



if

these

stalls

could

talk

If These Stalls Could Talk

The Feminist Toilet #3

The Feminist Toilet is a literary magazine that celebrates and raises awareness about public health issues, specifically the toilet.

This issue was edited by Brian Sonia-Wallace and Sammy Ginsberg.
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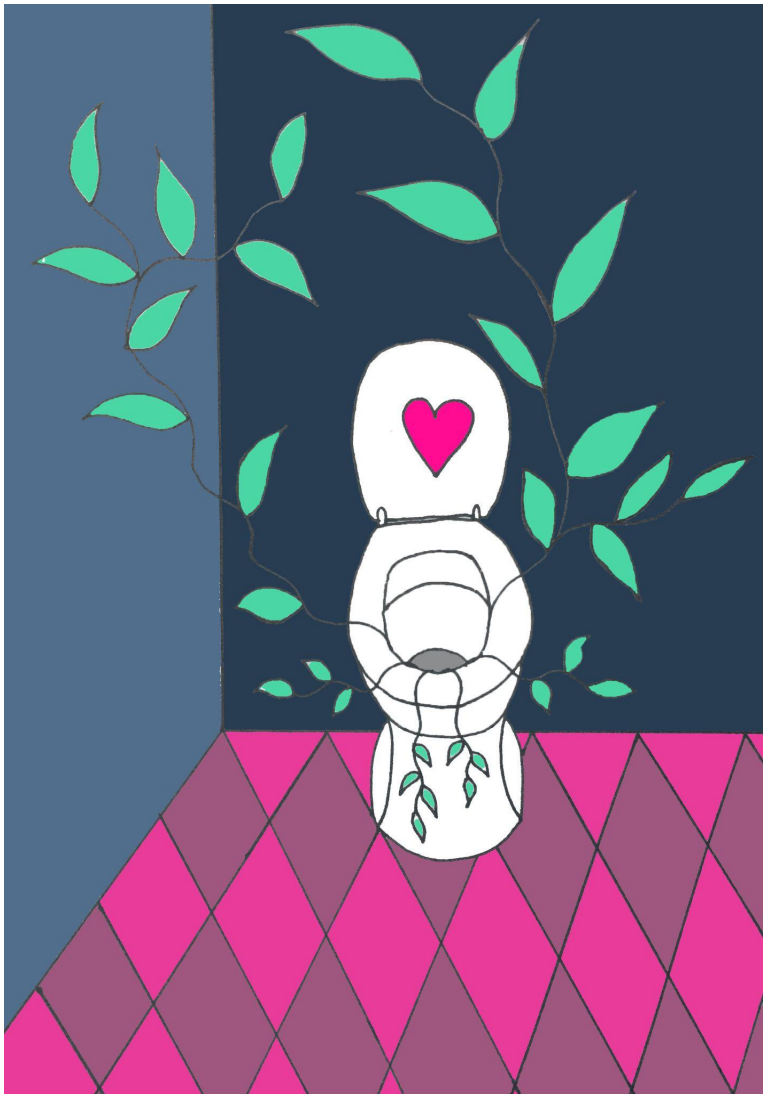
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Toilet Love



~ Rochelle Roberts

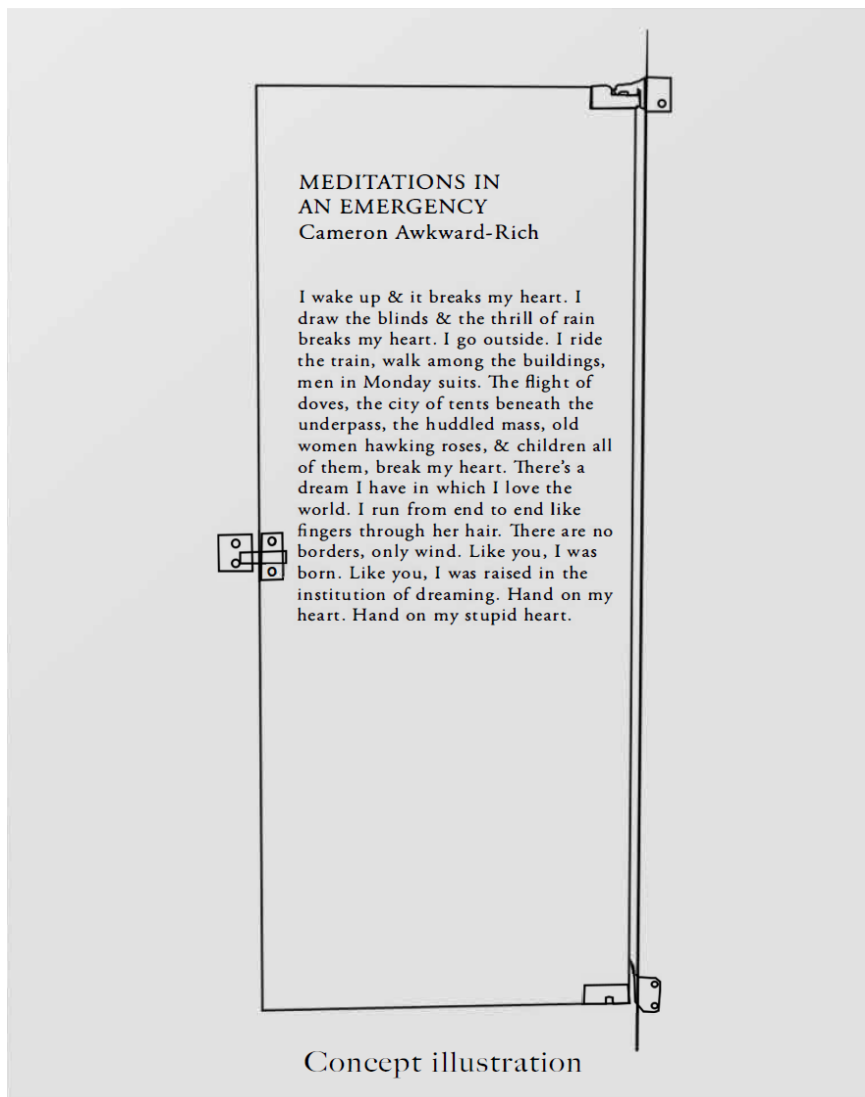
Foreword

If you had asked me—even six months ago—whether I’d write a piece on toilets—public or private, feminist or otherwise—I would have responded with an emphatic **no**. But when asked to do just that, I realized there was no reason not to do so. In 2026, when democracy seems to be a bad word in the American political lexicon, can there be anything more democratic than a toilet? No matter its materials or construction, all people need a place to relieve themselves...and, perhaps, to do more. We all need a place of “quiet with your thoughts”, of escape, a place to eavesdrop on the more interesting person in the adjacent space, a place to hide while alone...or not so alone.

And is there any other place more deserving of recognition that here’s a great place for the imagination at work? From the French bidet to the smart toilets of Japan to the hole in the ground I was forced to use on the Greek isle of Corfu, it seems clear that the where and how of relief is a high priority in creative minds. And aren’t toilets often good for a laugh: even *Seinfeld* had an episode called **The Stall** where Elaine didn’t have “a square to spare”! So read the following contributions with keen attention; you are one of us.

~Lynne Thompson
Los Angeles Poet Laureate Emerita

If These Stalls Could Talk Concept Art:



Commissioned by The Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture. Developed and Delivered by Dyson & Womack. On Display at The Music Center in April and May of 2026.

About “If These Stalls Could Talk”

This issue of *The Feminist Toilet* appears (#3) is entitled “If These Stalls Could Talk” and has been designed in tandem with my temporary public art installation of the same name. In the installation, words of queer and trans writers (Stephanie Burt, Cameron Awkward Rich, féi iká shumari, Andrea Gibson, Jennifer Espinoza, and Brian Sonia-Wallace) are laser cut into copper plates and affixed to bathroom stall doors at Los Angeles’ premiere cultural plaza, The Music Center, in April and May of 2026. The project is a challenge, a provocation, and part of a long-standing investigation with the founding editor of this journal, Sammy Ginsberg, into our most intimate space.

A restroom is a small room with a lock. A mirror. A moment alone. It’s where some of the best ideas happen. We go here to cry. To breathe. To escape. To put ourselves together again.

But a bathroom is also fundamentally civic infrastructure — a threshold between public and private life. In recent years, restrooms have become symbolic terrain for debates about gender and belonging, and for trans and gender-expansive people this ordinary space can carry extraordinary weight.

If These Stalls Could Talk (the installation) casts restroom stall doors in copper and engraves them with poetry by trans and queer writers. A material historically reserved for permanence, authority, and memorialization is applied at human scale, transforming a politicized site into an archive of lived experience. The theme that unites each poem in the installation is comfort — the verb — the act of creating ease, freedom — even luxury. Please. Finally.

We wish we could show you the doors themselves, but do accept this concept art in place, as they are currently being built. You'll have to go see the exhibit to see those poems. You'll have to be a little flexible in your identity to see them all. And you know what? In the State of California, no one can challenge your right to do that or demand your ID.

At The Feminist Toilet we believe that gender exists along a spectrum, and is accessible, unique, and mutable for everyone. As protections are stripped from our trans siblings we stand with them in solidarity and demand the access to privacy and dignity that is so encapsulated in the physical space of the restroom.

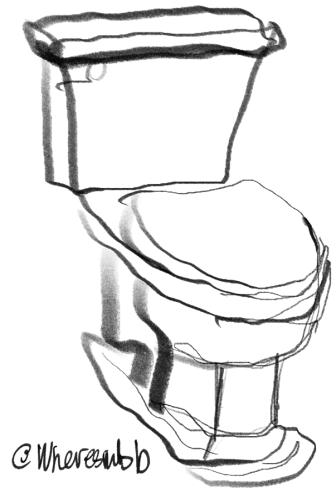
The poems you will read here are from a large community that supports this mission — we put out a call for art and poetry by anyone who uses the bathroom, and received a powerful stream of responses. These poems range in subject and tone from gas stations to gay sex, nursery rhymes to critical theory, bulimia to a first kiss. Our youngest contributor is four. Each poet is united by a shared experience — using the bathroom.

~Co-Editor Brian Sonia-Wallace
Former Poet Laureate of West Hollywood

SANCTUARY OF THE PORCELAIN THRONE

The world is a beast--
it asks for the labor
of your hands,
your name, your time, your breakfast,
your grief.
But in this refuge
the lock is heavy,
the bronze cool
against your spine.
Stay, until your breath
is just your own again.
The water will run
as long as you need it to.

~PK



Jaron's Potty Poem

Tinkle tinkle little pee,
How I want you out of me.

~Jaron Goldman, age 3

Graffiti Treaty

For a good time call GOD
 HATES
Steph♥Joni xoxox QUEERS.

a trans are they peeping
person ----→ at my peepee
peed here. through the stall door gap?

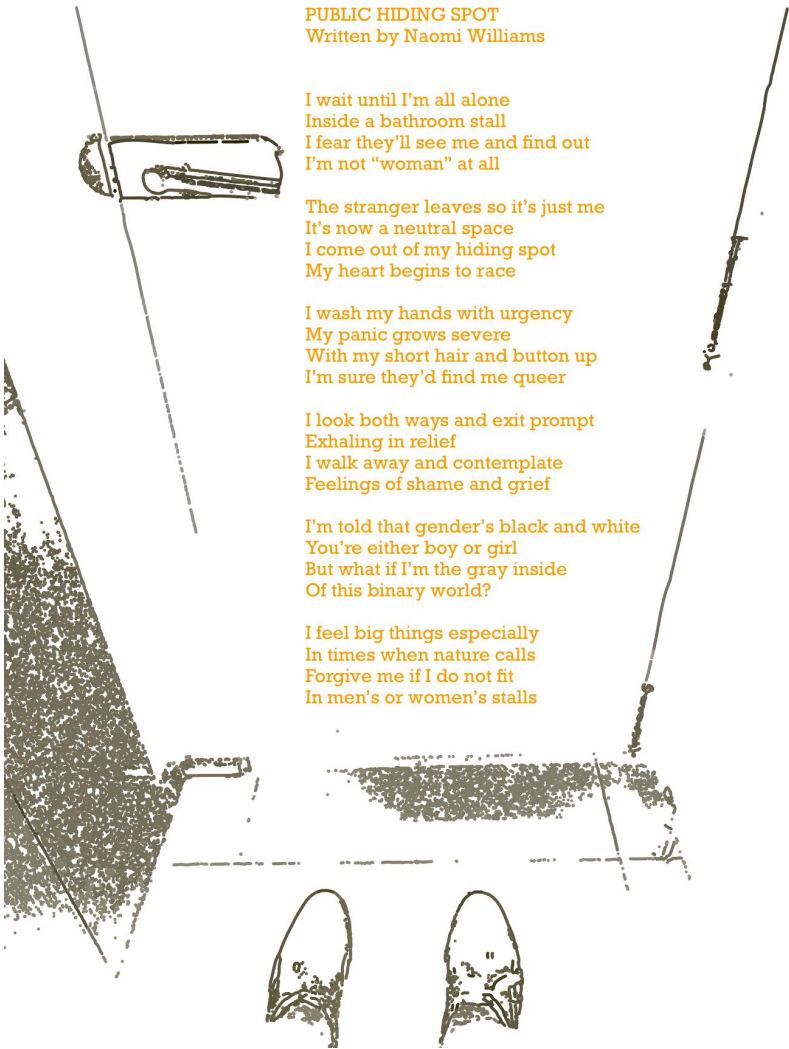
I am afraid ←-----you should be

our asses
touched the
same toilet.
we are family.

I warmed the seat up for you.
↳ ty ty ty

~Kro

Public Hiding Spot



PUBLIC HIDING SPOT Written by Naomi Williams

I wait until I'm all alone
Inside a bathroom stall
I fear they'll see me and find out
I'm not "woman" at all

The stranger leaves so it's just me
It's now a neutral space
I come out of my hiding spot
My heart begins to race

I wash my hands with urgency
My panic grows severe
With my short hair and button up
I'm sure they'd find me queer

I look both ways and exit prompt
Exhaling in relief
I walk away and contemplate
Feelings of shame and grief

I'm told that gender's black and white
You're either boy or girl
But what if I'm the gray inside
Of this binary world?

I feel big things especially
In times when nature calls
Forgive me if I do not fit
In men's or women's stalls

~Naomi Williams

Anti-Ode to the Third Toilet From the End in the Elephant Bar Bathroom

We were there for my birthday dinner, but you
were the main event. I prepared to kneel before you
like ritual, there in the vaguely safari-themed
suburban chain. The anonymity of Anytown I needed

with the false promise of adventure
I craved. You were a confession I bore in secret
so no one could take the cold blessing of you away.
It began with a baptism of ice water—

glass after glass, whatever I could choke down. An excuse
to leave the table, a soft place in my belly
for the shame to land. Then, alone, a communion
of apple cider vinegar charring the length of my throat,

so that any body of sustenance I'd laid to my tongue
couldn't fasten itself to me—at least that was the claim
the anonymous girls on the blog had made.
Finally ready, I opened my mouth, shoved my fingers down

like a desperate prayer. First came the water, and the water,
then the chicken stripped of skin on a river of more
unholy water, until the bed of green lettuce shreds
signaled the end. I offered you everything

I had in me. And thank god,
you are no god. There was no one
in that dim stall to hear me
sacrifice myself

from myself. No,
I've given up my faith
that self-hatred could change me,

could bring to light the bones
I thought necessary to brandish
to be deemed worthy. No,

I don't care how brightly
you once shone. I refuse
to miss you.

~Victoria Lynne McCoy

@Wheremb/b



Toilets & Intertexts

Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek says that the toilet reflects national ideology; he says it is typical for toilets to reveal how their users relate to what we make of as “us” and “not us.” He says that we show how we deal with shit by dealing with shit. He then conducts a lengthy comparison among nations. For Americans, he says, the bowl is full of water and the shit floats unexamined until it is disposed of, reflecting a pragmatic economic manner of thought inherited through Anglo-Saxon colonization.

In partial disagreement, the Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan sculpted two satirical solid 18-karat gold toilets titled *America* and sold them to two institutions in the United States. The *America* works are billed as totally functional and are typically available for private use when exhibited. The first was billed as unique and sold to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; it belonged to the Guggenheim from 2016–2019 before being stolen and melted down while on loan to Blenheim Palace; the other was revealed to exist in 2025; it sold at auction to Ripley’s Believe It or Not!. Cattelan said of the work that “whatever you eat, a \$200 lunch or a \$2 hot dog, the results are the same, toilet-wise.”

Cattelan referred to the project as providing 1% art to the 99%, echoing the protest cries from various economically-oriented Occupy! movements. On an airplane, when a gender-neutral restroom is in use, a sign pops up that declares that the restroom is “occupied.” Occupation is also a job, a hobby, and the term used for the violent enforcement of regime change among state actors. For both states and stalls, occupation is determined by “feet on the ground” and, the kind of shoe matters.

Žižek says of Germanic toilets that they lay out the shit to be sniffed at for illness before being flushed out a hole in the front. Swiss critic Max Lüthi’s system for the hierarchy of materials argues

that porcelain is worse than gold but better than shit, and shit is better than nothing sometimes. Žižek says of French toilets that the placement of the drain in the back helps to disappear shit as fast as possible.

French-American artist Marcel Duchamp caused a riot when his *Fountain* disappeared from the bathroom and was placed on its side in the Society of Independent Artists 1917 exhibition. The work, originally a porcelain urinal upon which a signature is painted, was lost after initial exhibition but unofficially replicated many times.

The skills of bathroom use are in a similar state of practice. In the bathroom, images are allowed to be brought in from the outside world. Décor tastefully hangs in many restrooms to signify. When my cousin was complaining about selling an artwork of a California landscape he made to a rich family that was delighted to tell him that they were going to exhibit his artwork in the bathroom of their vacation home, an ex of mine mused that he wished for my cousin that the rich family had many bathrooms.

The chain restaurant Buca di Beppo observes a binaristic gender dichotomy that is rigidly enforced and reified; the men's bathrooms have pictures of men peeing lining the walls; the women's rooms have photos of Catholic nuns. Even if taking photos into bathrooms is allowed, it is forbidden to take photos in bathrooms, though the mirror-selfie in an empty bathroom is a self-affirmation ritual that is commonplace.

Other forms of self-affirmation come in the form of devices available for use. A rite of passage in men's rooms is use of the urinal, and urinals are often positioned at various heights to accommodate gender indoctrination among the cisgendered. Some forms of urinal embrace privacy through low divider walls; some urinals are wall-less troughs and deny privacy. In all cases, use of the urinal is surveilled through furtive glances and policed aggressively. At the urinal users are supposed to look to confirm state-approved gender usage, but

users are not supposed to look too long or else they risk being marked as deviant from the state's codes for the gender regime. The ability to use the urinal and pass observation determines in part who is permitted to use the men's room.

The gender regime determines how people can move through the world, whether that is by driving a car or traveling internationally. The bathroom a user is permitted to use by the state is part of the information collected for school applications, bank loans, restaurant reservations, housing rentals. These written records document in part what happens in bathrooms, and they include photos sanctioned by the state for the state to use to verify gender identity.

In the bathroom writing then is tacitly permitted, even if it is explicitly forbidden. On the stall walls the people who show up are represented. A secret is negotiated among users with key scratches, faded stickers, a rainbow of sharpie marks, and the acid burns of urine spray. What was an address is now a phone number and now a website. A lewd doodle points to a support group.

The intertext is an idea Bulgarian-French philosopher Julia Kristeva gives name to but has always haunted texts with a plurality of voices, which is to say, all texts. The intertext is an invisible text that contributes to the interpretation of all other texts. A secret is written, sent, received, and read with the door closed. This text message is in part about every text message ever. The mirror says "I love you bitch" in red lipstick before it is shattered by a desperate fist and replaced; the mirror reflects "push," "pull," "exit" alongside brands of soaps and other products. With one's back to the sinks, a secret is passed in low tones that aren't a whisper exactly.

French critic Roland Barthes doesn't talk about the intertext, but he does describe writing as a "tissue of quotations," a collage of endless gifting, borrowing, exchanging, and transforming that anticipates, exceeds, and succeeds all expressions. On the stall door, a note is taped: "Sensitive Plumbing. Do Not Flush Anything Except

Toilet Paper.” Under the stall divider, a bloody emergency is salved. Under the stall divider, a secret is scarfed in white ink. United States Secretary of Health and Human Services and lawyer Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. brags about snorting cocaine off toilet seats in public restrooms while threatening militarized police action against transgender people who try to use restrooms of any kind for their urgent function.

In American director Steven Spielberg’s film *Jurassic Park*, the gender of the Tyrannosaurus Rex is an important plot point. The T-Rex is assigned female before birth via genetic engineering, and yet the T-Rex is referred to by park operators as “he” throughout the film. While the T-Rex, nicknamed “Rexy” by the internet, never declares a gender identity, the audience assumes that Rexy is misgendered by park operators repeatedly. Rexy eats villainous corporate lawyer Donald Gennaro while he is hiding in the binaristic unisex amusement park restroom, signified by the sign on the outside of the occupied stall: a silhouette of a white woman and a white man on a blue circle.

~Sean Pessin

Piss On Your Shoes

no more tooth aches
or missing the toilet bowl
i'll flush the urinal
just to feel that metal
handle on my hands
too small to jerk off
a Latino dick, if they really
are bigger than white guys'
i looked it up and mine
would be a 5.9 if i was born
an all-star soccer ball-hog flopper
but there's no 25-cent pad machine
anywhere in here
so I gotta walk to Albertsons
and explain to some cashier
that I actually do have a vagina,
you just can't see it through the binder

~Rhiannon Cielos Chavez

Bathroom Politics

Just before my bladder explodes,
I notice the manufacturer's logo—
a bullseye staring back at me.

Two words sit above the urinal cake
like an ad campaign,
suggesting I:

Just do it.

Have it my way.

Make America great again.

So, I take aim,
and piss all over
the *American Standard*.¹

I do not flush.
I wash my hands.
I walk out, feeling better.

~Eric Morago

¹ American Standard originated from the 1875 founding of the Standard Sanitary Manufacturing Company, a pioneer in enamel-coated plumbing and one-piece toilets. Following a 1929 merger, it became a global leader in bathroom fixtures, officially adopting the “American Standard” name in 1967. Today, it is part of Japan-based LIXIL Corporation.

Phillip T. Nails Photo



~Phillip T. Nails

for the wild lovers in every world

By Nancy Lynée Woo

wild weather is upon us –
wild wanderer, I wonder where
the wildness goes –
when it leaves –
where do all the frogs go
when they go extinct?
what wild place do we come from –
us, the birds, the butterflies
and the bees?

whoever is out to destroy
all living things, I hex them
with my wild wand, my bravery
and brawn! i'm re-enchanting
my mind – un-exiling my inner child
and supercharging up my SUPERWILD
waving goodbye to archaic fright –
welcoming in the welcoming new –
because what's wild within me –
sees what's wild –
within you –

and we won't back down –
wild magic calling out :
capitalism deranged –
patriarchy fire-fanged –
bigotry harebrained –
I let my wild feelings rage



against guarded space –

bathroom stalls
breaking down
obsolete walls –

wildness exposing itself –
to itself – punching out
of the porcelain bowl –
like a rainbow-moaning myrtle –
scrubbing out the pee stains –
of minds untrained – to see
the sacred – in the profane –
inviting in – what passion
gains – because wild
love – cannot be
contained

~Nancy Lynée Woo

Eradicate Automatic Flushing Toilets!

an example argumentative essay by an elementary school teacher for her students

Another automatic toilet? What an unnecessary excuse for an invention. Renovated business offices, stores, and government buildings feature this menacing modernization. Replacing old manual flush toilets with automatic flushing units threatens the water supply and negatively impacts the environment. It literally takes a second to flush a traditional toilet. I prefer to flush when I am good and ready, but automatic flushers activate at the wrong moment every single time. Cringing at the mist spraying into my unmentionables, I am left the grumpy, disgusted victim of public germs of the worst kind.

I like to protect myself as much as possible from the scourge of public toilets by taking the time to cover the seat with toilet paper. (I also deem the fly-away seat covers inadequate). Unfortunately, this often triggers the automatic mechanism to engage, and my protective paper is splattered with who knows what before I even get the chance to sit!

I do not even want to be in the vicinity of a flushing commode, but the fact that upgraded toilets rarely have a handle really messes me up. According to Sarah Kuta's article, "Here's What Really Happens When You Flush a Toilet," "airborne particles ejected from the toilet travel at speeds of up to 6.6 feet above the toilet within eight seconds." Instead of automatic flushing, public restrooms should have automatic closing lids.

With traditional toilets, I can open the stall door, lift my foot for the handle, and quickly escape direct contact with projected bacteria. But not anymore. To be courteous to the next user, I must flush the toilet again after the premature flush. Unfortunately, that leaves me pushing the button with my hands. Due to the missing handle, I end up pressing the nasty button to complete the

task. An act that used to take one second now takes more than 10 seconds and exposes me to countless germs that could exacerbate an illness.

When I rant about the futility of these robotic toilets, many people dismiss my irritation. The masses do not realize how much these advanced waste movers harm the environment. As far back as 2015, The Guardian reported that the phantom flush phenomenon wastes billions of gallons of water per year. This increases exponentially when one of these monstrosities is in disrepair. I have witnessed these toilets flushing hundreds of times in a row, wasting water and spewing bits of sewage. According to Kuta, scientists found E. coli and other pathogens lingering in the air for hours. These new toilets worsen the public restroom experience while siphoning water resources. We need to unite against the proliferation of automatic toilets!

Contact your city council representative. Tell them that we can flush by ourselves!

~T.D. Flenaugh

Not a pristine thing in sight

Don't expect me to say that word.

I'll tip toe around, dodging those contaminated places

I'll replace "toilet" with "bathroom"

Feign retching if you bring up behaviours in "that department".

But why?

Well, there's nothing pristine in poo

I felt the word "love" couldn't be uttered by one that says "loo"...

Haha.

Misguided – I see now

The shit'll hit the fan unless you embrace it.

~ Radhaika Kaipur



~ Turid

I feel god inside this taco bell bathroom: a taco-entrapuntal

she is a woman

drunk

in the stall next to mine

she listens to my sins, forgives the fact

that

I turn myself in-

side

out for others

she says I'll find happiness one day—

I want to believe her

her

of course

I no longer believe in a male god, but

I confess to her

I am a bad feminist

I support all women except myself

to a fault

line my smiles with razorblades, put them

on display for men and

god

and I want to do better for

the version of myself talking to an empty stall

~Kristin Gustafson



Untitled

I am of the earth,
Sometimes being ground into the dirt
and other times
Springing off with bare feet.

~Tanya Gabrish

Untitled



~ Hannah Rifkin

Miss B Mirror Selfie



~Jennifer "Miss B" Baptiste

First Kiss in the Boys' Bathroom

The boys' bathroom always smelled like a
combination
of sweat & soap that didn't quite work
and paper towels that tore too easily.

Fluorescent lights humming overhead.
Tile floors cold even through sneakers.
Voices echoing from the hallway
just beyond the door.

We were in detention together that week,
two boys pretending not to notice
how often we looked at each other.

He was already out.
I was not.

He carried himself like someone
who had already crossed a bridge
I was still afraid to approach.

One afternoon, between assignments,
we found ourselves alone
by the paper towel dispenser.

No music.
No dramatic moment.
Just a pause
that felt larger than the room.

Then he kissed me.

Quick.

Soft.

Careful, like he wasn't sure
if I would disappear.

I remember pulling back at first
fear arriving before any sort of understanding.
Then something else arrived too.

Recognition.

Relief.

A quiet yes I didn't yet know how to
speak.

So I kissed him back.

Not long.

Not deep.

Just enough
to change something inside me.

We laughed after.

Nervous.

Young.

Alive in a way that felt both impossible
and completely natural.

For a moment,
the world outside that bathroom
did not exist.

Just two boys

standing under horrible fluorescent
lights,
holding a secret
that felt more like truth
than anything we had been taught.

That was my first kiss with a boy.
Not romantic in the way movies
promise.
Not dramatic.
Not perfect.

But real.
And gentle.
And ours.

~Axel Jordan



EVERY BATHROOM IN L.A. IS GAY NOW

for Vanessa

An army of lovers shall not fail.—Rita Mae Brown

How do I enter this poem? Do love justice? A party is a party is a party. We mark our territory, knock over piles of TP rolls at sapphic nights—in gay sports bars. & someone in the bathroom line has a new crush, & you see someone else you know, & all our friends are here, but all we want is each other. & no one cares we're gone 20 minutes, but you have all the drink tickets. & we slow dance to fast songs, & everyone's ex is waiting for us to finish finger fucking. & it's Aries eclipse szn, so all the girls are out in their villain eras, on the prowl, gay panic ensues. But—I just got here. & we're sucking face already, against damp tile in gentrified neighborhood bars, insatiable, like this is all we have to live for. Butch in heat, moaning in your ear, nauseous with hope, chafe from Dickies' jeans. I'm clawing at the walls, ravenous, obscenely yours, tagging your name, leaving our scent. & as the bathroom door slams open, I remember to breathe. I remember everything is a poem, is a poem, is a poem, & this is where the poem does what it wants: It's having a midnight snack. It's remembering self-care, after the party, still ringing in my ears. It's raining in L.A. now, & my tits are a shelf for my chin, on the breakfast table, leaning in. Listening to you talk about how dicks are fucking weird, & to please, get those things away from me. But yours is my favorite, double-sided, & every time I sub: a subversive act against patriarchy. & every space we walk into: Queer. Ours for the taking, & every bathroom: gay now, because we can't keep our gay hands off each other's gay bodies, can't help but start small revolutions against imperialism. Ass up, pressed against doors, heavy breathing in tight stalls, uncouth & undeterred, derelict daughters.

Proud to hold your hand down Vermont, to drown you in desperate kisses at every red light, to watch the eclipse reflect off a dildo coated in a tiny mosaic of disco mirrors. To dance on every sticky floor, to close out every straight bar. Every night love, every night revolution, fuel for the fodder. & when we finally peel off each other, post sleepy sex mid-afternoon, skin stuck like medical-grade double-sided tape, pussyfog so dense, that there's only one god damn croissant left, in this entire godforsaken city, on an overcast spring Saturday—because every hipster-raided coffee shop in Silverlake is secretly homophobic, but we spend our hard-earned freelancer cash there anyway. & the neurodivergent person experiencing homelessness in America, mutters *the cops are coming*. & sure enough, our almond lattes come with a side of high-speed car chase down Sunset, & we live for it. We thrive in the drama of it. We want it all. To crash & burn. & the adrenaline coats our empty stomachs with the pure shrill of it. & the wind blows. & a marquee light bulb bursts. & you grab my hand—& say, let's go. Make love. Again.

~Karla Lamb

This poem originally appeared in Fruitslice Magazine Issue 4 (p. 146)

For Your Convenience

A young Narcissus
coming
in from the rain
kneels
before the blow
drier
of a men's
public room.
Stealing reflections
selfish
from its curved chrome
he watches his hand
style
precious locks
teased
through hot forced air;
strained,
he dries also
his pants.

~Frank Ortega



Road Toilet

Born on the left-angle cross of migration.

Gratefully, I found my way to the road. I could have easily stayed crying on the ground forever. Or hiding in a closet. Or bathroom.

I got the poison and it's antidote. The depression and the fight. The hopelessness and the chaos to tear everything dead to shreds. my things

would often end up in bags. After he threw them and broke them. Or because I could never get it organized. Packed up like it was garbage, like I was garbage, or like I was meant to leave. I did eventually. And now, over and over again, I repeat my escape.

Enough times that these bags no longer feel like shame but commitment.

Sorting, sorting through it all. Re-sorting. Resorting. Realizing how little and how much I need in order to be able to live. Beginning to feel myself again in my own skin. On the road, you need to be organized.

On the road, time is real and beautiful.

Supplies real with dust
and the desert reminder that we are too
(dust and real).

Time made real by space.

I know how long each fruit has traveled with me.

I know where I bought this toothpaste.

A pear from Utah, that I let rot and threw away in MacArthur Park.
Tangerines from Vegas. Where I got them and where I ate them or
left them.

After decades of so many thoughtless apples.

The last lemon of the last lemons ever from my grandma's tree.

From San Diego, the end of December. A whole bag of them. One
per day. Some shared along the way. Even to people I hate. Just to be
sure they would not go to waste. Plus, the hope that the bitter, sour,
sweetness could be some kind of witchcraft remedy.

Santa Monica, across the desert, back again.

Finally, the end of January, I ate the very last lemon.

Because Its time would have come anyways,
whether I ate it or not, so I did.

And now they are gone.

but, yet,

I can smell it now.

Running close to the road. Running on fumes. Running on tires that
are dry and threatening. So far, I have enough to keep me getting
free. One more step free. One more re-packed suitcase, re-organized
bag and destination. One more slightly-worn welcome.
One more lonely road I might lay down on in despair. Or speed off
on, in hope and bliss.

It's good that we have cars.

And gas station toilets.

we have what we need to keep going until we find home.

I love gas stations - the objects, art, and snacks. Big foot, spherical margaritas, slot machines. Mess, crap, kitsch, grit, necessities. markers of human meaning.

I love rest stop simplicity.

I even love truck stops. I love them until something happens to remind me that – though I feel like just one of the guys on the inside...that's not what they see on the outside.

And then, I love my own fear.

And I love the toilets.

My favorite part is when they have wildly specific signs.

Rules so specific that you know that...something clearly went down.

Something that travelers do in trying to get by. On an open road, under a cold starry sky, or warm still low-hanging farm air. Asphalt warm from the day. Floorboards flooded with trash. A second wind to keep going through the night. Hoping to keep driving until we organize every part of ourselves. until we make it to freedom. until we make it home.

~L. Fuller

Reciprocity

I'd been to his city before,
but I was still a tourist
pushing against a current

of people so I could meet him
for dinner. We walked back
to my hotel, a nicer room

than I could afford, as the sun set
over a hazy coast. We kissed.
We came at the same time

and he cried a little. I said I had to pee,
stood up, and he looked like he wanted
to say something, then did; he asked

if he could be on his knees beneath me
on the bathroom tile, suppliant.
The floor has a drain, he said,

that's rare. I wanted to give him
what he wanted, though it wasn't
something I'd wish for myself.

How many chances
do you get to live a fantasy?
When he stuck out his tongue,

I told him good boy as I had been told
by other men—and I couldn't help
but think of the insufficient description

affixed to years of my urinalysis:
yellow; ochre; clear.
Language will always fail us,

as it fails me now when I think
of how to describe
the expression on his face

when he looked up at me
and murmured, thank you.
I said nothing, then kneeled

to kiss him
like a ceremony
without a name.

~Billy Butler

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Toilet Portrait



~Dani DiPillo

Toilet Leadership

an ode

Thank you Toilet!
Thank you for listening always,
holding space
for our private excretions,
taking our shit.
Toilet for president!
Toilet for prime minister!
Toilet for pope!
Oh, you're an anarchist?

~Sammy Ginsberg



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Thank you for accepting our invitation to imbue our daily trips to the bathroom with meaning and joy, for listening to your thoughts and feelings (and faces!!) while using the toilet.

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