

# Salute the Wreckage

Poems

Clint Margrave

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# Contents

## *I. Origins*

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- Origins / 15  
Lost / 18  
Why Flowers Exist / 19  
Family Tree / 20  
Obligations / 21  
Gun Rites / 22  
My Friend the Christian / 23  
All My Life / 25  
Lottery / 26  
Last Night on Nova / 27  
String Theory / 29  
White / 30  
Inquisition / 32  
Paul Gauguin: *D'ou Venons Nous? Que Sommes Nous? Où Allons  
Nous? (1897)* / 34  
In His Sleep He Wept / 36  
There Must Be Another Way / 37  
Eclipse / 39

## *II. Debris Field*

---

- I Never Can / 43  
The Arsonist / 44  
Termino / 46  
The Necklace / 48  
Mummies / 49  
The Night before He Died / 50  
The Teller / 51  
Debris Field / 53  
The Road Previously Not Taken / 54

This is Just to Say / 56  
To the Student Who Asked Why He Earned a “C” on an  
    Essay about Love / 57  
Prelude to a Midlife Crisis / 59  
Pressed Man / 60  
You Must Change Your Life / 61  
February 7 / 63  
Time Laps / 64  
Futile Warning / 65  
French Phonetics / 66  
Luck / 67

### *III. Alternate Endings*

---

Revolt of the Books / 71  
The Next War / 73  
Commando / 74  
The Hope Chapel / 75  
Quantum Entanglement / 76  
What Ahab Needed / 77  
The Death of a Comet / 79  
Revising a Letter Already Sent / 80  
Reversal / 81  
Don Quixote / 82  
Death by Ink Eraser / 83  
The Knife / 84  
My Love Life and the World Cup: A Recent History / 86  
The Language of Airports / 88  
Contact / 89  
Stellar Outcasts / 90  
Sing at Unnatural Hours in the Presence of Artificial  
    Light / 91  
At 72 / 92  
Alternate Endings / 93

## Origins

Remind me of something forgotten long ago:  
Is it the sky that makes the ocean blue or  
the ocean that makes the sky blue?  
And why on a rainy day do they both look  
gray?

If nothing can escape a black hole,  
can god? And if he really made the world in  
six days  
and is perfect and all-knowing  
why did it take him so long?  
And where did he go?

I don't think the universe bends towards  
justice, but I think it ought to.

At eight-years-old I used to stand  
in the shower feeling overwhelmed  
by the question of existence.

I used to stare at my bedroom wall  
just to remind myself I was still looking.

What happened before the Big Bang? Or is it,  
what happens before the Big Bang stays  
before the Big Bang?

And why does the Dalai Lama wear  
a watch? What is time, anyway, to a humble  
Buddhist monk?

Who am I? asks the child.  
Who was I? asks the grandfather.  
Who will I be? asks the college student.

## Lost

I was ten when my mother left me  
at the grocery store.  
It must have only been a couple hours.  
I didn't take it personally,  
spent the time looking for a coin  
so I could call her  
on the payphone.

Now, thirty years later,  
it's she who feels left somewhere,  
when she asks me  
to pick her up from my sister's house  
where she's lived  
the past five years.

"I want to go home," she tells me.

"But you are," I insist,  
knowing she means back to that place  
before old age and dementia  
and the death of her husband.

"I am?" she says. "I thought I lived  
somewhere else."

It's not likely she'd remember  
ever leaving me at the grocery store,  
or how when she finally realized it  
she called the manager in a panic,  
asking if he'd seen a little lost boy  
roaming down the aisles,  
wondering where  
his mother went.

## Revolt of the Books

One day the books revolted  
and decided it was time to start banning people.

The first to conspire was *The Catcher in the Rye*  
still defensive ever since Mark David Chapman  
shot John Lennon.

Then came the Bible, fed up after centuries of being  
thrown in the face of others,  
cited for every prejudice known to mankind.

Soon, the poems had joined in solidarity.  
“Howl,” heading up a major picketing event  
in front of bookstores across the country.

Even those traitor Kindles agreed to shut down.

People were just too obscene, the books argued.  
And someone had to protect them  
from their readers.

But like so many other causes what started out  
as a peaceful revolt soon turned into a violent one  
spearheaded by *Mein Kampf*,

which suggested piling people up  
like old Beatles records  
and dousing them with kerosene.

And the books realized they’d become  
everything they hated and went back on their shelves

dedicated to a future of educating others  
about the dangers  
of banning people