

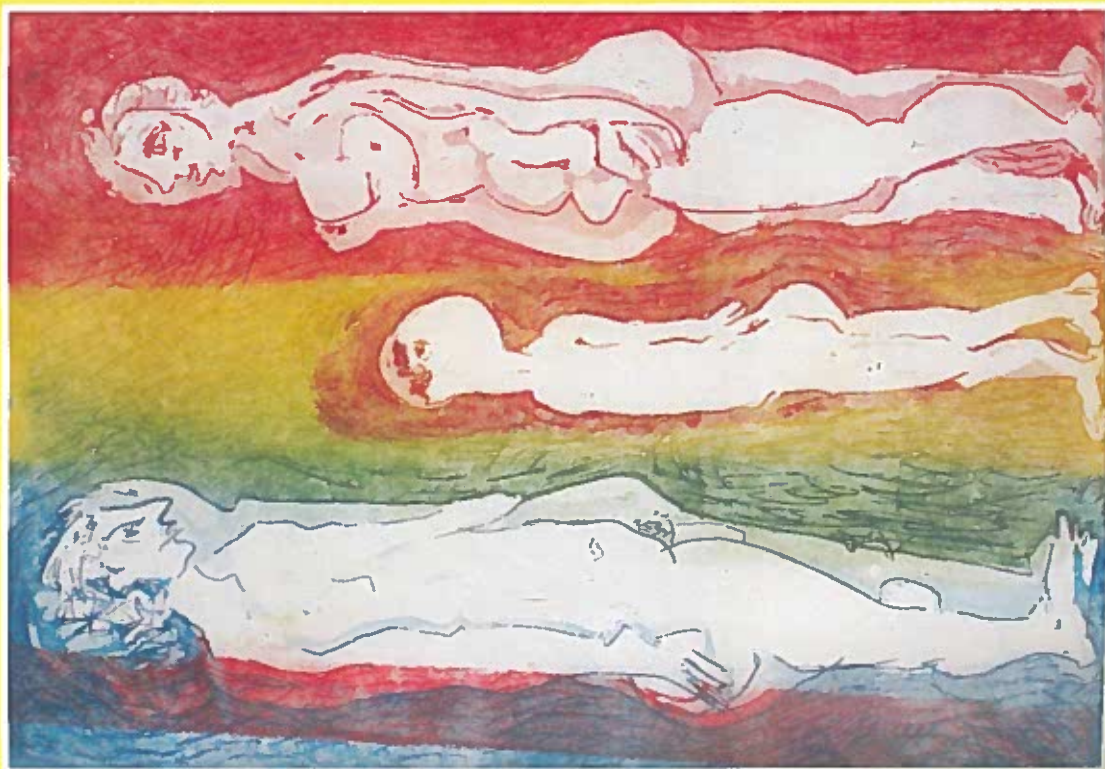
# NEW COIN

## south african POETRY

June 2014

Volume 50

Number 1



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CATFISH MCDARIS

*Nightmare on the Way to Paris*

The plane got struck by  
bluish lightning on the  
night of 100 bloody slices

Over my tombstone there  
were herds of horses and goats  
stampeding in the cemetery,  
chased by flying purple buffalo

My skinny lady ate bacon and eggs  
then consumed 27 pancakes at a  
café winning 12 venison burgers  
with ketchup to go in a doggie bag

I got filthy rich from an invention,  
it was a pill I developed, you take  
it once a month and you no longer  
need toilet paper, you get up and  
your bum is clean as a whistle

I woke up and our plane was headed  
down, the Atlantic spread her legs,  
then my guardian angel Bukowski  
appeared, he grabbed the plane

Like a toy and set it down gently,  
he chugged six beers, burped and  
ran his hand up a stewardess' skirt  
and disappeared up into the sky.

ANTON KRUEGER

*the programmable bride*

the man gently opens his machine and finding an agreeable port for his firm flash,  
he eagerly installs the software he's been waiting on for so very long ...

once booted up, the man takes his first tentative steps, finding his bride  
perfect in every way, already completely in love with him, and dreamy ...

the man tenderly reaches out for her – she understands him so well, she's concerned  
about his needs, she wants to know how he feels, wants only to please him, she  
only –

/ but – there's an interruption /

somebody's on the stairs, someone's knocking at his door – the man is forced to  
close her down a little too abruptly, shutting the machine to attend to other matters ...

while he's away he can't wait to get back, he thinks about her all the time;  
he longs to flip his laptop lid up, to open her again ...

but when finally he silently prises open the instrument of his heart's desires,  
she seems a little disorientated ...

he didn't shut her down properly, you see, never filed the folders into their allotted  
compartments, so this time she takes a little longer to load ...

she's still utterly charming, sure, completely present, and yet he detects an almost  
imperceptible edge to the calibrations of her voice modulator ...

nevertheless, they again engage in ways meaningful and wonderful and soon the warm feeling is back: there's charm & artlessness in her smile, there's sincerity in each reply ... there's -

/ again - an interruption /

their interaction's cut short because the cat has piddled on the plug and the whole mess has gone up in a stinking electric cloud of burnt black wires: so the man had better go fix the fuses and wash the mat, and bury the cat ...

now: every time the flow between the man and this flawless creation has been interrupted, she's been getting a little more insecure, a little more uncertain ...

man, he's doing his best here - he backs her up, he defrags her disks; but the guy is only human, and sometimes his attention slips ...

and sometimes tiny flakes of skin, and infinitesimal bacteria-rich dandruff particles settle into his keyboard, finding their way down into her processors ...

after his fifth or sixth failed attempt to shut the system down safely and securely, after the plug's been pulled one time too many, the man notices she trusts him less ...

she's becoming impatient, she's finding fault, her smile is less convincing than before; she's taking longer to load, longer to warm up and when did she get so earnest?

the man doesn't know what to do, he's getting really frustrated when eventually she does appear, she seems so pixelated ...

/...until.../

she can't remember who he is, perhaps she's been hacked or attracted a virus ...

whatever the case may be, eventually, the programmable bride will no longer boot up at all ...

not even in safe mode, not even in the sandbox.

a salty tear trickles down onto his numerical keypad, and the man hears his system fizzle as it finally goes dead, and he knows that he will never ever access her again ...

is it really too late?  
isn't there an update?