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Wednesday, January 06, 2021
Kate Bolton Bonnici, Night Burial

MORROW, MORROW, VALENTINE

They say hope survives because we lack
foresight yet here

I've read the story & know
to miss you before you're gone—

sorry does not call me love
but will when you are lost

a child who cannot know to mourn
your possibilities, the particular

way you would pronounce
a word like *empty*—

the tale of the swans' sister is a tale
told not at bedtime—take

her babies, mark her mouth, blame
her congealed heart

her blood a think Valentine
of love & consumption—

I've read the story
& can't pretend

what happens elsewhere
happens to another, to some other,

at some other time
able to quiet the calls at the door.

Winner of the 2020 Colorado Prize for Poetry is California poet [Kate Bolton Bonnici's](#) full-length debut, *Night Burial* (Fort Collins CO: The Center for Literary Publishing, 2020), a book-length elegy around and through her mother's illness and death. "Quiet & you are not among

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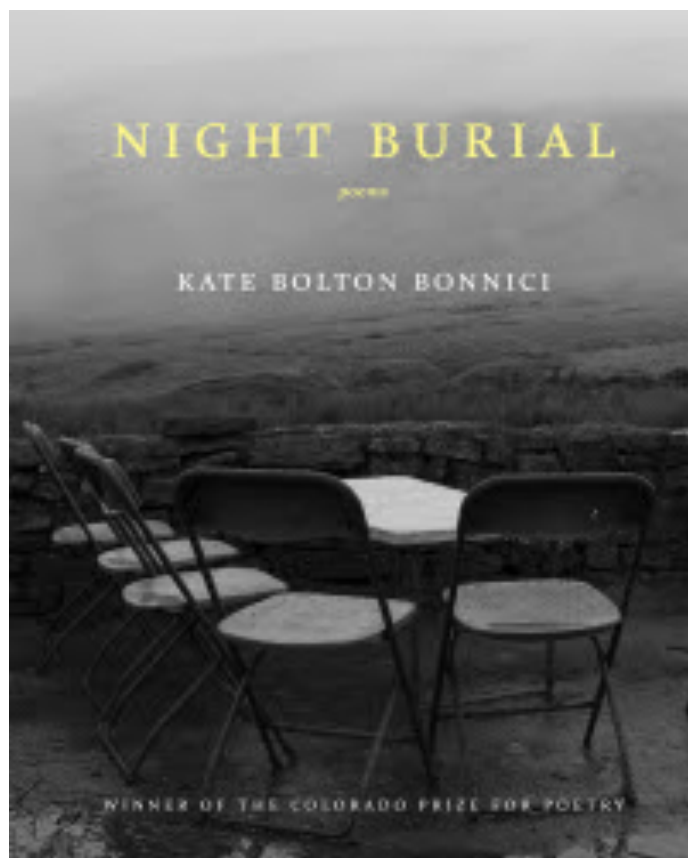


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the / quick but
the dead I /
quicken
once in your
womb you who
felt my own /
quicken //
rested your
hand on my /
round belly at
20 weeks /
riding to
Pensacola a
daughter /
reached," she
writes, to open
the title poem-
section. *Night
Burial* is
composed as
two sections of
lyrics followed
by an
extended lyric
title sequence,
and closing
with a final
section of

short lyrics, all of which are structured to highlight small moments amid the larger crisis, medical appointments and dissolutions. "Your mother dies," she writes, ending the title poem-section. "The most ordinary thing."

Bonnici writes around the death of her mother, circling the occasional other relationships around that central core, including her husband's response to his own mother's death, the ghost of her grandmother's death, and the reactions of her mother's death by and around her small children. "Since someone is always thirsty," she writes, as part of "WITCHSPEAK," "I deliver a child daily into want [.]"
[As Bonnici responds as part of a recent interview conducted by The Center for Literary Publishing's managing editor, Jess Turner](#): "*Night Burial* addresses and cries out for absent beloveds—mother, family in Alabama and elsewhere, children close by but developing their separate selves, husband who walks his own path of maternal passing. These are my household gods, personal and yet part of larger lyric impulses, twining solitude with community, disruption with participation, death's particularized intimacies with the rituals of ordinary time. And this is what I imagine: as a book that is read, each address summons new communion, new remembering, choral and so shared. As a book held in others' hands, the poems find their location—a true lararium fixed for good and for real."

There is such an ease, a clear precision to her poems, composing a lyric of direct statements packed with nuance and density, reminiscent slightly of the lyric of Ottawa poet Sandra Ridley: there's an emotional content both directly open and held back with remarkable restraint, composed

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across a sequence of sentences and an extended accumulation. Through this, Bonnici allows for the sum of its parts to present what her direct statements slowly unfurl: a collection of deep attention and grief. And the book is rife with incredible moments: "My earliest memory of my daughters they / will have forgotten," she writes, as part of the poem "IT WAS A COMMON NIGHT," "which is not the same / as not having known." Later on, as part of the poem "IN YOUR ABSENCE THERE ARE NO MORTAL BANQUETS,'" she writes: "What remains / remains to be seen / never / is what I'm afraid of [.]'" Further on, in the same piece:

now that each day is memorial
 each ends with here lies
 buried here lies bones joints
 & cataracts undoing

undone a past tense
 I can't reckon with
 Let us resist the history
 of every word between us

Posted by [rob mclennan](#) at [8:31 AM](#)

Labels: [Center for Literary Publishing](#) [Colorado State University](#), [Jess Taylor](#), [Kate Bolton Bonnici](#)

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Marginalia"
by Eric Schmaltz, Grey Borders
Reading Series blog
rob answers the Proust Questionnaire,
Open Book Toronto
by Jacob Mooney, The Torontoist
by Peter Simpson, The Ottawa Citizen
by Susan Olding, Proved on the Pulses
by Bruce Deachman, The Ottawa
Citizen
by Open Book Toronto
by Jonathan Ball
by The Danforth Review, on the
ottawa small press book fair
with Elizabeth Bachinsky
some answers to questions and a
poem at Canadian Literature (UBC)
with Sachiko Murakami
with Sandra Ridley
with Melanie Little, editor, Freehand
Books
by Ryan Saxby, on the ottawa small
press book fair
by Broken Pencil, on the Departures
chapbook
rob answers his own '12 or 20
questions'
by ryk mcintyre for GotPoetry (part

two)
 by ryk mcintyre for GotPoetry (part
 one)
 12 or 20 questions project (interviews
 with various authors)
 by Lea Graham, for MiPOesias
 with Rob Budde
 by Didi Menendez, Men of the Web
 Wide Poetry World
 with/by K.I.Press, responding to my
 "anticipating Alberta..."
 by Haas Bianchi
 by Cameron Anstee
 with Stephen Brockwell
 with Shane Rhodes
 by Matthew Firth, on Chaudiere Books
 by Nathaniel G. Moore, on Chaudiere
 Books
 with Rachel Zolf
 with Chris Turnbull
 with Monty Reid
 with Adam Dickinson
 with Amatoritsero Ede
 with Dave Cooper
 by Amatoritsero Ede
 by Sheila Murphy
 with William Hawkins
 with Jay MillAr (on BookThug)
 with John Barton
 with Max Middle
 with Meredith Quartermain
 by james hörner
 with Stephen Cain
 with Stan Rogal
 with Douglas Barbour
 by donato mancini
 with Gil McElroy
 with/by Stephanie Bolster
 by Michael Bryson
 by Michael Bryson (on above/ground
 press)

writer (etc) blogs i often read

(NEW!) rob's list of blogs by Canadian
 writers
 Jonathan Ball, Calgary AB
 John Barlow, Toronto ON
 Gary Barwin, Hamilton ON
 derek beaulieu, Calgary AB
 Charles Bernstein, New York NY
 Gregory Betts, Ste. Catherines ON
 Biblioasis blog, Windsor ON
 Joe Blades, Fredericton NB
 Michael Bryson, Toronto ON
 Rob Budde, Prince George BC
 Mairead Byrne, Providence RI
 Stephen Cain, Toronto ON
 Jason Camlot, Montreal QC
 Jason Christie, Calgary AB
 Cormorant Books blog
 Brad Cran, Vancouver BC
 Peter Culley, Nanaimo BC
 Marita Dachsels, Edmonton AB
 Lauren B. Davis, Princeton NJ
 John Degen, Toronto ON
 Conrad DiDiodato, Toronto ON
 Nate Dorward, Toronto ON
 Amanda Earl, Ottawa ON
 Jon Paul Fiorentino, Montreal QC
 ryan fitzpatrick, Calgary AB

[Tom Fowler, Ottawa ON](#)
[Corey Frost, Montreal QC / New York NY](#)
[Laurie Fuhr, Calgary AB](#)
[Ariel Gordon, Winnipeg MB](#)
[Spencer Gordon, Toronto ON](#)
[Kate Greenstreet, New York NY](#)
[Helen Hajnoczky, Calgary AB](#)
[Sharon Harris, Toronto ON](#)
[Jill Hartman, Calgary AB](#)
[Amy King, New York NY](#)
[Dawn Marie Kresan, Kingsville ON](#)
[Ben Ladouceur, Ottawa ON](#)
[Larissa Lai, Calgary AB](#)
[Shawna Lemay, Edmonton AB](#)
[Rachel Loden, Palo Alto CA](#)
[Annabel Lyon, Vancouver BC](#)
[John MacDonald, Ottawa ON](#)
[Robert Majzels, Calgary AB](#)
[Billy Mavreas, Montreal QC](#)
[Marcus McCann, Ottawa ON](#)
[Max Middle, Ottawa ON](#)
[Jay MillAr, Toronto ON](#)
[Nathaniel G. Moore, Toronto ON](#)
[Sachiko Murakami, Vancouver BC](#)
[Wanda O'Connor, Montreal QC](#)
[Susan Olding, Kingston ON](#)
[Paul Pearson, Edmonton AB](#)
[Pearl Pirie, Ottawa ON](#)
[Harriet, the Poetry Foundation blog, US](#)
[ross priddle, Calgary AB](#)
[Sina Queyras, Montreal QC](#)
[a. rawlings, Toronto ON](#)
[nikki reimer, Vancouver BC](#)
[Brent Robillard / The Backwater Review, Athens ON](#)
[Stuart Ross, Toronto ON](#)
[Mari-Lou Rowley, Saskatoon SK](#)
[Maria Scala, Scarborough ON](#)
[Brenda Schmidt, Creighton SK](#)
[Jordan Scott, Toronto ON](#)
[Ron Silliman, PA](#)
[Natalie Simpson, Calgary AB](#)
[Jessica Smith, Mid-Atlantic](#)
[Susannah M. Smith, Vancouver BC](#)
[Juliana Spahr, Oakland CA](#)
[nathalie stephens, Chicago IL](#)
[Anne Stone, Vancouver BC](#)
[Kate Sutherland, Toronto ON](#)
[Mark Truscott, Toronto ON](#)
[Michael Turner, Vancouver BC](#)
[Daniel Scott Tysdal, Moose Jaw SK / Toronto ON](#)
[Vehicule Press blog, Montreal QC](#)
[Aaron Vidaver, Vancouver BC](#)
[Natalie Zina Walschots, Calgary AB](#)
[Darren Wershler-Henry, Toronto ON](#)
[Thomas Wharton, Edmonton AB](#)
[Ian Whistle, Nepean ON / Winnipeg MB](#)
[Michael Winter, Toronto ON / St. John's NFLD](#)
[Rachel Zucker & Arielle Greenberg, New York NY](#)
[Heather Zwicker, Edmonton AB](#)
[Atlanta Poets Group](#)
[Trans-scribing Canada \(between Taiwan and Canada, but not in the Pacific Ocean\)](#)
[Calgary blowout blog](#)
[Chaudiere Books blog](#)
[ottawa poetry newsletter](#)
[alberta, writing](#)
[thirdfactory list of other poetry blogs](#)

[etc](#)
[list of Canadian writers' blogs from](#)
[the Canadian Literature Centre,](#)
[University of Alberta](#)
[rob's list of other blogs](#)

other books / sections edited

[Guthrie Clothing: The Poetry of Phil](#)
[Hall, A Selected Collage](#)
[Tuesday poem, Dusie blog, April](#)
[2013 etc](#)
[Halvard Johnson's TRUCK, August](#)
[2012](#)
[Douglas Barbour section, Jacket](#)
[Open Letter: A Canadian Journal of](#)
[Writing and Theory; "new Canadian](#)
[poetries" issue](#)
[Decalogue: ten Ottawa fiction writers](#)
[Decalogue: ten Ottawa poets](#)
[George Bowering section, Jacket](#)
[evergreen: six new poets](#)
[side/lines: a new Canadian poetics](#)
[new Canadian poets section, Jacket](#)
[YOU & YOUR BRIGHT IDEAS: NEW](#)
[MONTREAL WRITING](#)
[Written in the Skin: a poetic response](#)
[to aids](#)

cauldron books (rob mclennan, series editor)

[Cauldron Books \(Broken Jaw Press\)](#)
[ancient motel landscape, shauna](#)
[mccabe](#)
[Dancing Alone, Selected Poems,](#)
[William Hawkins](#)
[Groundswell: best of above/ground](#)
[press, 1993-2003](#)
[resume drowning, Jon Paul Fiorentino](#)
[This Day Full of Promise, poems](#)
[selected & new, Michael Dennis](#)
[Shadowy Technicians: New Ottawa](#)
[Poets](#)

some other lit sites worth reading

[Aaron Tucker's Agora Review, Toronto](#)
[ON](#)
[branta: celebrating the might of write](#)
[\(Goose Lane blog\), Fredericton NB](#)
[Peter Darbyshire's CanCult, Vancouver](#)
[BC](#)
[Trevor Cole's Authors Aloud, Toronto](#)
[ON](#)
[Chicago Postmodern Poetry](#)

[The Danforth Review, Toronto ON](#)
[ditch: the poetry that matters](#)
[Doppelganger, Vancouver BC](#)
[Dooney's Cafe :: A News Service](#)
[The Goose](#)
[Intercapillary Space, UK](#)
[It's Still Winter, Prince George BC](#)
[Jacket magazine, AUS](#)
[jwcurry/Messagio Galore page \(with links\)](#)
[LEXICAN RADIO, Vancouver BC](#)
[Narrativity](#)
[Northern Poetry Review](#)
[The Parliamentary Poet Laureate](#)
["Poem of the Week"](#)
[paperplates, Toronto ON](#)
[Parser: New Poetry & Poetics, Vancouver BC](#)
[Phillytalks](#)
[Stephen Collis' Poetic Front, Vancouver BC](#)
[PoetryReviews.ca](#)
[rabble.ca](#)
[The Rain Review of Books, Vancouver](#)
[Rain Taxi](#)
[ReLit Awards](#)
[Shampoo Poetry](#)
[stonestone, Prince George BC](#)
[Louis Cabri's Talknophical](#)
[Assumnacy, Windsor ON](#)
[W magazine \(KSW\), Vancouver BC](#)
[UbuWeb](#)
[/ubu Editions](#)
[more here](#)

rob's audio/video

[rob's first post-Alberta Ottawa reading at the Dusty Owl Reading Series, Sunday, June 8, 2008](#)
[on Bookmark, CKUA Radio \(Edmonton\), March 16, 2008](#)
[on Breakfast Television for Ottawa: The Unknown City, A Channel, Ottawa, March 14, 2008 \(YouTube\)](#)
[on Trevor Cole's Authors Aloud, reading from The Ottawa City Project Reading at the Atwater Library, Montreal, Thursday, February 16th, 2006](#)

[a new poem, "The Key of L," on On Barcelona, September 2013](#)
[two short stories in Sassafras #1, September 2013](#)
[two new poems in Tarpaulin Sky, August 2013](#)
[new poem, "from Hark, a journal: 1864-1967," in Himalayan Walking Shoe, July 2013](#)
[new poem, "Origin story," in The Wonder Book of Poetry, July 2013](#)
[new poem, "Conditions of the shudder," above/ground press broadside #319, June 2013](#)
[four new poems, in The Avatar Review #15, June 2013](#)
[two very short stories, in The Barnstormer, May 2013](#)
[collaborative poem with Christine McNair in Gritty Silk #1, May 2013](#)

[new poem, "Testament: a short sequence of poems after housewares," in The Wonder Book, May 2013](#)
[2 poems from "Songs for little sleep," in foam:e 9, May 2013](#)
[new poem, "Conditions of the shudder," up at the LPG National Poetry Month blog, April 19, 2013](#)
[new poem, "Bank Entire," up at The Steel Chisel, April 2013](#)
[new short fiction, "A Short Film About My Father," on Numero Cinq, April 2013](#)
[new poem, "King Kong Goes to Cambridge," on Dr. Hurley's Snake Oil Cure, March 2013](#)
[new poem, "Liner notes: empty, for an era," on On Barcelona, March 2013](#)
[new poem, "Birthday Poem for Gwendolyn Guth," on Peter Ganick's experiential-experimental-literature, March 2013](#)
[new poem, "King Kong Goes to Parliament Hill," on Centretown Nonsense, February 2013](#)
[new poem, "Self-portrait, with infant," on Konundrum Engine Literary Review, February 2013](#)
[four prose poems, "Notlake Utanikki," on Talking Writing, January 2013](#)
[new poem, "King Kong Goes to Stratford," on On Barcelona, January 2013](#)
[new poem, "A SINGLE STREAK, PURE WHITE OF SKY," on the Verse magazine blog, December 2012](#)
[new poem, "Imaginary Fred," on Peter Ganick's experiential-experimental-literature, November 2012](#)
[new short story, "The Matrix Resolutions," on The Puritan, November 2012](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in On Barcelona, October 21, 2012](#)
[Field Notes: Dear Lea Graham, on Centretown Nonsense \(October 2012\)](#)
[two poems from an untitled collaboration with Christine McNair, in summer stock \(September 2012\);](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in TRUCK, August 31, 2012](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in Newark Review, August 2012](#)
[a short short story at Reader's Digest Canada \(online\), July 2012](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in The Offending Adam \(with little write-up\), June 20, 2012](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in Truck, June 13, 2012](#)
[from "The underside of the line," in Turntable + Blue Light, May 2012](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in foam:e 9, April 2012](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," in Prompt #1, April 2012](#)
[from "how the alphabet was made," at NationalPoetryMonth.ca](#)
[sequence "Notes on the subject of marriage" at Quarter After #1 \(March 19, 2012\)](#)
[three new poems at NAP 2.4 \(March 12, 2012\)](#)
[untitled short story at Fortunates](#)

[\(January 29, 2012\)](#)
[Subject; , on Scott Howard's](#)
[RECONFIGURATIONS: Volume 5:](#)
[Disappearance \(January 21, 2012\)](#)
[Territory is not Map-- , on Halvard](#)
[Johnson's On Barcelona \(January 16,](#)
[2012\)](#)
[two poems from "Songs for little](#)
[sleep," on Dear Sir, \(January 2012\)](#)
[a small handful of poems, in BlazeVox](#)
[Winter 2011 issue \(January 1, 2012\)](#)
[two poems from an untitled Sainte-](#)
[Adele collaboration with Christine](#)
[McNair, in TRUCK \(November 24,](#)
[2011\)](#)
["lake, verse," in Canadian Literature](#)
[#208 \(spring 2011\)](#)
["The Carleton Tavern, shadow," on](#)
[Mad Hatter's Review blog, August 8,](#)
[2011](#)
[from "Songs for little sleep," on Lily,](#)
[August 1, 2011](#)
["A \(broken\) line of ants," poems](#)
[responding to Warren Dean Fulton's](#)
[last Ottawa Pooka Press pub crawl, at](#)
[Upstart, July 7, 2011;](#)
[two lake poems, on Apparent](#)
[Magazine, July 4, 2011](#)
["Vancouver, specifically," on Sachiko](#)
[Murakami's Project Rebuild, July 6,](#)
[2011](#)
["They will take my island," June 30,](#)
[2011](#)
[four poems online at Stride magazine](#)
[\(England\), June 13, 2011](#)
[Poemaday 12, May 13, 2011](#)
[National Poetry Month blog, The](#)
[League of Canadian Poets, April 2011](#)
[Prick of the Spindle, 4.3, Sept. 2010](#)
[Otoliths, summer 2010](#)
[late nights on bank street: a](#)
[concordance, from Branch 2.1](#)
[AngelHousePress, Nat'l Poetry Month,](#)
[from "grief notes"](#)
[monday poem, leaf press, January 18,](#)
[2010](#)
[shampoo 36](#)
[turntable \(BC\)](#)
[angelhousepress' national poetry](#)
[month, 2009](#)
[a poem and brief write-up at The](#)
[Globe and Mail blog](#)
[black robert journal](#)
[pf poetry](#)
[leaf press, Monday's Poem](#)
[milk](#)
[rob mclennan feature at Poet's Corner](#)
[- Fieralingue](#)
[three poems on the TREE Reading](#)
[Series "open mike" page](#)
[ars poetica](#)
[lexican radio](#)
[another new rob poem on The](#)
[Parliamentary Poet Laureate Poem of](#)
[the Week](#)
[rob mclennan feature on Other Voices](#)
[International](#)
[Starfish Poetry #8](#)
[rob on MayDayPoems, daily during](#)
[May, 2008](#)
[blue skies poetry](#)
[Forget Magazine](#)
[BlazeVOX](#)
[ditch: the poetry that matters](#)
[OCHO #11](#)

[Bywords.ca](#)
[Puritan Fiction Magazine](#)
[Walrus, Toronto ON](#)
[Stylus Poetry Journal](#)
[Shearsman magazine 69/70](#)
[Shadowtrain 13](#)
[stonestone, winter 2007](#)
[Dusie 5](#)
[Sidebrow](#)
[Otolith 3](#)
[Jacket 31](#)
[Murderous Signs 13](#)
[Drunken Boat 8](#)
[melancholia's tremulous dreadlocks 4](#)
["intercapillary space"](#)
[listenlight 01](#)
[aught 15](#)
[The Parliamentary Poet Laureate Poem](#)
[of the Week](#)
[luzmag](#)
[RealPoetik](#)
[zafusy](#)
[Nth Position](#)
[The Argotist Online](#)
[Spillway Review](#)
[P.F.S. Post](#)
[Moiria Poetry Journal](#)
[Shampoo 23](#)
[Malleable Jungle](#)
[Stylus Poetry Journal](#)
[Jacket 28](#)
[Hutt](#)
[Cordite Poetry Review](#)
[Sentinel Poetry](#)
[Honouring Mothers](#)
[The Alterran Poetry Assemblage](#)
[stonestone](#)
[the muse apprentice guild](#)
[Pettycoat Relaxer](#)
[Gumball Poetry](#)
[Milk](#)
[Flatlands](#)
[Shampoo 18](#)
[greenboathouse books](#)