

[Fake Ambassadors](#) [1]

March 19, 2018 [Featured Poetry](#) [2]

[Science and Society](#) [3]

[Nature](#) [4]

Two Poems by Athena Kildegaard



"Fake Ambassadors of a Fake Unknown"

—*René Magritte*

Some things we know: that our fingernails
grow and grow, that we lose strength

as we age, etcetera. These are physical
evidences of a quantifiable world. And some

things are unknown and may remain so
forever. For example, what was the first

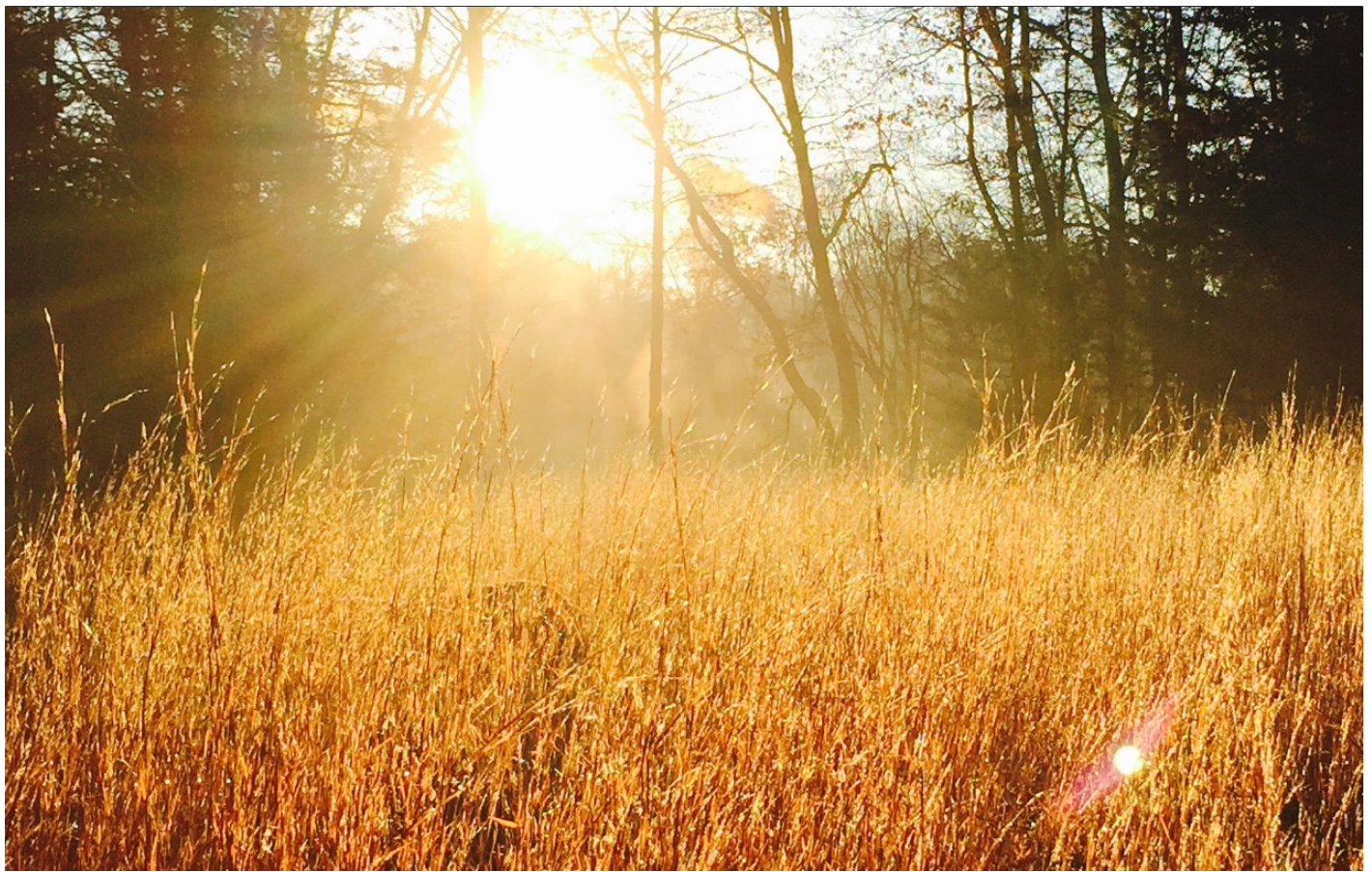
word ever spoken by *Homo sapiens sapiens*?
"Yes?" "No?" Or "eat," "shit." "Good?" "Me?" "Me?"

And surely there are things we don't know
but that we will no doubt find out. How

to die. When tomorrow's headache will pass.
So, the unknown unknowns, as a man

in a gray suit once enunciated. Those
will remain buried. For now, let a beautiful

woman wearing almost nothing jump
out of a cake. We'll eat with our hands.



Prairie Lament

Grain elevators connect sky
to ground.

Fake Ambassadors

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Our eyes seek out
these monoliths

of metal and square letters
and do not

move beyond them.
Grain elevators

leave nothing to the imagination.
They are

unrooted and do not blossom.
They presume.

And we are fattened by them
into complacency.

Publishing Information

- "Fake Ambassadors of a Fake Unknown" is taken from *René Magritte: Selected Writings*, edited by Kathleen Rooney and Eric Plattner, University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

Art Information

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Athena Kildegaard is the author of four books of poetry, and her fifth, *Course*, will appear in March 2018 from Tinderbox Editions. Her poems have been set to music, read by Garrison Keillor, and nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Athena lives and teaches in Morris, Minnesota.

For more information, visit [Athena Kildegaard's website](#) [6].

Fake Ambassadors

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Links:

- [1] <https://talkingwriting.com/fake-ambassadors>
- [2] <https://talkingwriting.com/talkingwriting-categories/featured-poetry>
- [3] <https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/science-and-society>
- [4] <https://talkingwriting.com/tw-channels-and-categories/nature>
- [5] <https://www.flickr.com/photos/imagefield/6002609086/>
- [6] <https://athenakildegaard.com/>