joseph La Corriveau, with a chilling legacy hung for the murder of her husband. (1700s, Google search, famous Canadian witches). Google Corriveau for a deeper dive.

In 1919, Maggie Pollock, a fortune teller and medium, was the last woman in Canada charged with being a practicing witch. ([www.ctvnews.ca](http://www.ctvnews.ca))

The real kicker is that a prohibition against witchcraft in Canada's Criminal Code was repealed in 2018! But fraud involving witchcraft remains on the books. Faking witchcraft isn't allowed, nor are fake magical abilities. The witch— her/his magic—must be genuine. No phony hocus-pocuses for the folksuses.

And speaking of real magic, we have a few new spellcasters—er, poets—joining us in this issue. Please welcome *Pam Martin* and *Marion Loughheed*, whose poetry conjures unsettling infant homunculi. Scary taboo stuff. Enjoy.

Rhea E. Rose

# MORNING IN THE GARDEN OF FEAR

*By Candás Jane Dorsey*

from scorched-earth-and-betrayal dreams  
the monster wakes to fearful flowers  
that in foul air unfold their bowers  
her favourite dwelling-place, it seems

she tends her garden carefully  
she plants a new grudge every day  
lets no old sorrow fall away  
recites their virtues prayerfully

this smothering vine will kill a child  
this acid nectar etch its toll  
entangling thicket trap a soul  
spirit pierced by cactus wild

but I am innocent, she cries  
and all about me earned their fate  
did not assuage my piteous state  
and found no favour in my eyes

a life of vigorous assault  
on all of those who are to blame  
for keeping steadfast hearts aflame  
and loving her despite her fault

we can't escape the toxic thorns  
we writhe amid the poison stalks  
along the path the monster walks  
plucking the fruits her soil has borne

-----

# GARDEN VARIETY PROBLEM

*by Marcie Lynn Tentchoff*

We knew her by her finery,  
the silks and velvets  
clinging to her waist and thighs,  
the diamond jewelry  
pressed bone deep into her throat and wrists,  
were all that still remained  
to tell us who it was that perished there,  
dissolving limbs akimbo,  
her face a liquid mask of flesh  
that would not serve to tell the tale.

And all the guests were baffled;  
her hunting days were long years past,  
adventurer turned wealthy dame  
who no more bothered seeking threats.  
Her hobby? Simple gardening, arranging blooms—  
yet, here she lay,  
yards from her garden party gate,  
a pouch of salt clutched  
in her melting, flesh poor hand,  
a trail of slime stretched towards the wood.

-----

# APPLES ROLLING OUT OF TIME

*By Lene MacLeod*

an apple rolls from its pyramid,  
crosses the aisle, landing below the  
raw bulk nuts  
remembrance of apples in my childhood kitchen  
then realization, like the knock on Newton's head,  
apples can wear different skins  
memories I dreamed were  
mine alone are universal  
yet seen from different angles  
nostalgia dissolves into awareness  
a medieval child watches an apple  
roll across the road  
cursing the inevitable bruises  
as their snack becomes the cure,  
with toxins strong enough to dull  
a dragon's bite  
a modern child becomes sick  
pesticides made his apple shiny and red  
a futuristic child eats apple-flavoured slop  
and asks what in this world an orchard once was

-----



# IF YOU COULD LOOK IN THE WITCH'S WINDOW

*by Lynne Sargent*

She hums as she works,  
counts and measures her herbs  
by the beats of the bars.

A mother will come today,  
lay her child's sweat-streaked brow  
on this woman's examination table,  
fall on the mercy of this witch.

A young man with a festering wound  
will arrive later, needing her help  
in the fight against those smallest creatures,  
infection, though he won the bout  
he was wounded in.

The witch keeps her windows dirty  
that her clients' reputations might be kept clean—  
no one will know that they visit her  
that they have been tainted by the muck  
of her dishevelled hut, her dark work

but those visits, and that gratitude,  
and the song she marks her labour by  
is the only light she needs.

-----

# WHAT THE BABY GOD MADE

*by Pam Martin*

look at what the baby god made  
scraped together with sticks and shade  
dead some leaves, bit of moss,  
stuck in mud  
forgot they eyes  
forgot they feet  
lean on each other  
like child and mother  
don't look like much  
but sweet and kind  
stuck some stones  
make they eyes  
can't hardly see  
almost blind  
help each other  
they don't mind  
shaped some clay  
make sweet little feet  
when soft winds blow  
dance  
sing  
move they arms  
move they feet  
sweet and kind  
what the baby god made

-----

# HUNTER'S HAVEN

*by Colleen Anderson*

Night gently holds  
its milk-white children  
curled into fetal blooms

waking, they crawl spider-limbed  
between  
lamplight's reaching fingers

they crave to taste  
sun-warmed treats  
drink in the owl's cries

Night closes its shadowy fist  
as predators blindly seek  
bathe in moonlight's whisper

the city comes to life  
as softly slumbering souls  
exude unencumbered mindscapes

gape-mouthed, Night's spawn  
gulp effervescing realms  
then burrow sleepily  
into people's dreams

-----

# HORRORKU SUITE

*by Marion Loughheed*

sunken sealer  
darkness on the ocean floor  
threads of light emerge

rain drums on the roof  
not a soul home to hear but  
the one in the walls

asleep in the crib  
baby opens her small mouth  
a deep voice booms out

-----

# STAIRS OF THE DISAPPEARED

*by Lene MacLeod*

These stairways lead not to heaven,  
gaps in the stairs where a hand will most certainly come out and  
tickle your shins or send you spinning, tumbling, breaking bones,  
cracked concrete stairs lead down, down into the abandoned root cellar  
twenty feet from the back porch of the abandoned house,  
metal fire escape stairs that are made out of gaps,  
they are too steep and reach too high  
staircase of disappearing  
the stairwell in a sunny parkette in the centre of town  
the steps lead down to a storage room, lawncare tools for summer,  
rakes for autumn, shovels and ice melter for winter  
a urinal in an alcove, no door, no women work here  
rats scurry about in the darker part of the room  
air hangs dead in the part that is darkest  
before the staircase, on the concrete path with  
mica inclusions that glisten in the sunshine,  
that is where the bones are found  
like an offering, arranged neatly,  
a pyre, a cairn, an inuksuk  
not once, three times so far as we know  
bones of the missing  
once it was a missing dog  
once a missing grandmother  
once a missing teenager  
and now the day is not sunny  
the mica does not glisten  
my inner voice warns, but legs do not listen  
down, down I go  
because  
someone left the door ajar  
something beckons from the room  
below the parkette  
I can see only darkness then  
I don't know what I am missing but  
I know that I am missing

-----

# FAIT ACCOMPLI

*by Heath Bleau*

Negative feedback eating me alive  
Positive promises promise to be lies  
Inside-out, a visceral feast  
for the well-seasoned autosarcophagist beast

Flagellation tenderizes the toughest of meats  
Garlic and self-loathing make savory treats  
I'll serve myself portions, sous vide or en croûte  
Amygdala and genitals make amusing amuse-bouche

My loin will, no doubt, make a wondrous fillet  
Encrusted with failure and peppery dismay  
My words will be salty and spicy and sweet  
when served with my gastrointestinal gastrique

I'll brine my own brisket with tears  
A flat-iron steak could be cut from my rear  
and prepared in the sauciest hate demi-glace  
seasoned with hope, but just barely a trace

And then, what of love, the sweetest dessert?  
Topped with a crumble of perversion and hurt  
finished with a cream of jealousy and pain.  
Best not drop a drip, that shit leaves a stain.

The mind, I'm told, is a terrible thing to taste  
And dyspeptic dispositions go straight to the waist  
But far be it from me to turn down a free meal  
Even if indigestion is part of the deal

Would that I could leave this seat at the table,  
"Excuse me, I'm not feeling at all well or stable."  
Alas, I'm force-fed by my own calloused paws  
My gullet, a guillotine. The basket, a gaping maw.

# MY SONG, MY DANCE

*by Renee Cronley*

I was seen in the woods,  
dancing in the forbidden way,  
and word travels like the wind  
in our small, pious village.

He thunders his sermon—  
hurling hollow virtues like lightning,  
while casting his evil eye on me.  
“*Witch*” sits on the edge of his tongue,  
ready to strike me into a pyre.

I mouth a quiet chant,  
and draw his attention to my lips,  
where I pull up the corners  
like a seven-string lyre.

Sensual beats slide through  
the restrained church organ  
like a poet serenading their mistress.  
*light as lavender*

The congregation comes undone,  
swaying their hips to the rhythmic  
thump of an unseen drum.  
*fierce as fire*

He twirls in tandem  
with the trim I cut from his robe  
as I wind it around my finger.

He has made it his life’s work  
to preach a leash around their inner animals.  
I show him how easily I can let them out.

The beats disappear with my smile  
and the moment is gone  
as though it never were.

He shakes till I steady him with my glare,  
writing my sheet music into his soul  
so that he knows he will dance  
to whatever tune I play.

-----



# PAPER KNIFE

*By Neile Graham*

you in here amongst the leaves  
flipping the pages of this stranger skin

only a blade this thin can slice  
the space between words

letters scramble to their places  
too late and too soon

the story reads you, syllables  
hide and reveal your name on every page

not like a rock you lift up  
and what scurries away, no

a knife shivved so thin as to eviscerate  
the seconds between your words    you

-----

# FOR EACH OF US IS A THING UPON WHICH THE WORLD RESTS

*By Lynne Sargent*

Think on the Norns,  
that first coven of witches.

I longed to join them,  
and perhaps you do as well

for you are here,  
wanting to be entranced by these words,

and what is magic,  
but agency in the face of fate?

Perhaps all who love  
such deities become writers,

I did,

that I might tend to the river's waters  
add new branches to the world-tree,

hold out spindle, loom,  
or scissors to foolhardy heroes

when I could give  
answers in their place.

But alas, those are only for you,  
dear reader

and now it is time for you to take them  
away from this place

cultivate your seed,  
find your magic,

your coven,  
your fate.

# THE GODDESS OF CURIOSITIES

*by Neile Graham*

What was it she asked us?  
She is counting rivers.  
She is tracing veins of leaves.  
She is placing cloud-pieces in the puzzle  
of the sky.

Each night she needles night's velvet shroud  
to let the suns peer through. To let  
them see our sleep.

She is naming birds.  
She is slipping into the spirals of shells.  
What marks do her fingerprints  
leave on our skin?  
She is watching the garden's breath  
through cat's eyes.

Each day she lifts the shroud to let  
the suns roar through us over us. To let  
them watch us wake and walk.

She is sketching the shapes of grains.  
She is noting the spiders' spells.  
She is weaving solitudes together  
the warp and weft of us, bit by bit.  
How is it she sings us so true?

-----

# LOSING IT

*By Candás Jane Dorsey*

I discovered today I have lost one of the mittens of human skin  
I made last time I was flayed by circumstance. it was lined with the contents  
of my thoughts, which are fuzzy and self renewing. they were good for insulation at least  
but now I will have to sacrifice  
the skin of a thigh, perhaps, or the soft belly I try to keep safe and hidden. after all  
I have to go on  
and some protection is necessary.

perhaps I'd better sit down here, try to figure out  
what I can do without. my belly skin for a while? the soft warmth between my thighs?  
or maybe just let the hand freeze normally. let it happen. how much do I use it  
anymore anyway? that's what the ice is about. reduction of the liveable land mass  
to someplace just large enough  
to lie down when it's time to die.

or I could wait until someone gives me some of their sloughed-off or sliced-off hide—  
we on the road, we give each other these useful gifts often, knowing  
we can't carry them all ourselves. yes, perhaps  
I can walk with my hand tucked into the sleeve of my jacket for a while  
not reaching out with it  
not really touching anything with that part of myself, until someone proves to me  
they are willing to give up something for my sake

for a change. I may or may not meet a generous person  
before the ice advances.

It's a long walk. anything could happen.

-----

# OFFAL OFFERING

*By Heath Bleau*

peel back  
split lips  
of this  
fiendish Afreet  
revealing  
black gums

grit your  
razor teeth  
laser edged  
then grip my flesh  
dripping bile  
where blood  
should flow

go deeper  
into my  
weeping chest  
and carve out  
my jaundiced heart  
a bitter feast  
for people  
but for demons  
it seems  
none better

quell your hunger  
in my  
soft underbelly  
then pick  
your teeth clean  
with my  
atrophied spleen

grin your  
gleaming  
satisfaction  
and be sure  
to keep what's left  
of my  
withered innards  
in a  
canopic bento box  
as a snack  
on your  
short trip  
back to hell

when next  
you well up  
from the depths  
of your  
offal meal  
and you feel  
a hankering  
for a  
fresh flesh filet  
please remember  
that ours is  
a shared fate  
and never  
a dinner date

-----

# HUMANITY'S DARKEST HITS

*By Renee Cronley*

I make these forest treks my habit,  
because when I'm out of tune with the world,  
a choir of meadowlarks and finches  
syncs me back into nature's anthem.

But there's a brief distortion—  
an ear-splitting hymn of silence  
as the drumbeat of creation  
cuts in and out at regular intervals:  
6 seconds, another 6 seconds, 6...

A metallic flash from the shadows  
behind the lip of an abandoned rock mine  
glints for my attention.  
I reach into its mouth  
even as my senses sing against it.  
A cool, slick silver cassette tape  
rolls off its tongue like a perfectly timed lyric.

It hums in my hands,  
sending vibrations through my bones,  
rattling the knob of a door in my mind  
I never knew was there.

I pop it into my cassette player  
despite the label cautioning otherwise.  
A chorus of clean vocals  
in a language I've never heard  
cuts through the air like polished blades  
severing the surrounding bird songs.

Hairs on my skin stand like antennae,  
picking up on a signal

that sits on the edge of my instincts  
screaming through the keyhole,  
*“I’m in here! Let me out!”*

The rise and fall of tones  
weave together to create  
their own beating heart.

They tap into mine  
and show me where the key is.

The door opens—  
they look into my soul,  
read the dark pieces like sheet music  
and the notes fly free.

The air tingles with them—  
flowing into innocent ears,  
unlocking doors Mother Nature sealed  
to restrain our wicked side.

*It’s time to come out.*

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## ABOUT THE POETS AND ARTIST

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### Colleen Anderson

Multiple award-nominated and award-winning author Colleen Anderson has been widely published across seven countries, with works appearing in publications such as *Weird Tales*, *Cemetery Dance*, *Amazing*, and the award-winning *Shadow Atlas*. She is a Rhysling Award winner for “Machine (r)Evolution” and a two-time winner of the SFPA’s dwarf poetry contest. Based in Vancouver, BC, she has been a Canada Council, BC Arts Council and Ladies of Horror Fiction grant recipient. Her poetry collections include [The Lore of Inscrutable Dreams](#), [I Dreamed a World](#), and [Weird Worlds](#), as well as fiction collections [A Body of Work](#) and *Embers Amongst the Fallen*—all of which are available online. *Vellum Leaves and Lettered Skins* is her fourth poetry collection coming from Raw Dog Screaming Press in 2025.

[www.colleenanderson.wordpress.com](http://www.colleenanderson.wordpress.com)

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### Heath Bleau

Heath is an American Expat living with his Canadian wife in Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. A photographer and poet, he draws his inspiration from the beauty and horror of nature, science, and societal issues. His work explores themes of mental illness, intimacy, and the darker side of the human condition.

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### Renee Cronley

Renee is a writer from Manitoba who stepped away from nursing to prioritize her children and channel her knowledge and experience into a poetry book about nursing burnout. Renee can be found at <https://www.reneecronley.com/>

## **Candas Jane Dorsey**

Candas is the internationally-known, award-winning author of speculative novels *Black Wine*, *A Paradigm of Earth*, and upcoming *(At the) Freak Show*; postmodern mysteries *The Adventures of Isabel*, *What's the Matter with Mary Jane?*, and *He Wasn't There Again Today* (The Epitome Apartments Series); YA novel *The Story of My Life, Ongoing*, by C.J. Cobb; short story collections *Machine Sex and other stories*, *Dark Earth Dreams*, *Vanilla and other stories*, and *ICE and other stories*; four poetry books; several anthologies edited/co-edited, and numerous published stories, poems, reviews, and critical essays. She has received a variety of awards and honours for her novels and short fiction.

She is also a community activist, advocate and leader who has won two human rights awards and served on many community boards and committees working for neighbourhoods, heritage, social planning, equality of policing, and human rights advocacy. Dorsey is also a visual artist.

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## **Neile Graham**

Neile is Canadian by birth and inclination, though she has lived in the U.S. (mostly Seattle, so she's leaning toward the border) for many years. She writes both fiction and poetry and is currently concentrating on plotting the build-out of her fantasy romance empire. Her poetry has been published in Canada, the U.S., and the U.K. and on the internet. She has four collections, most recently *The Walk She Takes*, an idiosyncratic travelogue of Scotland which includes ghosts, ruins of all kinds, and a landlady named Venus.

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## **Marion Lougheed**

Marion grew up in Canada, Benin, Belgium and Germany. She is pretty sure her family was not running from the cops, but she still moves around a lot, just in case. One summer, she lived on a 27-foot sailboat in Vancouver with her partner. People sometimes say Marion has "hidden depths" but that's code for being a bit odd. She is happy being a bit odd. It

helps her write speculative poetry. She's been published at *The Arcanist* and *Black Hare Press*, among others. Read more of her work at [www.marionlougheed.com](http://www.marionlougheed.com)

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### **Lene MacLeod**

Lene writes dark fiction, quiet horror, SFF, and poetry in Ontario, Canada. Her debut collection *Fringes of Grey* is now available from DarkWinter Press. Publishing updates can be found at [www.lenemacleod.com](http://www.lenemacleod.com)

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### **Pam Martin**

Pam is a retired therapist who enjoys reading, writing, photography, and walking in the woods with her dog.

Born in Ottawa, Pam spent most of her adult life in PEI, with a few years in Northern Saskatchewan. She now lives in a small town in Ontario.

Pam's book, *Variations on Blue*, was shortlisted for the Atlantic Poetry prize. She recently finished her first novel, *The House on Waverley Street* and is working on a second.

In addition to a variety of jobs, Pam has a background in the book trade, including co-owning and managing a bookstore in Charlottetown PEI.

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### **Lynne Sargent**

Lynne is a queer writer, aerialist, and holds a Ph.D. in Applied Philosophy. They are the poetry editor at *Utopia Science Fiction magazine*. Their work has been nominated for Rhysling, Elgin, and Aurora Awards, and has appeared in venues such as *Augur Magazine*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Analog*. Their work has also been supported through the Ontario Arts Council. To find out more visit them at [scribbledshadows.wordpress.com](http://scribbledshadows.wordpress.com).

## Tracy Shepherd

Tracy is a self-taught watercolour artist, a bold charcoal sketcher and an amateur acrylic trier. She is also a professional tarot reader/witch living in Canada. To date Tracy has published two books of poetry, *In Search of Dracula in a Moon-Shot Sky* and *A Sorceress Rising: Soulmate Rejections*, and two art books, *Temple of a Space Kitten: Unusual Water Colour Portraits* and *I am Thirty Seconds of Ripe Peach: Goddess Illustrations*. All four are available on Amazon.

-----

## Marcie Lynn Tentchoff

Marcie is a writer/poet/editor from Gibsons, BC, where she lives in the middle of a whole lot of prickly greenery with her family and various other critters. Her work has appeared in such publications as *Star\*Line*, *Dreams & Nightmares*, *Strange Horizons*, and *Illumen*.

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## REVIEW OF “WEIRD WORLDS”

*By Rhea E. Rose*



Colleen Anderson’s *Weird Worlds* is a poetry collection that lives up to—and goes beyond—its title. These poems are strange in the best way: eerie, emotional, haunting, and occasionally playful. They explore fear, sadness, myth, and transformation with rich, sensory language that sticks long after reading.

The collection is divided into five sections: *This is Horror*, *Shadow Country*, *Closet Skeleton*, *Mythic Nature*, and *Dark Matter*. Each offers something different, but together, they create a deep and dark layered

experience, bringing dread and beauty together in surprising ways, often shifting between the surreal and the emotionally raw.

From *This is Horror*, the poem *Vampire Girlz*—a personal favourite. Its subtle, humorous snark is pitch-perfect and a refreshing observation in a collection that leans heavily into the grim and gothic and shows the poet's range and wit.

From *Shadow Country* comes two of the collection's most memorable poems. *The Drowning Ones* is a standout piece that feels like a quiet myth unfolding. It follows a character from childhood into a strange union with the sea. The pacing is slow and reverent, and the language—like “glossy shells into hair”—creates an eerie and sacred hypnotic mood.

Also, from *Shadow Country* comes *Still Life with Gods and Monsters*, a surreal blend of underworld motifs from multiple cultures. A mythic convergence that reveals, through haunting imagery, a descent into both literal and symbolic death, memory, myth and madness.

After adventuring through cosmic places and other worldly domains, we find ourselves in *Closet Skeletons*, an inner world filled with the terrifying intimacy of our own haunted inner spaces. It's here where my favourite poem from this section hides. *How to Cook With Children* nurtures imagery and playfulness with a tasty twist of make-believe.

*Mythic Nature's* poetry is powerful. *The Tree of Eyes*, *Heart of the Woods*, and *Werewolf* connect the natural world with an ancient, living force—wild, watchful, and unknowable—confronting humanity with its deepest fears: the beast within and the mystery beyond. Here, nature is mythic—sentient, secretive, and transformative—revealing the wild force beneath the civilized.

From *Dark Matter*, the sci-fi-themed poems—like *Darkside* and *Pilot Flight*—resonate with the ache of loss, longing and existential exile.

*Weird Worlds* is a darkly beautiful collection. Whether drawn to the mythic, the monstrous, or the mysteries of space and time, there's something here to surprise—and maybe even unsettle in the very best way.

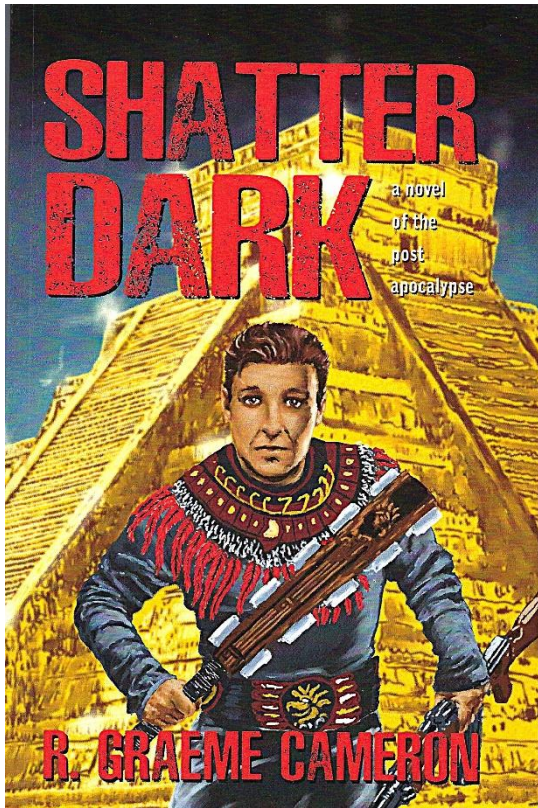
Find it here: < [Weird Worlds](#) >

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# REVIEW OF “SHATTER DARK”

By Rhea E. Rose



Set in a fractured future stitched together with myth, memory, and malfunctioning tech, this novel follows Rudwulf the Smiter—a professional killer with a dry wit, a talking AI in his head, and an unholy appetite for logic-defying bureaucracy.

I was pleasantly surprised by *Shatter Dark*. It's a hilariously clever read. It's a science fiction story full of cynicism, satire, and post-apocalyptic absurdity. Empires crumble, technology rots and mythical memories fade, but the voice, Rudwulf's inner snarl and Buddy-bod's snide AI commentary keep the tone biting and brilliant.

Our Rudwulf is a Don Quixote-like character, a broken knight in a fallen empire, searching for meaning as we laugh at the absurdity of it all. His embedded Buddy-bod is Sancho Panza meets HAL 9000. Windmills are now AI gods and plastic pyramids.

Parts of Rudwulf's journey echo the legend of El Dorado and the quest for the city of gold. The reader finds plenty of mythical power, golden illusions, and doomed quests in this plastic-and-code paradise where grow-vats, religion, politics, and simulation blur.

Rudwulf's reluctant diplomacy lets us see the last gasps of Gods, governments, and gadgets delivered with deadpan flair. The novel is fiercely intelligent but never afraid to be ridiculous.

And this story asks an existential question. What does it mean to believe in anything when belief itself has been bought, sold, and pixelated?

A consistently sharp narrative voice and a charmingly unrepentant, cerebral and funny relationship between Rudwulf and his “love interest,” Myriad, keep the story gritty.

Rudwulf's conversations and connection to his Buddy-bod are fun snark, and the technology is reminiscent of M.T. Anderson's young adult novel, *The*

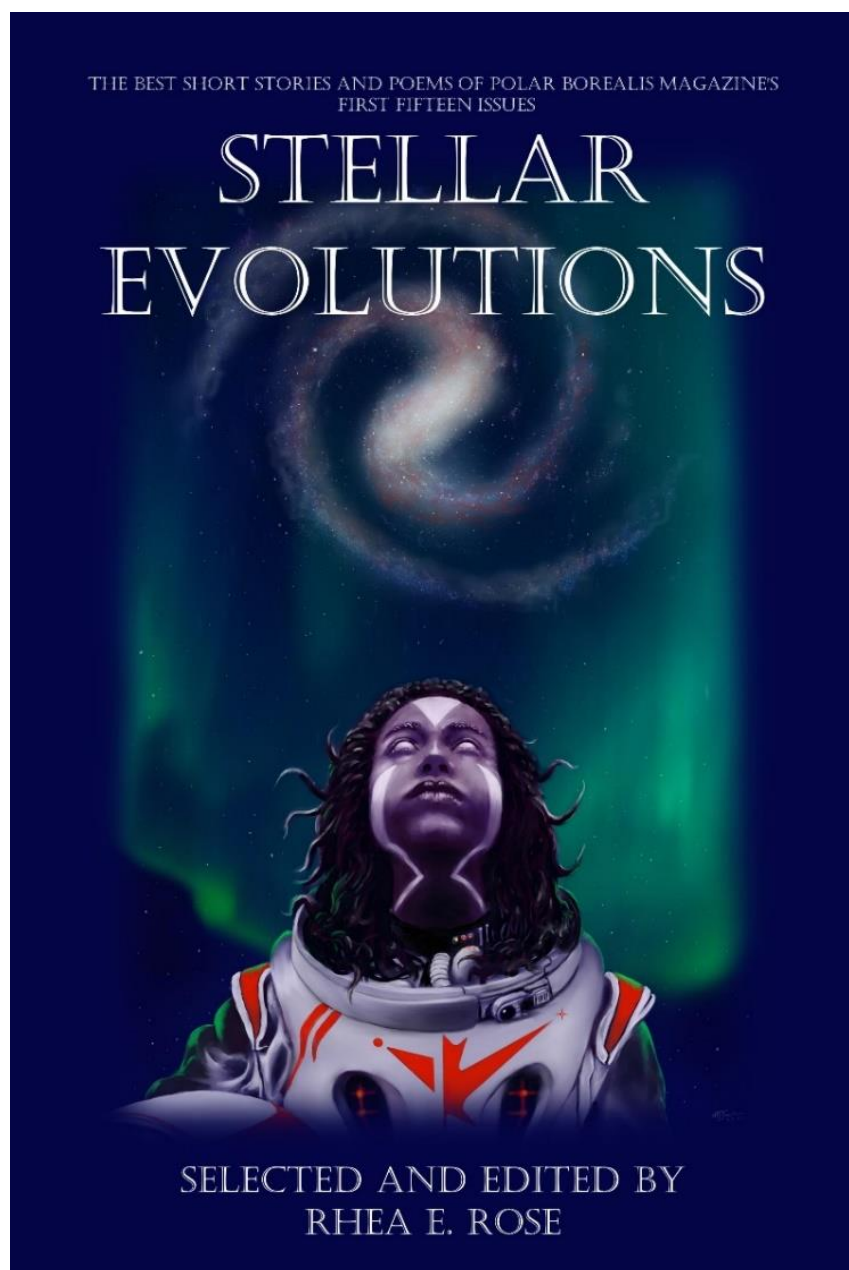
*Feed*, a dark dystopian novel, more serious in tone and outcome than *Shatter Dark*'s exploration of the aftermath of technology. Each time I picked up the manuscript for a read, I found myself smiling and chuckling at the page and subtext. I think readers will recognize this world and laugh out loud.

You can preorder *Shatter Dark* at:

< <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/alexmccgilvery/shatter-dark> >

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The Best Short Stories and Poems from the first Fifteen Issues of *Polar Borealis* Magazine



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