



JUNE 2020

DUSK

Patricia Bassel

Luc bát poem for my sister Sarah

Pink rimmed clouds in the sky,
Oklahoma dusk. Write a song,
a prayer, a page for Todd
who loved nature—rugged, free, strong—
lived in the country, longed
for scissortails, not wrong to die
on green grass where he lies—
long hair, tanned hands, closed eyes, alone,
my sister's son who rode
the wave of prairie grass. Moon rise.

Art by Brian Michael Barbeito

Patricia Bassel is a French teacher, traveler and poet from Southwest Oklahoma. Walking is a ritual for her around the world. She connects to a place by making discoveries on foot. The world is her home, but as a native of Oklahoma, she finds an austere beauty in the Great Plains, open spaces and the ancient boulders of the Wichita Mountains.

Find her at patriciabassel.wordpress.com

Brian Michael Barbeito is a poet, writer, and photographer. Work appears at such venues as *Fiction International* and *Literary Orphans*. Brian is the author of *a* (Fowl Pox Press, 2013).



JUNE 2020

MESSENGER

John Leonard

I pulled the short straw and drank my guts through it.
Time held still like a token; flashes of sound, wood
on the handle, a steel barrel. There is a garden where
your hands once laid, patches of black dirt crowing;
a ghost-town of bird feeders and sun-bleached pinwheels.
I spun you into a mirage, a tapestry of memories and
Michigan vineyards—But the truth involves horseflies
and the taste of possum-teeth in August; a mess of high-
ways crisscrossed with black honey and powdered ribs.
Bones frosted like lilacs. What's the word for a cold summer?

Photo by Pat Tompkins

John Leonard is an English teacher and poetry editor for Twyckenham Notes. He holds an M.A. in English from Indiana University. His previous works have appeared in *PoetryQuarterly*, *North Dakota Review*, *Roanoke Review*, *Eclectica Magazine*, *Rappahannock Review*, *Mud Season Review*, *The Blue Mountain Review*, *Trailer Park Quarterly*, *Genre: Urban Arts*, and *Burningword Literary Journal*. His work is forthcoming in *Chiron Review*, *december*, and *The Oakland Review*. You can follow him on Twitter at @jotyleon.

Pat Tompkins is an editor in northern California. Her photos have appeared in *New Southern Fugitives*, *Existere*, the *Tishman Review*, and other publications.