



make the kawinzi

rut was originally published as part of Ghost City Press' Summer Series, wherein the the press publishes a microchapbook for every day of summer.

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This version of *rut* was created for the 2024 San Francisco Zine Fest by me, Mukethe. I hope you like these ten prose poems about goats boning each other. I like being around animals who remind me that I am an animal and breeding season is a pretty good time for that.

Photos were taken on 35mm/Lomography Single-Use Reloadable in Cedar Grove, NC where I lived and worked on a goat dairy and creamery for a year during the pandemic. Birthed a lotta baby goats, made a helluva lotta fancy cheese. Good year.

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[BLAZE]

The grasshoppers who should be called grassflyers fly
while far off in the pasture Blaze moons: stands and
stares and aches and waits in quiet petition: come,
Adam, come, come. A heron lands on the pond's edge
in a curve the east wind has packed with duckweed.

A white duck with one bent wing waddles toward the
protection of a big grey goose. It is milking time and
Blaze, piebald and shaggy with one curving scar, rakes
herself from longing. She trots through the withered
grasses long after the other does have queued up in the
holding pen. Her udder is brimming and bouncing and
October ides lopsided bounty.

The discharge hangs long and low. Its terminal droplet has collected red clay, alfalfa dust, cedar chips. Two gloves, two teat wipes make quick work of wiping clean her swollen slit. Two does down, a fallow brown year-old shits, and the pineconed pellets fall onto the milking stand and steam.

[600P]



[RUT]

rolled in at the end of breeding at the last farm, bred just one
 doe to one buck, a buckling really, piss-soaked kid about a year
 old with gumption aplenty but not much aim / that afternoon i
 squatted + watched trying to make sure he shot up in crystal >
 three times / it's not entirely unpleasant / doggone ripe / ready
 / floral / not like lilacs but ruddling / like piss / because it is
 / so much piss / so much piss he whole-body tacky / somuchpiss
 his hair waxed / somuchpiss his hair standing on pisslaguered end
 / somuchpiss he scald his face + skin + far to peachwhite flesh
 and in the deepheat of spitting +/ or lip flipping +/ or mounting

i swoop in with menthol balm / dot the pissories something
soothing / it's bad / meat in a weak fire / wood mold /
overseasoned / oversalted / downwind / upwind / it blankets /
it seeps / you don't want it in you you best leave the farm / it's
desire that looks like madness / desire / lip flipped
but not fangs bared because them top gums toothless / flop-
around pink tongue tonguing piss / seepage discharge goop juice
piss so wet so much wet so much wet / blood gumming caroused
round a hanging hornbad watch watch there he go again he finna
go wade in the water / wade in the water / wade in the water



[ROSIE]

saw named her daughter rosie after her favorite goat rosie and she named the cheese she invented, the one she loves most, rosie, though technically the goat and the cheese are named rosie but the child is named rosalina. farm kids are sharp, abide mortality and apprehend creation hark! one day rosie, five years on this earth, rosie the child asked somegirl recently in the family way if she & her lad had been breeding for fun or breeding for a baby. "breeding for fun, rosie," she had to say look! see

crosseyed marco too horned up to eat mounting what's ripest that day, if you could ask him the words would cardle and collapse over the skid of your tongue and if he could answer he'd turn them yeast blank pupils toward you, the bucks aren't like the does, no consciousness peering back, nothing tamed, his yeast cloud eyes would not quite focus, he'd crosseyed stare and shake some spit or curl that lip, he'd grumble prelapsarian and you'd mind too late that our questions are always too much of Language, of Society, of Civilization, never enough of muck or marl or mud and he'd say he'd say one word he'd say not with his mouth but it'd blossom loud as his stink through the pastures lip flipped he'd say without saying

breeding

she spins coy little games, familiar & feminine, slides against him, soft & longing, grazes his coat gentle.

she blushes, bids him to pine her wiles to taking. he will disregard everything save the disclosures of her piss, her squiggle of a vulva, her pellets of shit. i wish the ken to give this tongue she could hear. i think i see her bat an eyelash. he seeks and smells her holes. she is open, she is more than open.



[SCRATCH N SNIFF]

[OPEN]

see the moon last night, sam asks, and i did, it waxed the whole path up from the family house to my trailer, a walk i take in cluckless dark, no headlamp, tradition i picked up from a teenager at the last dairy who liked to test his senses, wind it through the farm after sundown eyes and ears unaided, and also because it means one less thing to keep track of, three if you count two aa batteries each separate.

you know goats can hold on to semen, she says, let it go when primed to accept it best, happens at the full moon.

i can feel it too, she says, hand on her belly, rubbing slow, i can tell when i'm open and she's knocked up so her words have the weight of a blooming fetus, three months in the womb now, i can tell, she says, i can feel my cervix widen, and her hands fall and make an o parallel to the ground, under her belly, and she is so casual about this one more craft of womanhood she's mastered.

full moon on the 31st?, she casts, so if the buck got them all look on about 140 days for the nubian births, little later for the alpines. in the morning the one lamaracha doe, usually the smartest, is plodding and unfocused, even for a goat. she seems invaded. her udder is ash-dark and once its milkweight is drained





i ink the kidding calculus on my forearm, sharpie myself with stock in folkmath. i let her and eleven other dairy does out, warm the teat dip in a hot water bath. i squat low to heave the door, and let twelve more dairy does in.

[THREE DAYS IN A ROW]



he is greedy and focused. it
has been for three days in a
row only her, a short-legged
pale-fawn half-breed whose
standing heat persists an
unreceded tide. her receipt is
noiseless, volatile for thirty-
six hours of intermittent
insertions from a buck whose
pre-ejaculate head tremors
vibrate red like woodpecks.
so pissick and heavy aside

something so footlight and
lissom. cocks, cum, sogged
& furred flanks: what
viscid, hulking things to be
worshiped. by wilting night
he has moved on to lapping
inquisitions of the unspoilt,
engrossed in sodden study.
who is yet unsoured? who,
still wanting? who is next?



[WINTER FLIES]

the sun starts setting at five. they face south in the holding pen,
hoofperched on bent hog panels missing dusk raw pink as a rope
burn on a two year old's neck who says

COOK AT DIS MULEXE COOK

through fire ants/ fence falls/ near decapitation she's grasped
the body endures. i reinforce the divider separating in from out
three times before the season ends, conk t-posts into clay chaff
hoping i don't concuss myself swatting pests between downward
thrusts of the pounder. sam says

THESE ARE DANGEROUS FLIES
DANGEROUSLY HARDY
THE OFFSPRING OF OFFSPRING WHO SURVIVED
THE SWARMS SEEMED OVER THE YEAR

i say

let me at them

, take two tight hours to strip near empty forty/fiftysome-odd
does then lesion these hands careless, go in something sloppy with



the sanitizer, splash acid hard and high round the
parlour, hound them small black bodies to scatter but
before the sun circles back for cockerow the flies,
the winter flies, ham triumphant, scat, settle and
flock, jitterbug and resettle, for endless ever, with
the winged hubris of the freeborn.



[TAPER]

They are bred, growing doelings and bucklings now. We allow their glands a rest. Space milkings. Reduce grain, less alfalfa, more orchard grass. My cackle, tuneless upon seeing their last-eyed wheatwants, is cruel. The buck remains but garners little interest. One hunger for another. The conifers jaundice. The ground offers only scantest supplements. Friends: winter will end, gales will guide flocks back the other way, your babes will come and the commons will gush to green. I am sorry for laughing. Give me some grace, goats, some small spell, and when the oaks allow I will set about again with psalms of leaf and flower.



Sky and hay and hawks. Two blue jays. Hoarfrosted bunchgrass. A layer of ice on the whey pond. Juniper berries, plucked by peckers. The smallest doe is rounding out. Her neck fattens. Three inches of snow tomorrow. By and by and by I will lift each tail, determine for whom the seepage is sufficient to steer to a kidding pen bedded high and soft where you can murmur in peace, moan low and coaxing until the first two tender hooves, ivory and pliable, cotton their way to earth. You will stay giving your body to this motherless birth, until it is yours again, for a heartbeat, until, again, we claim it for our own.



for sam & rosie & cosima