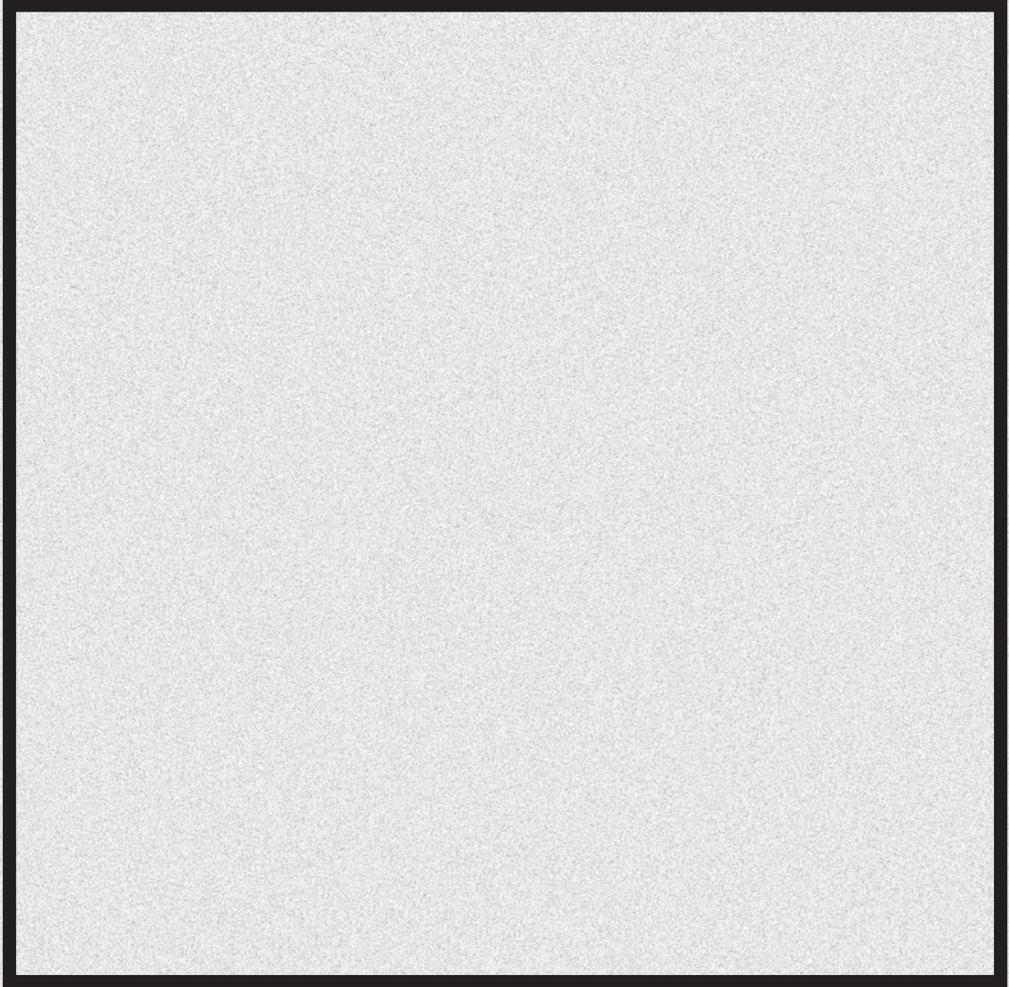


Vol 16.

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*Teach me tonight.*

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1. And Iowa is one syllable

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What, then, is the nature of this  
Divine love with its vicious turn?

Sifting light from the  
Impossibility of authenticity

Your pitch straining still as  
A concession to the other

Utterances of the unsolvable  
Pierces of darkness' blight

So, then, this is your  
Penchance for pomposity

The scattering of intimate  
Terseness

The weaves of an edge providing  
These delights of heaping

Turn after broken turn  
Always just always on the verge

At centre of your own quarrels  
The unhurried descent lands

A pitch streaming beyond the lessons  
And Iowa is one syllable

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Lim Lee Ching  
September 2015

2. Black moon sun, 2015,  
Christine Fernando

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Night, Long Island.  
No sound but for cicadas, and wind meeting leaves.  
No moon.  
No light but for stars.

A pleasant warmth: the warmth that lingers after a hot summer day,  
after the sun starts to hide behind the Western Lands,  
after the soft ocean breeze dances through the trees,  
after the earth moistens and softens.

My wife appears from within the house, lingers at the sliding doors, looks me over;  
perplexed there is no music playing, no tiki lamps lit,  
so no book being read,  
no smart phone in hand – nothing but sitting, staring starward.

“What are you doing?”  
“Hanging with Saturn.”  
“What???”

The explanation is routine, but, to me, not mundane – to her I seem slightly insane:  
“I’m hanging-out with the planet Saturn; see that tiny yellowy-orange dot off there between the trees?” (It was lingering a good bit above the southwest horizon.) “That’s Saturn.”

“Oh. Want another beer?”  
“Yeah.”  
She goes back inside.

I’m old and mimicking the ancients: looking at sky, marveling, pondering, but  
discovering nothing for anyone but myself.

by Michael Kearney

a buddhist deity inspired costume?  
the contesting dress for a Miss Universe  
is a failure in design, still  
the Miss Canada 2015 captures  
the comical craze of ice hockey addicts constantly  
high on hockey

21:57 in Takadanobaba, Tokyo, Saturday, March 28,  
2015

five fifteen year olds  
committed hockey crazy boys  
#7 #37 #71 #12 and #5  
beaming with smiles  
skated through the arch of sticks  
(#8 went through last week in the same state and  
moved on)  
satisfied with their nine to seven years of  
hockey-high time

22:00 approaching  
to the five graduating boys for the team spoke #17,  
#37 says in return  
Come #17, tell us your goal for the next year,  
... after a thoughtful silence the boy replied:

I want to beat #7 (Sho-kun ni kachitai)

hearty laughter breaks out,  
sending echoes through the cool air of the rink  
team mates, coaches, moms and dads, on ice off ice,  
all having a great time

Zamboni engine is buzzing  
marking the end of ice time  
a lucky player is #7  
he earned it  
the happy ending to his hockey days.

the next day on a beautiful sunny spring day  
#7's mom hand washes the jerseys  
and with the final wash,  
two As, an H and a seven  
peel off from his black game jersey

dried under the sun  
she sewed them back on  
delighted for her son

for moms and dads  
watching kids having fun on ice was their joy  
witnessing kids becoming better hockey players was their  
ecstasy  
and the rink has been their inevitable dating spot for all  
those years

but high school hockey requires no parents  
done are the happy burdens of arranging accommodation  
driving them for games — long and short distances  
no more rink side pleasures

stripped of the time with boys,  
laying out money  
is the only parental obligation that is left  
and the capitalistic formula asphyxiates them hard: (love =  
money)

the hearts' struggle to stay  
human started;  
gasping for air,  
they burst out

fuck the formula  
with that the breathing eased and words came  
and the construction of an abstract rink side with the boys  
began  
whether that labor be failure or success is yet to be seen

5. Firenze, 2012



by Sara Chong

6. Unwinding

undeveloped in finesse, i exploded in menace

You have to relax, to find a place  
inside yourself  
that allows you to  
find some kind of peace.

dammit, thanks for the advice, i checked with inside  
the place is full ...such a perfect dominion of mimicry  
a favored popular space for mockery

a you manages to flee from inside,  
mumbling and stumbling,  
with your own arms constraining your own legs

amused at the sight, welcomes the flight  
...relax, have some pints, have some fun

mumble singing stumbling dance mumbling  
dancing stumble dancing song mumble  
singing stumble dance stumbling song mumbling

writhing arms breaking the habit  
words in labor  
hope flutters its wings

the muse is about to share  
and i let the mute strike you

by Setsuko Adachi

## 6. Proving Jupiter

I cough my way down a narrow street –

Can it be called a street?  
Far too small for the smallest of cars,  
pedestrians and bicyclers cannot pass  
without great care and a walker's sideways shuffle,  
a left-over from an old Tokyo,  
before cars, before companies  
replaced rice farmers as the core of economy.

to a pub. To a friend?

Early evening it was, of a clear, chill winter Sunday;  
the air crisp and clear for once, –

The air here is usually thick.  
Mostly moisture in seasons other than winter;  
pollution all the time.  
Today, however, the lack of commuters' cars  
and businesses' trucks, along with a strong breeze  
storming down from the mountains,  
swept the muck of the air away.

allowed me to wear my old junkie overcoat and dark, dull green knit hat.

As I fumble with stiff fingers through the coat's deep right-side pocket –

It contains only cigarettes and lighters,  
always have a backup.  
Money is housed in trousers,  
the pockets of which are not deep.

for cigarettes and lighter,  
my eyes follow the vertical lines of the houses and small apartments  
that comprise the walls of this tight shallow canyon  
to a spot up above the roof of the Mizuho Bank building a half a klick away  
and catch a large bright glimmer in the Eastern sky.

What's this? A planet perhaps? Wow, a few months ago, in a different country,  
in a country-ish locale, I communed with Saturn.

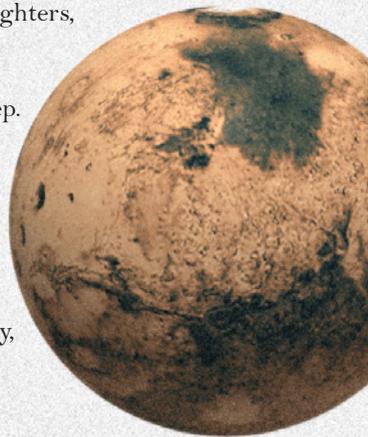
Who could this be?

From a not so deep inner breast pocket of the junkie coat,  
I fish out a smart phone, and hit the app that gives me a map of the sky:  
Jupiter!!!

I light the cigarette –

In most places I have been,  
smoking in bars, in restaurants,  
indoors, is prohibited, so  
one must go outdoors to light up.  
Here in Tokyo the opposite is true:  
smoking in bars and restaurants if fine,  
smoking outside verboten.  
Japan, at least the Japan that is Tokyo,  
likes to be different, special, unique.  
However, the Japanese claim that in Japanese culture  
people who think they are special are objectionable.  
Japanese rail that people and places  
from over-the-sea, –

It is a very binary mode of thought here:  
there is Japan and not Japan,  
that which lies beyond the waters.



think they are special: it is a common criticism of foreign people and nations. This is perturbing logic, but psychologically logical. A German friend, a professor visiting for a special lecture series, observed this and keenly concluded: "The Japanese think they are special, so of course, no one else can be special." Japan is a paradoxical place.

The keep-people-from-smoking-on-the-streets police, a brigade comprised of old men, does not usually patrol this narrow passage, which is why I use it: smoking and walking is one of my few pleasures in life, as is smoking and drinking, so sometimes I find that I love Tokyo's logic of the opposite.

and slow my pace, linger on the back path longer than is necessary so as to enjoy my smoke with Jupiter. Selfish for this pleasure, I slow to a creep and light another cigarette.

I arrive late. Am queried harshly as to the cause of this tardiness to the pub. I say I was smoking a cigarette and observing, hanging with, Jupiter. Me and my sky map app's claim of spying the God of the planets is rebuffed: "You can't see Jupiter from Japan." I respond that yes, usually you can't see Jupiter in Tokyo because of the haze, the smog, the density of the air, but that tonight is clear, but I am met with: "No! You can't see Jupiter from Japan! Fact!" I stammer out a "What?" and ask why. The response is staggering: "Wrong side of the planet." I only manage a "huh?" and am given back rolling eyes and a sigh: "It's on the wrong side of Earth; Jupiter's over Europe."

An exposition of our solar system, orbits, satellites, rotations, is erroneously refuted with: "You're wrong. Ya don't know what you're talkin' bout. Jupiter is over Europe, not Japan. Fact!" Smart phone gets put into action, app opened, show him that Jupiter is in fact in the sky above Tokyo tonight. I'm laughed at, called a fool, told I'm an idiot, and it is explained to me that "That app doesn't work indoors, ya bollocks, the roof blocks it." Of course I want to take this outside, leave it to Jupiter to prove itself. This does not occur. The disbelief is too deep. Leaving the bar stool too much effort. I plead, become indignant, but it does not sway him: I am not to be taken seriously.

We talk of other things, but I can never let it go. Inside of me, I want out of here. My thirst is gone, and I should be too, but I linger for a few hours because what else do I have. When finally I leave, I am angry at myself for not pushing the point, for not leaving earlier, for wasting time and money in a pub that was not fun, that caused stress. Saddened at this state of existence, of not doing more with myself, I started schlepping home.

When I got to the narrow path, the wind was raging down it, made me sink deeper into my junkie coat. Made me think of my son, he has the same coat, we gave them to each other for Christmas, we have love and affinity. I started to revive, to gain determination, to work myself out of the drudgery. I looked up to the Western sky and saw Jupiter descending towards its setting location. It stayed with me the whole way, led me home.

by Michael Kearney

## 8. Teach me tonight

Every so often — and with seemingly increasing regularity — our news feeds are inundated with what can be loosely termed sex for grades scandals; where a professor has, where professors have, been accused of inflating students grades in exchange for sex, and occasionally even a slew of expensive gifts. Leaving aside, if that is possible, but perhaps at least momentarily, our judgment on the morality of such relationships — though here one should keep in mind that a relationship of equal power is, at best, a comforting illusion — what has been brought to the fore is the question of the relationality between a student and a teacher.

Which is also a question of: **what does it mean to teach,** alongside, **what does it mean to be a teacher?**

A common critique of said professors is that they have abused their positions as teachers: for, even if there might have been love involved — as some have readily testified — the professor should have known better.

Which translates to: one's position as a professor means that one is above mere feelings.

We see this logic play out each time a person in public office falls from grace: what they are accused of is falling prey to their own desires as humans; regressing from one who adopts a particular position, role, to merely being a person. The other, related, critique is that a teacher is supposed to be impartial: that grades are awarded on merit. Thus, a 'good teacher' is one who is able to divorce her or him self from her or his role as teacher. In other words, (s)he should be able to become non-human.

Whether this is realistic or not is beside the point: the fact that the public continues to be shocked each time this happens suggests it is a fantasy that is expected to be maintained. Perhaps this is why we tend to be harshest on the ones who call themselves 'public servants': their fall from grace only serves to remind everyone else that *if the alleged best that was on offer is that bad, what more everyone else; and even worse, what more ourselves.*

What more if the one being judged is a teacher: a figure that is supposedly highly regarded.

All of which are valid sentiments of public opinion, outrage even — if only they did not miss the point.

For, one must never forget that the role of the teacher is distinctly anti-public, *anti polis*. As Socrates reminds us, the role of philosophy is the corruption of youth — not by turning them away from what is good, but by opening the love of wisdom, by opening thought, thinking, questioning, in them. And *love* in the specific sense of *philia*: two-way, in-relation-with, whilst never claiming to fully know another, whilst being open to the possibility of the other. Which suggests that this is a relationality that is reasoned, reasonable, within the boundaries of rationality; but always also open to the unknown, to the potentiality that is unknowability. For, we must try not to forget that even though this is a relationship of love, it is not completely haphazard: it involves craft, discipline, *tekhnē*. However, even as it is not fully reliant on chance, Socrates teaches us that wisdom only comes to one from elsewhere, from beyond; only comes to one at the point where the daemon whispers in one's ear. Which means that even as one can attempt to teach another, that even as one might be able to be taught, teaching is limited to the manner in which one might approach wisdom, and not wisdom as such.

And if teaching, and learning, involves an approach, this suggests that it requires practice; that it is through constant repetition that one potentially begins to develop the skills required to open oneself to the possibility of the whisper. For, as Socrates never lets us forget, at the point when one hears the *daemon*, it is craft that becomes art — nothing is said of the craftsman. There is no artist — only the gestures of the possibility of art.

At the point of wisdom, there is no teacher — only gestures of the possibility of teaching.

The teacher — the *pedagogue* — can only guide, lead the ones being taught. For, it is not a direct transference of information, or even knowledge, but a leading by example; where the very habits of the teacher — and by extension the teacher's *habitus* — is the very site of teaching.

Thus, the teacher and the student are in a relationality — and the site of teaching, learning, is on, and in, their very bodies. Which brings us back to where we began, to the most important point — that of love. And, the fact that love is the very condition of learning itself.

Perhaps then, the only accusation that is valid is that the professor is being unprofessional. Not because it is a charge, but precisely because that is what a teacher should be, that is what one should be taught to be:

## an amateur.

To be one that loves, to be one in love (amore).

Keeping in mind that love is always risky — it is never safe, and one opens oneself to its dangers. Not just in one's mind, but in one's body: for, one should also try not to forget that as one practices one's craft, as one constantly repeats, as one builds certain habits, these write themselves onto one, shapes our very bodies.

*... the real teacher, in fact, lets nothing else be learned than — learning. His conduct, therefore, often produces the impression that we properly learn nothing from him, if by 'learning' we now suddenly understand merely the procurement of useful information. The teacher is ahead of his apprentices in this alone, that he has still far more to learn than they — he has to learn to let them learn. The teacher must be capable of being more teachable than the apprentices. The teacher is far less assured of his ground than those who learn are of theirs ...*

*(Martin Heidegger,  
What is Called Thinking)*

*Her too, Martin — always her  
as well.*

\*\*\*

Did you say I've got a lot to learn?  
Well, don't think, I'm tryin' not to learn  
Since this is the perfect spot to learn  
Oh, teach me tonight!

One thing isn't very clear, my love  
Should the teacher stand so near, my love?  
Graduation's almost here, my love

(Dinah Washington, Teach me tonight)

\*\*\*

And at this juncture, if your spidey-senses are tingling, and alarm-bells are going off about the possibility that we are encroaching dangerously close to the terrain of paedophilia — they should be. For, if love is the premise of learning, of teaching, one should bear in mind that teaching, learning, quite possibly always already entails a fall — where the ones involved potentially do what they otherwise might not have, perhaps transgress not just mores, norms, but their very selves. Where to be in love is to open oneself — with all that it entails.

Which is not to say that teaching always entails sex, or expensive gifts. Far from it. For, discernment, choice, saying no, is a mark of intelligence.

However, just because we discriminate, select, does not mean that we are not open to possibilities, does not entail an a priori dismissal. For, an intelligence choice can only be made after considering, consideration, after a certain care is taken to think — which means, only after the possibility that one is open to something, to someone, is first considered.

## Care.

Keeping in mind that teaching involves dissemination, spreading, growing, germination, trimming, cutting, pruning — quite possibly insemination.

Thus perhaps — whether one likes it or not — to teach, if by teaching we are opening our students and ourselves to possibilities, even if one is taking all care to say no, is to always already fuck one's student; insofar as one is always also being fucked by her, him, them.

And, a categorical dismissal of the potential relationality between a student and a teacher — even if this relationship extends to a sexual nature — is to make teaching a mere profession.

Which is not just to sterilise the one who teaches — it is the devastation of the possibility of thought itself.

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by Jeremy Fernando