



Give Us This Day

andreas gripp

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Give Us This Day

Andreas Gripp

Beliveau Books

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Digital Edition

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These poems were penned in 2026



Give Us This Day

Our day-old bread
was bought for half the
cost. It's acquired
twice the wisdom
since it was pulled from
its hellish kiln, warm & plush
as a chick, that's emerged
from underneath
a mess of feathers,
in that infantile
innocence where you sense
that you are loved.

The baker said it's prone
to going stale come
Sol's ascent,
locked in its routine of

sitting in its bag and
doing nothing. That would make
anyone go insipid.

I beg to differ. Tell him
in the night it heard the story
from the eggs,

how they miss
their henpecked mama,
badgered by the farmer to
lay a little faster—
someone needs an omelette
before the end of the working
week.

Then the sorrow of the grapes.
Hoisted in the air, the pulpy
globules plucked
from bronchial stems—
will bowl along the floor,

to be trampled underfoot
by 8am.

I'll tell him the woe of the
ice cream cake, *Happy Birthday*
Kevin all for naught. Either
his parents didn't show
or he was punished for a
fib with turnip soup,

canned in dented tin
in aisle 7.

Our sourdough's heard it all—
how the bananas bruise
from a sneeze, the eyes on a Yukon
gold will sprout an inch
in half-an-hour, and that the
rafters are filled with birds,
not-as-picky as we, bowing
at what's bestowed,
will praise whatever god is
theirs for the sanctity
of senescent crust.

Undulation

I don't note an *ocean* in the
seashell that I'm pressing to my ear
but a puddle.

It's clear but laced with clag.
The streetlamp will be rippling
in its sheen. Some creeping sort of
bugs will flit within, as though a
stagnant pond. If I were nano-
scopic, I'd coast along its arc
in a catamaran.

A person has been running
for their life —
the shell, discernibly
perturbed —
squirming in my hand
as if a baby armadillo. In 3.14
seconds, a shoe will
splash this entire shallow world
upon the grass, the thirst of
shrivelled roots,

eerie like the echo of applause,
the kind you'll hear once
every patron's fled, the sconces
raped of light.

The Wrath of Yo-Yo Ma

*In space, no one can hear
you scream.* In space, there is no
need to. Only humans make us
shriek. Well, the occasional bear
and shark, perhaps. But they're not
up in the cosmos.

Silence does not speak louder
than any word. Silence
can't even speak louder
than silence. If it could,
you'd be donning
earbuds in the forest,
banging to Iron Maiden
in order to drown the
din of leaves, the streams of
rock, translucence.
The way a hummingbird
stays aloft. We cannot make
a plane that doesn't thunder.
Yet we say we are the masters of
the air.

The stealth is not as tongue-
tied as they say. Listen to its bombs
upon the city. The clap of
severed hands.

You cannot mute a sob.
The tug of a single tissue
from its box. Clamorous,

like the crunching of Tostitos
through the cellist's
adagio. Is the salsa really
worth it? The paprika
that makes you sneeze?
A hundred pairs of
eyes that murder softly.
Their raging, quiet stare.

The Prognosis

There's a man so attuned
to the Earth, that whenever it
quakes so does he. The doctor
assumes it's Parkinson's. The priest?

Seismology stigmata.

Perhaps it's empathy gone
amok, juiced like
Barroid Bonds.

His mother thought it strange —
as a boy he keeled
to the carpet, as if a bullet
struck him through —
blubbered for dear Old Yeller
till the set was off for good.

He's much too sensitive.

*His father will straighten him out
just like an iron.*

It's obvious that he didn't —
concussed as concrete plummets
on another's skull —
half a world away;

short of breath
the moment a girl has drowned—
disgorging froths of water
as though his windpipe
had been channelling
Niagara Falls.

There's no way it could have
happened every time—
he would have been dead for decades,
and this poem would not exist.
Blame it on *survival*—
that discrepant, two-edged
scalpel.

The nun who bled from her palms
was only grieving for her Christ.
If a hundred-thousand others
bore the laurel of thrusting thorns,
it wouldn't mean half
as much. When we know the
name of suffering, it wounds us
more than 80 million numbers.

A bhikkhu shrivelled
to bone
after gorging on
all-you-can-eat.

The panzerotti, triple-
cheese. Raheem Hassan
had starved to death
that very afternoon.

As for the man, his face is
steadily healing from its burns.
They say it happened while he
scooped some Häagen-Dazs,
the instant that a toddler was
being strapped into a stroller —
maybe Gaza or Ukraine —

the mother struck by shrapnel
in her knee, which will give him
a wretched limp
he can't explain.

Musings

There's no luck
without destiny. Rules
in lieu of liberty.

If it's salt in
the pepper shaker,
does it say the snow
is filled with soot?
The clouds
have been soiled by
our dross. What is *white* without
its stain? Misery
bereft of laugh?

You tore the curtain
from the window, wrapped it
about your skin then
gloated it was Gucci.
I'll let the courts
decide your fate.
Nakedness comes in a
variety of colours, none
of which are funnelled
in the dark. Timing is
everything.

Next time
be more patient, for the kids
to be in slumber, dreaming ice
cream's at its best
when it has melted.

I read about the 24
karat pendant, unearthed
in a Cracker Jack
box. The customer griped
it took up too much space
beside the kernels—
losing at least a mouthful
because of it. Treasure to us
is *chaff* to someone else.

A scout's been
peddling crabapples
on the walkway.
I'll be getting the wiser
of the deal. It is better to
receive than to give.
There cannot be the
other without the one.

A heart that hasn't thawed
can never save you from
the cold. And the Earth's
indeed a crisp &
bitter place.

The Beholder

The adage goes the *beholder*
will determine
what is glorious.

The line of shine/penumbra
on our evening's ghostly orb;
how the craters take on depth we
never notice in the day. Everyone else
is focused on the *stop* of
coagulated red.

Your eyes are never more lovely
as when they're fastened.
Spirited, stirring worlds
beneath your lids
while you are dreaming.

I tell the tour guide that
Rodin was overrated. The
rock had been the master
throughout his chiselling of *The Kiss*.
Just ask Camille Claudel.
A straitjacket in
the end her magnum opus.

His gasp when I leave the
group to gaze at rusted
bathroom fixtures.
The scrawling on the stalls.

A daisy's more alluring
once it's plucked. What else has
the answer to *love*?

Then the daughter whose limbs
are severed after shelling, ferried
by her mother who is scaling
newborn crags in her chador,
brushed the hue of blood that's not
her own, the way it
mimics Gauguin when in the light.
How she wails when they are
laid beside the torso. An aria
that evokes
Maria Callas. If the dead
can not have beauty
then who can?

Uchronia, or Changing the Subject

Your great-great-
not-so-great granddad
swiped Adolf Hitler's paintbrush.

In the annals of injustice,
it's small potatoes, yes.

I tell you tubers
are a nightshade
under the surface.

Part of *family*
Solanaceae.

Every eye is blind
before its birth.

You show me courtyards
rendered on canvas. The
sublimity of flowers. Hitler's,
not your granddad's. Splendid
if not for the brush, frayed just
like the face of a macaque.
It kept him from the Academy.

Within an amended timeline,
they might have traded places.
Adolph in the Louvre,
toasted by Parisians
for his art. Granddad running for
office, no one for their lives.

I'd rather speak of primates,
you shriek about Dachau.
The way he sketched a
tower on his rapidly
thinning leg. Skeletal
by then, like snow that
waned from branches.
No one makes a frame
for such a thing.

As to the fate of the brush,
you sigh it's in the attic,
boxed with a baby's toy —
rattling like a viper
when it's lifted.

Let's prattle instead on
snakes, the redundancy of bone;

you say there's 11 million
skulls beneath the ground,
we'll never know *who*
was who, a pair of empty grottos
where each iris should have been.

Nicki Nicki

You tell me long
ago the wind had
rung your doorbell.
No human
could have fled so
spright & nimble.

And that winter
sends its greeting
via the window's
condensation. You say
you were alone, that
someone came and drew
a smiley face, which morphed
on its own accord —
a mouth that drooped and
runnels from the eyes
which soaked your hands.

It's quite clear
the elements are our ghosts,
unveiling their every thought
through what's unseen —

a barometric
pressure's sudden
plunge,
a searing from the sun
that reds your flesh,
and the duvet
of fallen snow
on what is dead—
the down of pallid
feather, chasing the grey
away.

You'll visit your
mother's grave in
early March, will wipe the
woolly white that
fogs her name,

as if she never passed,
as if she's out there
someplace
in the nimbus,
when the rain is knocking
frenetically on your roof,

pleading for you to
welcome it inside—
let it warm itself by the
fire, comfort you in
the diaphany of its arms.

Rewriting Androcles, or The Conversion of Theodore Nugent

Today
an earthquake will level
the suburbs of greater
LA. No one will be slain
since *thoughts & prayers*
will work for the very first time.

And today
the bosom of ICE
will thaw in piercing sleet,
the needle in 99
trillion sheaves at last
pinpointed. Mexicans will be
assembled to share a cake,
provided reparations
for 1848.

And today
no *soldiers* will be needed.
Either in plastic or in flesh.
Hasbro will give its profit
to grieving widows—

in every single country
on the planet. Boys will
play with dolls and
keep a home. Effigies
will be watered
from our wells.

And today
I'll write a poem
that thunders the world.

And today
reserves will be no more.
No one will be ghettoed.
Settlers & Shoshoni
will fish from frothing
streams. Wash it down with
milk from the buffalo—
offered, never purloined.
Nothing will be taken
from this day on.

And today?

A lion's sentry of the
rose will be *uprooted* from its paw —
not by a children's
fable—but a trophy
hunter vowing he'll
go vegan from here on in.

And tomorrow?

America will finally choose
the woman of colour. Soaring,
magnificent colour.
It should have been
yesterday. It should have
always been yesterday.

—for Kamala

Why no one ever mistook me for Stevie Wonder

I was given a harmonica
at the age of five-and-a-
half. Needless to say, there was
no harmony involved.

An accordion would not have
been worse. At least it would
have been saliva-free.
I'd take a thousand
Walter Ostaneks
any day. The shrill of my
dentist's drill, boring into my
teeth while I listen
front-row-centre.
The screech of Yoko Ono —

well, let me get back to you
on *that*.

I've digressed. There's nothing
worse than dissonance fused
with spit. Your DNA
that's launched into the ether —

with the squeal of a braking train.
I'd rather hear the nails-on-
blackboard symphony,
in a sold-out Carnegie Hall,
with the jackhammer
orchestra to open.

What makes this thing an
instrument forged in Hades
is the fact it's double-sided.
You can mimic
the screams of the damned
from left-to-right,
then again but vice versa.
There's not a greater
deterrent to perdition

than a harmonica
in a neophyte's hand.
I'd never be a drunken
gadabout; would give everything
I owned to feed the poor —

except *that* which was gifted
long ago. The destitute have
suffered enough.

It was more than enough
when the Sally Ann paraded
through their shanties,
tubas blasting the
pall to smithereens.

To Be Read

My book has been in your
TBR pile for an awfully
long time. I notice it's getting
bumped within the queue,
that tome from Poet X
still toasty to the touch,
the one you boast
is a 21st-century Rumi.

I get it. You said you'll
do a blurb. Posting it up on
AssFace when you're done.
But Gray's
Anatomy—really?
Just look at yourself in the
mirror if you're unsure
where everything is.

Robert's Rules of Order
would be commendable—
if you actually showed
for meetings.

I've never
even seen you in a chair
let alone *as*. La-Z-Boy &
Cheetos doesn't count.

I've tired of your *excuses*,
why my stunning
magnum opus is clad in
mites, wisps and strands of
webbing spun when dodos
walked the earth;

languishing under your
lamp—with the scrolls
of Agamemnon, the Guide to
Cooking Manna, or the Jokes
of Gutenberg,

a volume that he conjured as
a test run, before laying out the
letters for the Bible while he
sweat, the immortality
of *errata*, the pressure of a perfect
Word, something that you
swear you'll get around
to one of these days.

Mysteries

People have said
what's dreadful comes
in threes. For me
they come in twos—

the proverbial second
shoe, plopping from the
ceiling when I try the
sneakers on,
and the right is tighter
than left. Both will be
abandoned to their box.
Have you ever seen a
human leave Adidas
with a single cleat?

The time I lost a glove
I kept the other in a basket—
where it baited, suggesting
that my fingers
could take *turns*
at keeping snug, while I
saunter the downtown streets,

looking like an ass-clown
who's too cheap to buy a *pair*.

There's a reason that
our marriage was a failure.
Forever stuck on *two*.
If we'd been instead a *trio*
I swear it would've been better.
I'm not talking *ménage à trois* —
but casseroles & dishes.
Another could have
scrubbed while we embraced.
We only quarrelled
amid the bubbles —
the Sunlight squeezed
out twice instead of thrice.

Think of a traffic
signal—only bobbing red & green.
It's *yellow* with the power
to calm. Gleam like an
amber star, a warmth in
winter chill.

It's a riddle why my
eyes will blink together,
why both my hands will lift
in supplication, to some gracious
triune God, or when I cheer
a netted puck—in our son's
first game at centre,
two tongues to
say *I love you*
if I had them.

Play Well

Not everything should be Legoad.
Rockets, sure. New York's
Chrysler Building. The workers
with their lunchbox & their hammers.
Stuff like that.

But you mustn't put one out of
Bergen-Belsen. Lego could say
it needs to keep our memories
alive. History that's forgotten
never happened.

But I would play the cynic;
think it's just a grab of
grubby cash.
They've had *decades*
of causation
to unveil it—
and all that time they didn't.

I'd say it's Eurocentric.
Where are the limbless kids
of Palestine? The Tutsi
floating head-first in
the streams?

Leg Godt has
no excuse. They've come out
with bodies of water,
migraine-blue before.
Waikiki anyone?

Maybe sorrow needs its own half-
bricking. A mortician
plunking lilies
on a casket. Children
wait too long
to know of death.
Pain that melts
you to the bone.

Stick an end-
piece in your shag. Walk on
through the hallway
in your nylons. The pair your
cantor gave you

at the end of Yom Kippur.
Then say you've heard a
holler like *that* before.

Compare it to an Auschwitz
shower. The wail of a gaunted
mother for her son. Have the gall
to tell me that
each block is all in good fun.

The Blade

*Those who take up the sword
shall perish by the sword.*

—Matthew 26:52

Sword must be the mightiest
word in the world. See it for
yourself: *word* is already contained,
its double-
dagged w
left unsaid, mistaken
for a pair of muted v—
fleet-footed samurai
set to slice;
on tiptoes like the shrouded
a in stealth.

It's the hero's
weapon of choice—
unsheathed in half-a-second—
the honour that it brings, a rod
for Thorian bolts, epitome
of Herculean effort.

Conan was its servant
not its master. Nothing else
can knight you on the shoulders.
Not an AK-47.
Not the atom bomb.
And surely not a Molotov —
its bearer fleeing the battle
once it's tossed.

It's the poster boy for
knives; something they aspire to
whenever their drawer is pulled.
It will help you in a pinch;
cut that brick of butter
that's been sitting in the
fridge since olden days.
Silverware have winced
from golden auras — a smooth,
deceptive texture;
feigning they're too spotty
to do the trick.

The sword *itself*
can never be surrender's cause.
It knows no cowardice.

When it's thrown onto the
ground in acquiescence,
it repudiates the fingers
which concede, always unforgiving;
vengeful to the bone.

It does more than
simply wound. It severs the
brain from body. The body
from the soul. Takes our proud
identity away.

It's just in its show
of mercy. Merciless
when it's just. It will invade
and/or defend. It even serves to
splice the conjugations.
Unyielding Excalibur.
Few are worthy to wield.

It's our past and it's our
future. Willing to *adapt*
if it must. Alight in the
hands of Kenobi. Aflame
with Joan of Arc.

Forged when war arrives
& it always will.

The sword can take a punch—
pounded on an anvil
in a blaze, till it blinds us
like the sun. Its deafening,
immutable roar, as though a
mother giving birth
in archaic times.

We are all its sons.
We are all its daughters.
It's twin-edged for a reason,
honed in its locution.
Its language is its
glory. It harbours the gift of
tongues. We know exactly
what it says when
it disrobes, recoiling from
its naked retribution.

Sharing the Carapace

There are times that the snow
looks pristine enough to eat.
Or possibly *drink*. The meta-
morphosis of melt. Everything
will be clean that final day.

And then there are times
the buds will stay clasped
as a purse, unwilling to divvy the
touch of maquillage;
a huddled sort of
beauty, like scallops in their armor,

refusing the egression from a mouth—
till the buntings trill their
octaves to the stratus,
hoisted beyond what
auricles can hear—
the limit of our lobes—

before they plummet
in the form of freed ovation,
water that's been ransomed
from its freeze.

And then there are times
I can still pen something *pretty*.
For the wind has droned my name,
confided its furtive love
between our howls.

Sorry I Can't Join You for Shinny

They say that it's so cold here
folks will gorge on ice cream
to warm themselves up.

It's the kind of day
a puck will feel relief —
freed from being thwacked
because it's adhering to a
glassy pond's veneer, like a sucker
that is stuck upon a seat —
engulfed in someone's slobber.

No one's drilling holes
upon the lake, juddering with their
poles like masochists.
Trout are forced to
bore beneath the silt,
assent to muddy quilts
of hibernation.
And no one can bait with worms,
since they're stiff like Mr. Noodles
before the kettle froths in fog.

The wings of every junco?

Squeak like rusty hinges
when they part.
Lubricants are clogged
inside their cans, hardened like
the top of crème brûlée.

Everything is grounded,
for each micron
above the drifting
drops the air a half-degree.
The wind chill's
minus a million, sporting a
balaclava like a thief.

No one's pumping gas—
lava couldn't flow if
it were here.

You'd fly on up to
Pluto if you could. Its dark-
side feels like Tucson
compared to this. But fire
has gone on furlough,
laws of physics don't
apply.

Glaciers creep
ahead, as though it's the
Pleistocene.

Even the snowmen shiver.
Frozen in their
frowns. Buttons that are limp
as though they cling by a single
strand. Carrots like the
stab of icicles.
They've lost their
arms to frostbite; fingers having fused
as if a club. There isn't a parka
on the planet
that could possibly keep them comfy;
down that's cornflake-crisp,
snap at the slightest touch.
Every flimsy top hat
pinned with rime.
A sound like grating velcro
if you try to peel one off.

They're not going *anywhere*.
Neither are you.

Look — the Michelin
Man's not stepping out-of-doors,
despite his tired rolls of
roly-poly, 50 pairs of socks
inside his boots.

It's so frigid
Hell's congealed at last.
Demons & the damned
are seeing their breath for
the very first time. The Devil's
gone off skiing,
his red of nostrils
sting from appled air.

Saints will see him coming —
their every halo
buckling from its burden,
when the sun can seem
a multiverse away.

My hockey stick has bonded
to the lamppost.
Like a tongue which took a
dare despite our pleas.

Wite-Out, or Caffeine to Go

I've started to blame
autocorrect
for *everything*.

When the officer
pulls me over,
blowing past the
stop sign at the corner,
I tell him it told me *shop*,
with the plaza just
beyond it
beckoning.

If I forget what
you told me to get,
I'll gift a flower to
remember me by,
that the flour
I should have snagged
is clearly unromantic.

You'll ask me to order
pizza 2-for-1.

I'll explain
autocorrect only offered
1-for-2, *pepper* supplanting
your beloved pepperoni,
sneezing out our candles
bawling wax.

They've always been overly
sensitive, these paltry
ruffled flames —

which flee at the slightest
breath, without excuse
for their cowardly ways.
At least I have a reason
for my fuckups.

I'd been longing
for the world
that up & flew,
when I had to *smother*
my mistakes with
Liquid Paper;

and whilst its label
read *flammable*,
it never changed my words
without my knowing.

But now I embrace this way
of morphing words.

I will never sin again
while it is here — scheming,
ever-plotting,
mischievous
mini-*Satan*
that it is, wreaking havoc
on every christened
cup of coffee,
on every groggy Stan
who only wants what
morning owes him.

The Wino

My every chug of wine
is utterly medicinal.

I accept you won't
believe me. I wouldn't buy it either.
What I *will* buy
comes swathed in a paper bag—
sheltered by the progeny
of the *woodland*.
If trees confer their blessing,
who am I to differ?

I'll be completely candid—
it doesn't cure what ails me. I will
still be limping to
the door when FedEx
beckons. Mourn my mother's
rot. Kvetch when I am
worming out of bed.
Oy vey is just a cultural
annexation—too good to
leave absconded.

I will caterwaul its merits
as I belt some Caballé,
from Pinot to Chianti;

share the sagacity of
the vine—how it's wiser
as it ages, like a monk
on a mountain-
top; the interconnected-
ness of stems—a model of the
brain amid the branches.
Green & purple pearls
are simply protons.
Worlds of a higher whole.
Every blinding star
submits to shadow. An
eclipse is but their kiss.

If it were not so then
Christ would not have
waved His heavenly hand,
morphing Evian to Merlot.
Welch's wouldn't cut it.
And if *He* were lacking
insight, I doubt you'd sing
cantatas every Sunday,
witness miracles of trans-
mutation.

The fact you're
Episcopalian
says it all. Forgiveness from the
grape in lieu of flesh. But blood can
yet be beautiful.

Heed my altar call.
Sip it again for
the very first time. Then quaff
it on your knees. Gulp it to
the marrow, till you succumb
to its vintage spell. Even mystery
spills its guts when it is drunk.

Signs & Wonders

The first time that it happened
I was half-court in the gym.
Rimless like LeBron does
in his sleep. Only the custodian
present, refusing to pivot his
head at the sound
of the swish.

And then my twirl of a silver
dollar on a desk. Rotating as
a pulsar, like the spin of an
Olympian—a figure skater's
gold of 10.0. The price of arriving
early with no one there.

Third you shrieked *yeehaw!*—
from the apogee of
your lungs—slamming the door
behind you. So much for my
Burj Khalifa of
cards. All *you* saw
was a mess of Solitaire.

My stone will skip
from one end of the ocean
to the other, as long
as you're fixated by the
leapfrog of the clouds,
waiting to tell me the
miraculous only happens
when our gaze is turned away,
bashful little rascal
that it is.

Terminal Elegiac

At the age of 6 or 7,
I was attentive to the hooting
beyond our timbers,
transcribed it in my
Lionel's *choo-choo* steam.

My brother's locomotives
were one day passed to me.
He'd lost interest as soon
as he could tear apart the crescent
in his Mustang '69.

I have nothing to show for it
now; my every poem a husk
along the freeway,
the path less journeyed
long since asphalt-smeared.
Talons scoop them up

while hands are ever latched
on 10 & 2. At least when-
ever the officer's
right behind.

See them here and here,
there and there then gone.
Wing surpasses wheel.
We should have known
that from the start.
The owls are wearied from waiting,
of asking ashen Luna for
the time the train comes in,
all of us aware it never does.

Ethiopia

Granite is our very
final canvas. Everything
that's chiselled
lasts forever. Or at least it
should. With the price that
Aaron's Monuments will charge,
you'd think it would outlive
Mount Sinai's tablets.

Moses broke the initial
pair in tantrum. Whatever
became of the second
I can't recall. Maybe hanging with
the *Ark* in Addis Ababa.

No, not the boat on
Ararat, but the one of
Covenant. Noah's supposedly
cringing from his rainbow's
appropriation. Why does
God need reminding
anyway? Spectrums have sod all
to do with floods. Take your
Oakleys off and see.

The splash of sun & water
shouldn't mix. But it does
when you're a boy.
All can be prismatic.
Look before you *spring*
on through the sprinkler.
The poor man's
swimming pool.

You thought you had one
coming, no one to sneer at
your ribs in the shallow
end; the shield of
a backyard hedge.

When you're skinny,
they tell you to eat a
sandwich, as if you never
have. You'll cling to your
shirt like a rail —

11 feet aloft, a girl who's afloat
like a dory, a sinner after
40 days of rain, scorning
when she's nothing
left to lose.

As for the obelisk I
mentioned, carve it in
haiku. Come up
with something grand.
Scratch your noggin
till it bleeds. I'll be sleeping cozy
in my coffin. Let *you* sweat
for a change. Find out just
how *easy* a poem can be, with only
the flies to read, a mantis to
offer prayer.

Flatlines, or Pax Americana

Peace is our fantasia
which the dead are lying in,
a tombstone that will quiver
while the raven rests its wings.

We think the fallen cannot hear us—
our squealing shells of mortar,
gnash of *go back to*
your country that mortally
wounds. A sister's
guttural sough, clothing clawed in
two, bruises on her face
the shade of rape.

We consider blue
to be a tranquil pigment.
The peace of a cloudless dawn.
But we only spot the trails
of guided missiles. The luminosity
of blood. Every human shadow
stretching out, like an elastic's
elongation. Light reveals our
targets. The callousness of sun.
Frozen in a fervor all for naught.

Or peace might be the choice
of a middle finger—
rebellling against its
drive to *flip the bird*,
spreading with our index
in a manifest of V, a flock on
its migration to
a fairytale of warmth;

a sign of Victory,
or maybe just a gesture
to the Somali you're supposed to
spite, every bit as human
as yourself, as worthy as our bones
to find their slumber; a tanager's
intonation, supplanting the pipes
of bombs, lulling all to
bolt their eyes, soar off to
some phantom Camelot—
barren of *belief*,

of flags which serve as
shrouds, their fifty stars to
burst in supernovae,

bars of red that dash
beyond their bounds,
the absence of a pulse
we never took.



Visit Andreas at his website:
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Delirium Lullaby

a collection of poems favoured and new

Andreas Gripp



Andreas Gripp was born and raised in Treaty 6 Territory (London, Ontario) and in 2024 moved to Leamington with his wife, Carrie. He's the author of over 40 books of poetry, including *Last of the Bons Vivants*, *Trigger Happy Warnings*, *Satanic Canticles*, & *Delirium Lullaby: a collection of poems favoured and new*. His writing has been lauded for its lyrical and literary merit, accessibility, and for its blend of comic and poignant storytelling.

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— Katherine L. Gordon, author of *Caution: Deep Water*



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