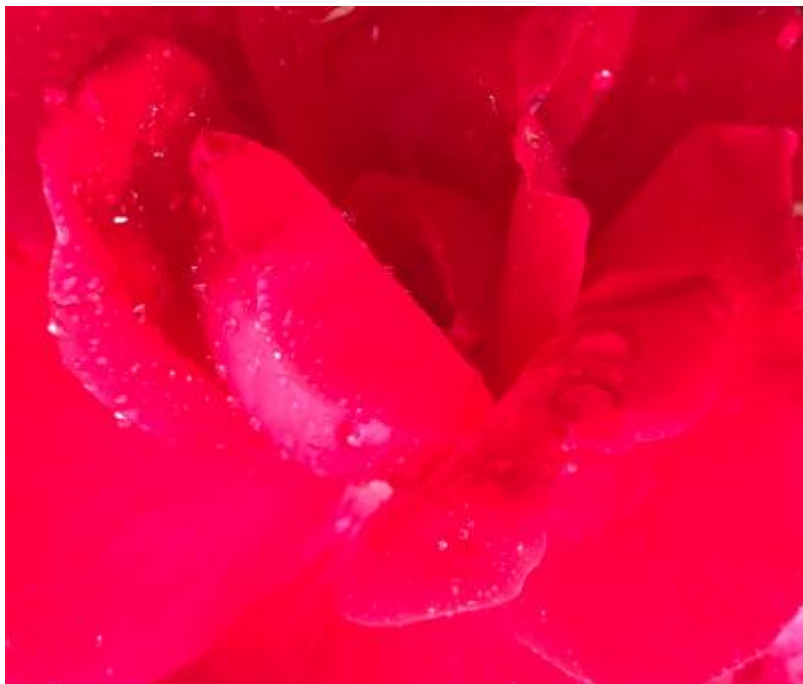


# New Poetry from Alita Pirkopf: "Roadkill," "Sounds of the Past," "Spring," and "Unhealthy"



BLOOD IN BUCKETS / *image by Amalie Flynn*

## ROADKILL

I bring you blood in buckets,  
a heart that I hear, a palsied hand.  
It has been eight, ten  
years, my issue.  
The same as twenty years ago  
when your father felt  
about me as you do now.  
I felt the world shrink  
but I thought something,  
not necessarily the world,  
would end. I had not thought  
the world lay flat, as Renaissance

cartographers mapped it.  
But now, like an automobile tire  
not only flapping, flattening,  
parts of it, or me, lie on the shoulder  
of my road with dead things and dirt.

## **SOUNDS OF THE PAST**

She thought she had found  
soft music and warm dialect,  
a sunny sort of near-Italian soul,

But surfaces surprise.  
She found out. She found  
that underneath pounded  
a martial drumbeat  
vibrating still

from Vienna's center,  
his childhood years  
under the Third Reich,  
a father fighting  
occupying Yugoslavia  
with others  
missing  
the village polkas,  
his son.

A burst of marches,  
explosions, still resounding.  
All of us hearing  
pounding steps and hearts.

## **SPRING**

Shreds remain—  
unraveled weavings  
of brown grasses and mud—  
in branches a bird eyed

for her family tree.

The rest, the nest,  
that we had watched  
through last week's window,  
fell.

The dog found  
blue broken eggs  
in the grass.

Families, all of us  
consider seriously.  
Upsetting winds  
come to nests.  
It is spring  
and windows  
open views  
and dooryards fill  
with the ambiguity  
of lilacs.

## **UNHEALTHY**

I loved my doctors  
until one  
played sick games,  
touching and taunting,  
and knowing of rules  
I didn't know.  
Telling jokes  
I didn't understand.  
Dismissing me  
for my naivete—  
stupidity.

The years passed,  
and he operated  
on me appropriately,

savingly. Later he  
mentioned dining  
together or going out  
for coffee, but didn't ask,  
and got angry for reasons  
I didn't know, saying  
I hadn't said I'd go.