

# OXEYE DAISY — JENNIFER LANG

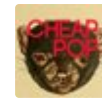
October 17, 2019

You confront him, hands on hips, say, *So, did you enjoy that?* and he asks what and you say, *Your 80th birthday party, a little belated?* But he doesn't realize it's belated, having lost track of time, no longer able to recall the day he was born. All the guests—your sorority sisters, his fraternity brothers, your friends from Lawyers' Wives, his from high school across the Bay Bridge—gone, leaving only the two of you in the reception room still awash in UC Berkeley colors with blue-and-gold mini basketballs and plastic cheerleading pom-poms you placed on every table, and me: your second child, only daughter, grown woman with still unanswered why-questions. He tells you it was nice and you say, *Good!* your voice implying more along the lines of *Good because I planned it by myself!* or *Good because it's my turn next year and someone better do the same for me!* when he leans in, toward you, while I lurk in the doorway, putting presents in bags, observing as you lean in, toward him, hearing his *I love you* and a loud smack, followed by your *I love you, too*, making me wince. I get your fifty-nine years of marriage cemented by two children, nine grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and adventures on every continent but can't get beyond all the other butts. But his quarter-century betrayal. But your rash decision to stay together. But his diagnosis. Last but of all: your ensuing rage, ending in I-can't-deal-with-him-anymore-so-I'm-moving-out at age seventy-eight. Honestly, you behave like a sixth-grade girl, plucking flower petals on a daily basis, altering the words *I love him-I love him not* as I stand, a witness, wondering how to solve the pronoun problem: who is really losing whose mind here—him, you, or me.

American born, French by marriage, Israeli by choice, Jennifer Lang writes mostly about her divided self. Her essays have appeared in *Under the Sun*, *Ascent*, *Hippocampus*, *Full Grown People* and on *Brevity's One-Minute Memoir* podcast. Honors include Pushcart Prize

**New stories every Tuesday and**

**Thursday.** Have a question for us? Email us at **CheapPopLit [at] gmail [dot] com**. Let's do this.

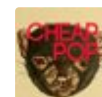


## CHEAP POP

RT @monetwithlove: I take full credit for TJ's story that I did not write. 🤖❤️😄

<https://t.co/4v3MOPPyqP>

Oct 23, 2020, 7:54 AM

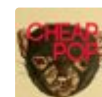


## CHEAP POP

"he keeps turning the prism of your body, soft hairs, red mole, noticing to stay present, you, his second love, fou...

<https://t.co/vn9x7mDW8P>

Oct 22, 2020, 6:06 PM

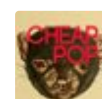


## CHEAP POP

Friends! Coming in November! Our very own reading series! Stoked x infinity! 🤖👉

<https://t.co/b2ipFiFvPm>

Oct 22, 2020, 3:46 PM



## CHEAP POP

and Best American Essays nominations and finalist in 2017 *Crab Orchard Review's* Literary Nonfiction Contest. She holds an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts and lives in Raanana, where she founded Israel Writers Studio and serves as Assistant Editor at *Brevity*. Find her at <http://israelwriterstudio.com/> and follow her @JenLangWrites.

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 Robert James Russell  Comment

< CHICKEN — LACEY N. DUNHAM      BEEPERS — EMILY COSTA      >

RT @robhollywood: Well, this is happening. More details soon, but @CHEAP\_POP presents ROUND ROBIN, a monthly(-ish) reading series. St...

<https://t.co/RvDf8oRHd8>

Oct 22, 2020, 3:45 PM



#### CHEAP POP

RT @robhollywood: "which is why he keeps turning the prism of your body, soft hairs, red mole, noticing to stay present, you, his sec... <https://t.co/q1WtgX0fmq>

Oct 22, 2020, 2:15 PM



#### CHEAP POP


"...even though he wasn't joking, couldn't kid about the way loneliness found him buying microwave meals and thrift...

<https://t.co/IvBYTdVAKm>

Oct 22, 2020, 10:54 AM



#### CHEAP POP

Thank you, everyone who applied! We've got a difficult decision to make. We'll let you know as soon as we do 

<https://t.co/Urg0039IRp>

Oct 21, 2020, 9:56 AM



#### CHEAP POP

"we hadn't met before, no not yet but I had seen you, seen you on stage, dancing in a torn black dress and at that...

<https://t.co/yZ3uKU9gXz>

Oct 20, 2020, 8:22 PM



#### CHEAP POP

"What year was it? I returned home to a letter from you, your loopy handwriting warm in my grasp. Dear K., Know tha...

<https://t.co/dHMDngIBzR>

Oct 20, 2020, 2:01 PM



**CHEAP POP**

Pssst. Did you hear? WE ARE  
LOOKING TO BRING ON AN  
ADDITIONAL ASSISTANT  
EDITOR! LGBTQ+ and BIPOC  
candidates are str...

<https://t.co/YNGXqhuc1u>

Oct 16, 2020, 8:34 PM

ARCHIVE

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FOCUS — TJ FULLER

3 DAYS AGO

COUP DE FOU DRE —  
KATHERINE GLEASON

5 DAYS AGO

ANIMAL BEHAVIOR —  
MELISSA BOWERS

A WEEK AGO

GLENDALE — GEGHAM  
MUGHNETSYAN

A WEEK AGO

MYSTIC HUSTLER — ERIKA  
VEURINK

2 WEEKS AGO

SHE PROBABLY DIDN'T  
MEAN IT — DANA  
LIEBELSON

2 WEEKS AGO

THE STONE GIRL — LUCY  
ZHANG

3 WEEKS AGO

AWARD NOMINATIONS —  
2020

3 WEEKS AGO

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