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HSTQ: SUMMER 2023

First Book
Daniel S. Irwin

You know, the first book I ever put together
Was really full of crap just to see how a book
Would come out. It was a true treasure of
The absurd, irreverent, vulgar, mega facetious,
Absolutely filthy purely moronic work that just
Flowed from my sick deranged head to fill pages.
Didn't do it for money. Never thought it would sell.
What kind of fool would waste hard earned dinero
On totally worthless absolute dung heap literature?
Shocking surprise, some did with expected results:
Hate mail, damnation to Hell, cast out by relatives.
Shoulda used a pen name. But I never name my pens.
Sales so good, I had to order more books three times.
The quality of the printing and paper didn't matter.
I sold most of them at the local church book burnings.

**The Human Condition According to Cardinale Lotario
de' Conti di Segni, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216)**
Tony Dawson

Innocent III, not the jolliest of Popes,
wanted to dash Everyman's hopes.
To achieve this end, it was his primary mission
to set out his thoughts on the human condition.
His medieval mind produced a short treatise
marked by a really heart-warming thesis:
that Man's made of slime and is utterly vile,
(and 'Man' includes Woman, so no need to smile!)
Man is conceived in the stench of lust,
ending his days as ashes and dust.
Made of rotten blood and unclean semen,
he enters the world pursued by a demon.
In life he breeds fleas, tapeworms, and lice,
and in death, worms, and flies, because of his vice.
If it's all vomit and dung when he's 'in the pink',
in death he's reduced to putrefaction and stink.
So no Gay Lothario was this Innocent Pope.
He much preferred to whinge and mope.
'De miseria humanae conditionis'
was not the work of a handsome Adonis.
While in frescoes he cuts a commanding figure,
his prognathous jaw was only slightly bigger
than the rest of his prominent facial features
that made him appear to be one of those creatures
of Italian stock that looked more like a German
and regarded fellow humans as lower than vermin.
His lantern jaw of the Desperate Dan variety
had a light in there to search out impiety.
Yet people still read the song that he'd sung:
'the more delicate the food, the more reeking the dung.'
Considering the chant that Lothario intoned,
he tended to leave no turd unstoned.

Early Morning Cocktails
George Gad Economou

the dragon-filled meadows come to life
again

as I stare at the sweating glass of gin and tonic.
ten in the morning, no better way to prepare for
another day of pure nothingness—the bars last night
were rough, no new faces,

only whiskey nursing flies and we had someone to ache for,
a face we tried to drink away till last call came and stumbled
our way home—some to the nearest park, others to their
little corners underneath bridges made of snow.

tiny dark room, encapsulated by
thick clouds of blue smoke; there were no fights,
aside from one I picked with a lamppost that wouldn't budge,

and no women. the drink gives me strength
to carry on for another day and hope for a different result.

in the grasp of insanity for years, always looking for
ways out, even when I want in.
the glass's dangerously empty, one poem more than enough
to drain it;

time for a stronger refill, save on the tonic for
when *she* comes back.

God on High ~ Willie Smith

I'm on the make. I'm on the take – take any wench, take any drug,
never any shit take.

I lie on my back. On top the hill. Under the stars. Close the eyes.

See that ceiling in Italy where God first gave man the finger. Zoom
through the cupola. Eviscerate the atmosphere. Kick the ass outta holy
space. Shoot clear to the Perseus Clusterfuck.

I'm on the make, I'm on the take – five bills by midnight. On accounta I
turn an eye to the sky.

There shines Medusa, masked as Algol, the Ghoul, tonight in eclipse.
She squats at her vanity, braiding snakes, while her galactic nails dry.
Whereas Algol, at the bottom of her/his clockwork, dims.

Damn sight ducky, hosting stars in the brain. Star maps spritz the
cortex. I'm in the heavens called "Tex." Work the door. Swamped with
calls for directions.

Dusa, my arm across her kidneys, palm cupping an alabaster hip, wears
but sky-blue fishnet thi-hi's. Halo dropped around the neck.
Hummingbird breasts perched for takeoff. Curious nipples. Sapphire
screwed into the navel. The snakes hiss and spit their approval.

Across the floor alone together we waltz.

She breaks the ice – before breaking the embrace – with a pick up the
nose. I am severely pithed. A last thought squirms, spit missing the
spittoon...

Tonight I take my eyes out for a date. Take with two flutes. Dinner plus
a show. Some blow, some dawdle, some more blow, several licks at the
infinite, then we mate.

Take me in your head to the ceiling. Make me high on that air touch.
Take me – for I, too, am, see this finger? on the make.

Light a Candle at 58
Donna Dallas

Exit 58 is a Vegas showstopper
3 suicides this month
I saw one of em
drop from that bridge
like a huge stuffed animal
contorted bent and fluffy in the air
like they had folded up for the hit
The one last month landed
on the hood of a car doing 70
detective came by
to investigate these incidents
why the exit 58 overpass - why here?
because they can get over the fence
it ain't high enough to keep 'em down
he walked away discouraged
there ain't no secret voice from beyond
calling to these jumpers
no dark omen hovering over 58
it's just dang easy

The twins at the bar today
drunk to the point of savage
pull up their skirts in unison
show their stuff
walk over to 58 like they comin for it
they strolled by twice last week
sizing the climb
the fall
holding hands
they stare over
into a blind abyss
I'm sure they discussed this
either through their telekinetic twin powers
or over martinis
slurred together a plan
to fly over in a wind of glory
I said 3 this month
2 were addicts
the 3rd lost his house in a gambling bender
3 kids and a wife bring flowers
and light a candle at 58

**Eastern Avenue Arcade
PW Covington**

I'm back in my car,
My mouth smiling but sore
the way your mouth feels after sucking seven cocks in the last hour

Lunch time, 12 to 1
Face-fuck aftermath, back of the throat tenderness
Sore and edgy
They still fill my nostrils

Sweat and pubic must, musk, and Irish Spring
My sore soft palate will remind me
Until I'm out of Oklahoma
Of every cock that pushed against it

That enjoyed my sweet and slick submission
So free to take in that darkened, roadside, den

Oklahoma City
Eastern Avenue Arcade
It takes a while
For your eyes to adjust

Pulling clean and circumcised cocks from unbuckled blue jeans
Silky hard and throbbing shafts from gym shorts
Swirling my salvation tongue over the tip
Then suckling like a pup

Retired Air Force Non-Com's and
Construction foremen in their 60's
Oil field tool salesmen
Use my willing mouth, anonymous

Imagining Goddess forms,
their wives or long-lost loves
and other more disturbing deviations
that one that kept calling me "his boy"

Imagining all sweet release
They grind my forehead into soft and furry bellies
Imagining they were anywhere
But Oklahoma

millionaire
John Grochalski

leaving
the job
for the weekend

to spend
forty-eight hours
on the couch

acting like
a drunken
millionaire

without a care in the world

until i wake up
into the horror

of the monday morning
work day

beholden
to america again

nothing
but a pauper

with cheap vodka
and stale wine

on his breath.

The Taker, The Rainmaker
M.P. Powers

It takes more than just wild-eyed
courage.
It takes a tightrope walker's balance.
It takes the nerve of a canal
horse.

It takes a knife to the laws of physics.

It takes your hair,
your teeth,
your youth.
It takes the delusion
of hope. It takes all your illusions.
It makes
you wear the mask of a clown
the hide of an alligator,
your shoes
on the wrong feet and your toupee
backwards.

Then it puts your mind in total black sun
darkness.

Then it comes for your name,
your ego,
your identity,
your convictions.

It takes them all and keeps taking,
and keeps taking
and keeps taking
till there's nothing
on the bone. Then it takes
the bone.

my first book signing
Johnny Scarlotti

starving... rummaging around... i mustered up a mcketchup packet... rip
the top off... imagine it's a chick... put it in my mouth n suck... n fuck
yea...

ima relish this

i do another line of crushed up adderall
inside my car that i'm livin in,
outside the library

ssnniiff

i look at my face in the rear view mirror, and laugh

(i am so depressed)

windows rolled down, it's hot

i watch a guy and girl passing by

he's tall, buff, mean looking

gurl sees me

gets excited

(??)

says, shrieking

"ARE YOU JOHNNY SCARLOTTI?!?!"

"um, sadly, yeah"

she jumps up and down

comes over
the guy follows, looks annoyed

"pardon the whip,
rari is in the shop", i joke

guy looks upset

she grabs one of my books (!!) from her bag
says "can you sign this for me?"

"sure" i grab the pen from her
"your name?"

"Naomi" she says, handing me the book

it's all beat up
suffered a lot of water damage
i can't help it
i make a joke
"did you get pussy juice all over this or wut"

guy looks mad
he puts his arm around her like she is his property
like he's scared of me stealing his mcchicken

"relax, i'm not gunna take ur mcchicken", i say

"what?" he says like a bitch

i say back to him
"shut up bitch"

*oops, haha, i shouldn't have said that,
i donno wuts gotten into me lately,
this guy could easily kick my ass*

he says
"the fuck did you just say, faggot? cocking back like he's going to hit me
thru my open window

oh shit, what do i do

"get out of the car!" he grabs my car and shakes it

"what!" he screams

he elbows my side mirror, snapping it off

the girl says "chill chazz!!"

"you're real tough" i tell him

he circles around my car, spits on my back window

"fight me", he begs

"no..."

oh yyeahh

i pull out my new pistol

(a reeal sexy model
best rated for blowing your brains out)

guy gasps, puts his hands up
"woah buddy, u win" he says, stepping back
"please don't shoot. please"

i don't really know what to do next ...

"BANG!" i scream and he dives to the ground

i give the girl the book n pen back

"sorry about that" i say

starting my engine

girl says "wait, can i come with you? he's not my boyfriend"

guy's back on his feet "what, i thought we were together", "babe", he
pleads

"no, you're a stupid asshole" she says

i open the passenger door for her

she hops in

i point the gun at the guy again

"BANG!"

he falls to his knees, like he's just been shot

a dark stain grows out of his crotch. it looks like blood but it's probably
just piss...

and we leave.

guns are pretty cool

/i look her up and down,
damn, i'm in the mood for a mcchicken

/pardon my outfit, i tell her.
it's laundry day, i lie

Three Ways
Jay Maria Simpson

Three women emerge from a sleepy night
drowning in the cobwebs of leftover dreams
caffeine soon to be shared from a bowl
sugary treats pastries being the sole
reason to stretch their bodies in morning ritual
breaking free of constraint with unseemly acts
they walk to the river wrapped in chiffon and lace
no longer avoiding the whispering eyes
they drift in and out of feathery leaves
falling slowly from autumnal trees
the wanton river peaks in early morn
they drown their faces in its liquid silk
feel the force between their legs
the perfect three way
body
mind
poetry

to be a poet seventy years ago
Karl Koweski

upon arriving in Hollywood
Dylan Thomas stated
his two main objectives
were touching the titties
of a blonde starlet
and meeting Charlie Chaplin.

by the end of the evening,
Shelley Winters obliged him
the first objective
at which point
Dylan Thomas excused himself
saying he was off
to find Charlie Chaplin.

it says a lot about the
poets of yesteryear
as opposed to the
dabblers of today.

I can list a chapbook's
worth of blonde starlets.
I can't think of one poet
worthy of their titties.

**Mt. Olympus
John Bennett**

At the seafood buffet
David Carradine opts for oysters,
dead by autoerotic asphyxiation,
his face is like a blue moon
as is Anthony Bourdain's
(they often sit together
though seldom speak)

No one gets drunk
on Mt. Olympus
but everyone tries

"Have another!
Afraid you'll wake up
having your stomach pumped?"

The vomit chokers cringe, Jimi Hendrix,
Jon Bonham, Bon Scott...

The only efficacious drug
is angel's piss
but the high
is seeing everything
for what it really is

"I won't touch the stuff,"
says one and all,
"not on your life."

**Getting Old
Mather Schneider**

Getting old is no good.
You get the jowls and your bones creak
and you have to wipe your ass for 10 minutes
and then again a half hour later.
Just wait, it gets worse, says my old mother.
Dad's got two new hips.
Even grandma is still alive
if you can believe it.
She's 96.
They all live thousands of miles
from this small Mexican town
where I count change for a pack of smokes
and walk to the corner store
with my 33 pesos.
Chucho follows me jumping and acting a fool.
He loves to go to the store
though I never buy him anything.
He sniffs the garbage everywhere,
chases a cat or two,
old Chucho now 5 years old but still
a pup at heart.
Except some days he seems tired
and wants to crawl onto my lap and sleep.
He must have some arthritis from when he got run
over by a car a couple years ago.
Getting old is no good, Chucho.
He looks at me and tilts his head
and cocks his ear.
I complain to him about not getting laid anymore
because the old lady's got a sickness
and says it hurts
but poor Chucho's probably been laid at best
3 times in his whole life
and he doesn't even have porn to look at
like I do
when the old lady goes to the drugstore.

Jane of The Jungle
Casey Renee Kiser

I remember Him, Him
and *him*
They'd beat on their chests
and claim my swirling-drain heart;
Claim me with echoed ego,
Mark me as 'rescued'
But every branch I'd reach for
after that would snap
So many branches
when they all just kept a one-track mind
...AVOID EMOTION...
I remember myself too-
Me, myself and I reporting for duty
Surely, with all my personalities,
I can get one of these motherfuckers
to warm up around here
(words directly from my childhood trauma)
I'm lost again in my constant need to mother

Emotionally unavailable men-
sexy hearts in barbed wire lace
lit up my black hole

Can't commit, can't decide on anything
except to hold back? Well honey,
you've got a chance with me!
Feel nothing (give a bit) Say nothing (give a bit)
Admit nothing, push-pull, PUSH-PULL
And I laugh at the fact
that I never believed in wearing a watch
'Cause all I get is
motherfuckers wasting my time

Turns out, a jungle man is an idealized good time
but they get boring faster than I can say,
oh, my hero...
Wearing their mommy issues like animal skin,
so, they can pretend they've conquered them
Protecting the *honor* of their toxic mothers
while attempting to dodge *every* call, *every* visit
Soaking up mommy's gossip gush and rumor rush
I'd blow kisses
while they'd throw banana peels at my feet.
Trained monkeys!

Still, I'd wrap myself around their thumbs
when they weren't sucking them
Gimme more, gimme more baby,
ANY DAY NOW...

Oh *yeah*, I was Jane of The Jungle,
swinging from tiny moment to tiny moment
of which I related
Grasping tight to the in-betweens,
the bones they threw, I'd bury deep

Getting fucked till I was pretty
by distant eyes,
I remember when I had the energy
But I am choosing now to forget

Finally, clean and dry, I wave
good-bye to the spin cycle;
to the mucky jungle
with pitted eyes
from a cloud
above
the asylum

Yeah,
I wear the 'crazy ex' label proudly
I WORKED HARD FOR IT

late at night
Ronan Barbour

people have stopped
answering their phones
people have stopped
leaving their voices
in greeting
or goodbye

so I knock on windows
late at night

long and loud enough
to awaken
the possibility
of an inhumane monster
on the other side

long and loud enough
to get some of them
praying
for that
which they
give:
an empty footpath
under the cold glow
of the street lamp

the image
they have etched
in another's
heart
late at night

too many sad poems
J.J. Campbell

they tell me i write too
many sad poems

there has to be something
on this planet that makes
you happy

i laugh and tell her all
those things are now
inappropriate in these
times

i would be a creep if i
asked what color panties
are you wearing and do
you mind if i have a sniff

i heard laughter and i
quickly told her that's
a bad sign

in the old days i would
take that as a sign to get
even dirtier

now, i think you think
i'm just being funny

silence

and then she says
black lace and sniff
all you want

i laughed
and told her here
comes a happy
poem

Ste. Fabulist of Venice Beach

Jay Passer

She sips the warm nectar of bee pollen combined with tinctures of turmeric and psilocybin

She speaks 8-10 languages fluently, including ASL, Braille and dolphin sonar

She consumes more food than an army of renegade hysterics and yet retains the figure of Karen Carpenter

Along with a family of opossums she squats in a den wallpapered with aluminum foil

While picking corn poppies as a child in the Lower Silesia Voivodship near Warsaw, Poland, she's exposed to Agent Orange, which explains the Spock-like uplift of her eyebrows

Her busy schedule includes a Wednesday mid-morning chat with Elon Musk to discuss plans for a trip to Ancient Rome in a time machine currently being manufactured at NASA headquarters in Cape Canaveral. To save the trees she wipes her ass with pomegranate leaves

Pepper-sprayed in the pussy by a Latina murderess in the laundry room at CRDF Los Angeles, she commences to wash her private parts with lactate milked from a Madagascan monkey

Using an iPhone 14 to photograph her freshly-shaved vagina, she in turn uploads the image to social media, resulting in multiple cases of mass gender dysphoria

She practices kundalini yoga with the venerated actress Demi Moore, who, according to sources in the know, once had a menage-a-trois with Patrick Swayze and Whoopi Goldberg on the set of the movie *Ghost*

She uses chopsticks inlaid with mother-of-pearl to pluck stray hair follicles from her nostrils

She professes to having engaged in unsolicited sexual acts with her father, her twin brother, 5 of her uncles and too many nephews to count (there may even be a niece or 2 in the mix)

An eidetic memory equips her with the ability to quote Shakespeare at length and recite the theorems of Pythagorus simultaneously

Her fundamental goal in professional life is to act as a direct liaison between the East Coast Sicilian Mafia and the CIA

She massages her feet with the sperm of Beluga whales imported directly from the Gulf of St Laurence in Quebec, Canada

While incarcerated at CCWF Chowchilla she boasts of baking a fruitcake in a toilet bowl from fermented orange peels and frosted with rectal mucus from her own personal cache

It is a blessing to be graced with her presence, amen

House of Fleeing Winds
Michael D. Amitin

I am the crippled saint rapping at the door
of forgiveness, creaky oilless springs
a house of fleeing winds
thoughts darting across a sea of wanton olive skin night

I am the storm rattling iron door handles
stone churches dangling over faded waters, orphaned rains
dark seaport nights
young wives of the sailorhood praying for good to come
no widow's hand to touch
the merry band shoves out to Brittany wine darkness

I am the star of storms
whipping brewed mists
and mandolin ash bone trysts
sunrise-blue groans

I am the nail in my hop-along cassidy coffin
pining lust busted caverns
in a torrent of rain on dream street

born backwards my dice tumbling rocky roads
eternally awkward in the hall of cracked-eye perfection

zen-headed dottard riding a youth dew vapor throne
in a dime dance parade
oopa oopa cops with maiden-bated breath
hangovers hanging on a thread of orderly

In a nightmare I saw a
warrior of yore darning obedience stockings
Redyard Rudyard cries
'An' you'll lick the bloomin' boots of 'im that's got it'.

St Vitus does the jerk over red hot coals
as the earth hums a dirge in the key of catastrophe
the kids chanting Runaway

I saw God
he looked me in the eye from a soft orange cloud
whizzing over rumble town
I am the star of storms escorting you through
red-light servitudes
scorned devil moons, brooding mama's

lady peppermint fondling the jade egg of Napoleon's daydream
the messianic bus driver honking with his tin-horn hat
better climb aboard. or run for your life
fast