

COOP

of our poetry



Duck, Duck, Goose!

~~COOP~~
~~chickens of our poetry~~

GOOP
geese on our pond

Duck, Duck, Goose!



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First printing edition March 2024.

Cover font: Cooper Black
Heading font: Farm House FS by Farz Studio
Body font: Goudy Old Style

For submission and publication inquiries please contact us at coop@coopzine.com or visit us on our website, coopzine.com

When finished, please pass on or recycle!

Content Warning: Some poems portray animal death.

Cover art: “Duckie and Goosie”
by Larz Alexander Hagen
@larzstarz_arts on Instagram
Digital

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and watch the geese take flight

Ellie Simmons

warmth is, especially
on the sunbaked rocks of the river,
a reminder of youth.
i return on occasion in the summer,
dip my feet in the chilling water
and consider how i never feared.
i keep to the shore when i visit,
for the wade to the field
of sun kissed sedimentary
requires a tread through currents
abrading and deep,
seething around my ankles.
the child that i once was
never saw the threat,
never distrusted the waters,
despite the numbness of the limbs
that comes with the cold.
there was no danger in a sweeping current,
no hesitation as she reached
for the geese, who surely
would nip at her fingers
if drawn too close.
i linger on the brink of the waters now,
and watch the geese take flight
from their perches
on the sun-warmed rocks.



afternoon snack

Nancy Nolf
@babeccuda on Twitter and Tumblr
Digital

Sapience

S. Sadedin

Hens scratch and peck
bathe in pools of dust
stretch and writhe
ecstatic in sensations
connecting to the world
content in the flow of existence

Geese graze
sideways-yanking grass-tufts
moving slowly
across the sunlit meadow
until some impulse stirs —
the great white wings open
shouting in joy, they cascade
from end to end
content in the flow of existence

And me?
I sit among machines
in a dark room
so tell me again
about Homo sapiens?

Herding Chickens

Kasey Butcher Santana
@solhomestead on Instagram

Two baby alpacas, planned for autumn,
but only one arrived.

With no playmate, Nell bounds around the pasture,
shouldering her aunts, more concerned with grazing than
games.

She seeks thrills from behind her mother's fluffy tail.

I am training a flock of chickens to march from their coop
through the gate,
from pasture to backyard to range.

With two feet in the air and an excited hum,
Nell rears up and jumps,
joyful and curious at the sight of plump little birds.

She chases, trying to bop them with her soft nose.
Squawking chickens turn and bolt,
seeking shelter from excited cria feet.

One by one, I toss flapping hens
over the fence where they land with a
thud,
but when it is time for them to go home again,

Nell is ready, waiting.

Two hens hide beneath the hay feeder where big alpacas
eat.

Two run zigzags around the pasture with Nell trailing
behind.

One makes her way straight to the coop, eating the apple
waiting there.

Chickens aren't meant to be herded,
but alpacas don't know that.

The curious prodding of this fuzzy menace
teaches five frantic hens to flee from coop to free-range
so fast you'd think they could fly.

3 Quail Haiku

M. A. Dubbs

@madubbspoeetry on Instagram

“Bobwhite Quail”

Whistle speech from brush
a throat white, black border chin
breast breathing peeled bark

“California Quail”

Their black or brown plumes
tilt down on beak, shake with run
marching quail shako

“Montezuma Quail”

Stubby fowl between
oaks and juniper forest
eerie cry hidden



Keep Your Ducks in Rows

Teri Anderson

@tinyteri13 on Instagram and Twitter

Cotton on aida fabric

Make Way for Ducklings

Caitlin O'Halloran
@selfcaremaven on Threads and Twitter,
caitlinohalloran.com

On a summer afternoon,
families gather around the row of ducklings
in the Boston Public Garden.

These eight tiny ones, frozen in bronze,
form a single file line led by their mother,
who knows that wherever she goes,
her children will follow.

One looks up at the sky,
beak open, seemingly distracted
by a pigeon flying overhead.
Another looks downward,
ready to peck some tasty morsel
off the ground.

A girl sits on top of Mrs. Mallard,
her bright pink sneakers dangling
off either side.
Her mother snaps a photo with her phone,
while rocking a stroller back and forth
to soothe the girl's infant sister.

A father stands nearby,
iced coffee in one hand,

as he waves at his children
who are playing leapfrog,
hopping over each duck.

A young child, who couldn't be more than three,
holds a small piece of torn bread
in the palms of her hands,
offering it to a duckling,
who refuses to eat.



Make Way for Ducklings

Joe Shlabotnik
via Flickr
Photography

The Nest, or What Happens When Customers Disturb a Goose

Rye Galbreath

i think about the goose
who, in the spring, chose the patio for her nest.
after all,
it was warm,
and safe,
and no one was using it anyway.
the perfect spot she must have thought,

and then the people came.

"we'll just move around her," was what my manager said,
"after all,
it's for business,
for profit,
and no one was using it anyway."
it's just a pest she must have guessed,

and so the people came.

i couldn't fault the goose
who, while they dined, stayed rooted to her nest.
after all,
it was hot,
and dangerous,
and she was using it anyway.

defend her brood, she would conclude,

and then the people came.

they drove her away, dug her out and destroyed her nest,
"she bit someone," they said, "leaving now is, for the best."

i think about that now, and though perhaps a bit obtuse,
i simply wish this poem was only about the goose.



Handprint Turkey

alilyah
Watercolor

Broad Breasted White Turkey

Patrick Kuklinski
@todaysbird on Tumblr

You look nothing like your ancestral mother
Packed in rows with your sisters and brothers
You'll never touch the sky
Even if you were free, we've made it so you could never fly
We built you to give everything
Your children, your body, your soul
You suffer a life of pain
For our convenience
I'm sorry

Bagpiper Among the Geese

Paul Hostovsky

I think it looks to them
like one of them,
this three-legged goose
belly-up under
my arm, wrung neck
hanging down with my finger-
prints still on it.
I think they think
I've killed it,
till I squeeze with my elbow
and it comes to life,
groaning, becoming a three-
headed goose now
craning its necks
over my shoulder, sounding
the alarm. The gander
lifts from his desultory nibbling
as if to consider
whether my domestic
squabble is impinging
on his honor, his distant,
foreign, and a little
ungainly cousin having eloped
with me, the interloper.
But is it love
or death, this alarming

embrace of mine,
all bellows and drones and tasseled
goose? He lifts
his bill skyward, tunes
his own broken clarinet a moment,
then resumes his foraging,
returning his nose
to its own business
as if to say, Who knows
or cares if love is fighting
or love is loving?
And who dares
presume to understand love's ways
or love's eyes for the one
with the one leg and three heads,
or the three legs and no head?
And who's to say why one
is the one love is dying for
while another is a dead bore
at love's oblivious side?
There is only
this music that drones on and on
while someone or other is
dancing till he drops
dead of exhaustion
or disillusion
or strangulation.
The indifferent
beaks will always go on eating.

Swan Song

E. W. Here

over the lake the Swans fly
glide and gleam
each pale feather as it falls
and graces the glass water
echoes the touch
of a piano

Dreaming of Peacocks

E. W. Here

the little Duck with the grass-colored head
drifts through the mossy lake
the water behind him rippling out
in an endless tail
of shifting color

When I Look at Crows

E. W. Here

I can't help but see death
I remember being clothed in Black
as Black as the birds
and a little Crow landed in the grass
she watched me
watched me cry
and smear my black lipstick
as I called her name



Ridgewood Pigeons

bedfordtowers
@bedfordtowers on Instagram
Photograph

underneath Northtown Mall's bridge
from the parking structure to the
main building

Joseph Self
@bigbot66 on instagram

Pigeon down for peach blossoms. They swirl
down in concrete wind. So many times
we have learned to paint and failed to comprehend.
The newest rendition lies beneath, gray with guano
blended corners where the sweep brush failed.
This land belongs to the pigeons. Their king
has long since bonded with the immaterial and artificial.
He pecks at stained paper wrappers and the foundation
of this human attempt at sky. A covering
like a tent or a ceiling to replace what highest yields
is nothing new to him and he favors waddling the land
where his easy banquet will soon unfurl, but he, the king,
is not reserved against abandonment. He knows who
the angels are and it has always been them. Fast. Unglorious.

Mottled
after a painting god saw while making the world
of green leaves giving way to vivid pink fire, which lifts
until it dies and black branches reign over the gray
firmament.

Editor's note

alliyah

At COOP we've never been afraid of being a little bit out of the box (or out of the egg-shell!) and this special edition of COOP, we decided to even allow writers and artists the freedom to go beyond our typical chicken theme and show us their best art and poetry pertaining to any variety of birds. In this issue you'll find ducks, and geese, pigeons, and turkeys, and a host of other feathered friends. And isn't there something that is just so naturally poetic about birds? Perhaps it's their ability to not be bound by land that makes them the perfect subject. It was a pleasure to see how the contributors brought their unique perspectives into their work, and how they made an effort to see beyond the obvious or literal - but convey humor, hope, narrative and metaphor that goes beyond the page. Enjoy this special edition, keep bird-watching, and keep looking beyond!

Editor's note

Rook

We celebrate chickens here at COOP, but we also like to celebrate others: the chicken friends, the creatures who live among chickens, their avian cousins. We encourage people to write chicken poetry when they're not quite sure what to write, because chickens feel goofy and low-stakes and there's a lot that could be said about them. But not everyone feels a deep connection with chickens. Some have more experience watching the geese swimming on a nearby pond or the pigeons roosting under a bridge. It doesn't matter which silly little creature that lives outside your window or inside your heart: write that poem.

Within the pages of this zine are some incredibly beautiful and heart-wrenching, serene and surreal poetry, not to mention images that showcase the diverse talent of our contributing artists.

It's interesting to see which animals our contributors were drawn toward. There's such a delightful assortment of birds (plus alpacas!) in this issue. Thank you for introducing us to so many different chicken friends and helping us see them in a new light. I'd never thought of a bagpipe as a goose before!

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