

the big picture has been dissolving for years  
an utterly disintegrating  
reality  
left to be put  
back together  
across the deserts of the vast eternity  
placed between us  
the all connected  
circulation of  
kings money and death

ROBERT BALUN

## Hologram






This amalgamated union represented the bottom half of the  
pay scale for humans.  
The union started making demands in 2045 A.D.  
But the rich had the weapons and destroyed all their leaders.  
The union members thought the Leaders were ruthless and cruel.  
But the new law was no groups of 10 or more could  
associate anywhere on Earth.  
And the Leaders instituted sterility in the food so that the  
poor could not have children.  
And eternal youth was only for the elite 10%.  
The poor were desperate. They rioted but were gunned  
down by live fire.  
And the society's Leaders mocked the poor saying that  
they were morons etc.  
The poor had no leverage as machines now did all their  
former work. They were useless.  
They tried to make the elite feel guilty, but were hopeless.

TOM BALL

## Union #4025

**Tom Ball**  
**Robert Balun**  
**John Grey**  
**Maggie Nipps**  
**Yash Seyedbagheri**  
**Natalie Warther**

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## Hopeless

JOHN GREY

I heard the story on the news.  
It's all over.  
There's no more hope in the world.  
With all the old people  
dying of the coronavirus,  
there'll be no one named Hope left either.  
Parents haven't given their children that name  
for about the last three generations.  
That's the real story.

## Clogged

NATALIE WARTHER

The spaghetti still wouldn't fit down the drain. It had come out into the sink in one big slop, still formed in a tupperware-shaped blob that clung to itself until she ran the hot water across all the skinny noodles and they split like hairs falling away from their scalp. Pour hot water on anything and it's bound to break loose.

Now, the water mixed with the reds and browns of the sauce until the sink filled with a nasty stew, running a big red finger across the rim of the sink and leaving a crusted trim that would potentially never come off.

It was not a small amount of spaghetti. She used her hands to encourage it down the three small holes in the sink bottom, her sleeves rolled up to her elbows and her butt sticking way out behind her in an attempt to not stain her shirt.

The sink was making a noise now, and doing a pulsing thing, like a gasping patient or a drowning person. The sink is clogged, she said aloud to no one, and no one came to help.

When she'd made the meal she'd felt proud. The spaghetti had been from a box, and the sauce she'd bought too, mostly because the old lady on the label seemed like she really knew what she was doing. And she had been right to trust her, the old lady, the sauce was good. But what she had done on her own that no one had told her to do was to add spinach. Steamed spinach, which she cooked on the stove by putting it in the pan with some water and turning the burner on. This was her secret touch, she thought, and she thought for many minutes about how she would one day serve it to a table of people who loved her and for generations after people would be saying this about her, they'd be saying, "spinach was her special touch."

Now, there was hardly any spinach, because she'd underestimated how much the leaves shrink when they're cooked. Really, it was more like a spinach garnish than an ingredient, and when she'd had the second serving the next night, it was a bowl of spaghetti with no spinach at all.

What else she had underestimated was how much spaghetti a box of spaghetti really makes. Too much for one. Which was why she was here now, standing before a sink full of nasty noodle stew, carefully removing her shirt with the tips of her cleanest fingers.

Now she was bare chested, which made things easier, but the pants were still there. A splash of red and they'd be ruined. So to be safe, she removed those too.

Now she was naked. She chose her weapon of choice from the drawer, a wooden spoon, and began to push the noodles into the holes with the pointed end of the stick.

If she wanted a family, which she did, she would have to stop doing things like stripping naked in the kitchen and focus more on things like adding spinach to recipes. In thinking this, she felt a tender feeling towards her naked self, and mourned for only one second the fact that she would not always be free. And then the feeling passed, and the sink gave up, and even a few noodles went down.

## Moment

YASH SEYEDBAGHERI

eyes light up  
with comparisons  
fueled by depth of thought  
and depth of booze  
fine glasses of Pinot  
paid for

maxed out  
mouths proclaim this moment in time is  
insert Kaiser Wilhelm's mustache, the Anschluss, Mussolini's chin,  
Roman gladiators, the Confederacy revived, Birmingham 1963  
eyes flicker and they congratulate recognition  
raising glasses

meanwhile another police officer shoots  
a lesbian wails behind lavender curtains  
justice notorious lies dead  
what's the solution  
oh look  
this moment in time is

insert something

## Idea of Resurrection: Fear

*after the Toynee Tiles*

MAGGIE NIPPS

we bury our dead  
to shield from stench and sight.  
the integrity of the flesh too tenuous,  
quick to unravel its fibers.

[CHILD enters w/ FEAR OF DEATH. he holds  
THE EMPTY PIGEON. rather, A DEAD PIGEON.  
A DEAD PIGEON is encased in cement. THE BLOCK plays  
A CASKET. alike in figure, in holding]

at the bottom of a transi-tomb  
the figure in sterile stone.  
object, half rotten, and stagnant.

embalm | imbue  
the body with spices:

balm, spices, resin and volatile oils,  
fragrant oils as anointment

imagine the body risen in completion.  
but we can't all be enoch.

[GOD or ELIJAH or FUTURE  
lay in waiting as FIGMENT. THE  
DEAD crowd inside]