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CML News

Yes, we live in interesting times! Having never practiced 'social distancing' before, our whole CML family—all five of us!—are following recommended practices to contain the COVID-19 virus and working from home. This spring issue was put together in late winter and finalized just before we physically separated: we are grateful and somewhat in awe of the technology that affords us a feeling of connection to the world of literature, ideas, and each other.

Highlights

We enter the season at a moment of world pandemic and economic uncertainty. In times such as these, we have all the more need for familiar, reassuring, and compassionate voices. “Look for the helpers,” said the late Fred Rogers. A man of deep faith and empathy, Mister Rogers brought joy and comfort to countless children (and more than a few adults) through his beloved television show, which ran for decades on public television. **Jeanne Marie Laskas** takes us behind the scenes in “The Mister Rogers No One Saw,” bringing us an intimate view of this profoundly gentle, caring, artistically gifted man who became a pioneer of educational television.

Even in the worst of times, who doesn't crave adventure? Here at CML, we go on the most extraordinary journeys without leaving our desks! In “At Bottom. Repeat. At Bottom.” **Susan Casey** travels with explorer extraordinaire Victor Vescovo on his mission to visit the deepest points of the Pacific, Southern, Atlantic, Indian, and Arctic oceans in his titanium-hulled submersible, The DSV *Limiting Factor*. However, one does not have to be as suave, super-rich, and multi-talented as Vescovo to explore the mysteries and beauties of nature. In “Fantastic Grandmothers and Sea Snakes,” by **Annie Roth**, we meet a group of retired women who snorkel in the Baie des Citrons, off the shores of New

Caledonia, to catalogue poisonous sea snakes for the University of New Caledonia: so far, they have identified over 250 of the (surprisingly) benevolent beasts! Nor does being an adventurer restrict one from the softer pleasures of poetry: in **Traci Brimhall**'s reverent exploration of the innermost lives of marriages, "Archival Voyeur: Searching for Secrets in Amelia Earhart's Lost Poems," we delight in discovering that the legendary aviatrix was also a serious and sensitive author of verse.

As always, CML offers you the finest fiction and poetry available. In this issue, you will find outstanding stories by **Amor Towles**, **John Kinsella**, and **Maria Lioutaia**, as well as powerful poems by **Christopher Buckley**, **Evie Shockley**, **Mehrnoosh Torbatnejad**, and Syria's greatest living poet, **Adonis**.

TOP PICKS:

"*Ulysses on Trial*," by **Michael Chabon**, recounts the adventures of publisher Bennett Cerf and the brilliant ACLU lawyer Morris Ernst to overturn a ban on the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, considered the most innovative, and, by some, the most *obscene*, novel of the 20th Century. High literature, greed, and drama meet in this story of legal maneuvering and manipulation, which resulted in a major victory over censorship and hypocrisy.

We also recommend two reports that expose the threats to privacy and freedom in our time: "Snowden in the Labyrinth," by **Jonathan Lethem** and "The Disappeared" by **Sarah A. Topol**. Lethem reviews the recently published autobiography of the exiled iconoclast Edward Snowden, who revealed the panopticon surveillance techniques used by the NSA and other intelligence agencies to spy on the American people. Further afield, but still close to home, Topol tells the story of Zulhumar Isaac, a member of China's Uighur minority, who, amid a wave of measures taken against ethnic minorities by the Chinese government, must deploy her journalistic skill on the internet and beyond to find and free her unjustly detained parents.

The D-B Beat

Our selections for the spring issue contain many references to titles that are available in the National Library Service's BARD collection. Here are just a few to feed your curiosity and keep you busy during these long quarantine days:

- From the article "Archival Voyeur: Searching for Secrets in Amelia Earhart's Lost Poems" by Traci Brimhall:
 - *Whistled Like a Bird* by Sally Putnam Chapman, **DB45404** (plus a keyword search using 'Amelia Earhart' will give you over 20 additional titles!)
- "'Ulysses' on Trial" would be nowhere, naturally, without James Joyce's modernist masterpiece, listed as **DB19994** and memorialized each year with public readings and reenactments on "Bloomsday," June 16.
- "Snowden in the Labyrinth," by Jonathan Lethem, refers to these books:
 - *Permanent Record* by Edward Snowden, **DB97138**
 - *Trick Mirror* by Jia Tolentino, **DB96489**
 - all 12 volumes of Anthony Powell's historic novel cycle, *A Dance to the Music of Time*
 - *The Magnificent Ambersons* by Booth Tarkington, **DB48558** (read by our old friend Jim Zeiger).

And Special Thanks To...

The wife of long-time subscriber from York, PA, **David L.**, who told us upon his passing, "Oh! I cannot begin to tell you how CML changed his life! We would often listen together in the evenings. It's a wonderful service."

Happy Spring from Annie, Mike, Jay, Alfredo and Raquel!