

Three Poems from a United State

by [Michael Odom](#) (February 2019)



Jealousy II, Edvard Munch, 1896

I

Ceding points to the blonde, he raises his mace,
Proving her arguments specious.

She is blinded and female, much like Justice

With capsaicin burning her face.

He's dressed Halloween black with red eyes in ash

And the masked crusader's set jaw.

His own comic book! He flies like a jackdaw

Up the street! A hundred-yard
dash

Flown in a second! It's Jackdawman's escape!

He'll sleep tonight (toke or no toke)

Snuggled up, woke.

II

When her chivalrous comrade makes himself scarce,

The SJW girl bares

One breast, Amazon-ish. Her nipple ring scares

All the shyest Nazis. One dares

A soft compliment. Square-jawed. Blue-eyed. No scars

Yet. A police teargas bomb scatters

Antifa to their waiting cars and, mostly, their
bars.

But with youth opposed, two get
their

Cocktails less Molotov. Girl, boy now, she leans
Towards his iPhone, their heads together,
Watching live streams.

III

Like Americans, we drove, tired, veering
Right into on-coming traffic.
“Left side!” “I was just thinking, knowledge: it’s like
China teacups. Like my steering:
My American Lipton brain seeps through cracks,
Gravity pulls to the right lane,
Drips toward fiery death, blood staining Earth’s crust-
Carpet . . . ” “It’s awake or A wake.”
“Moors make me morbid. Get it? Moor-bid moor?”
He braked. A skull with matted hair
Crossed. We offered her
Crisps with chocolate stout, then Yorkshire Gold tea,
Brash as American coffee,
On the roadside near Haworth, called it “Bronte
Breakfast” on “Coleridge Christmas Eve”.
“They found one of the Ripper’s victims right here,

Smashed head and raped where we picnic.”

Grinning, drunk, still estranged, my toothless beatnik

Father, in the know with her queer

Weather, said “Beautiful world, cup made of lace,

Soaked and leaking blood, flesh, and fates.”

“There but for grace . . . ”

Michael Odom is an American poet and translator, the author of a collection of ekphrastic cinquains for children entitled *Ick! Fran's Tick!*, a book of translation from Catalan, *Count Arnau & Other Poems of Joan Maragall*, and his own collection of poems playing on the rhythms & themes of Catullus, Selene.

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