

HOPE THEY LAUGH AT YOU
WHEN YOU LEAVE THE ROOM

**

A flock of hippies came to the field and the auditorium on the humid Tuesday night. Looking for some skin, good drops, better drugs, soul music and the rest that is forgotten in remembrance. Coming down the field, the scents were those of a Grateful Dead show. People gathering in the congenial air of hanging out. Good with one another. The outside world looks on and spats a rock at the loss of bathing and longer hair. These people wouldn't turn on a fucking banana peel.

After finding a parking spot for this Phish concert, we crawled out for a little soul & scent. Pulled the cap off a number of the "Champagne of Beer" bottles. Listened to the sun dip down and had the cold humidity fall on my arms as the show was coming to a close.

Just off to the left of the stage next to the protective barrier, there was a gal giving sign language to the crowd. Christ, that's one helluva universal language to have deaf folks attending a show. Another teeming allegiance to the power of the musical note.

**

In his mid to lower 20's, he spins on down the sidewalk on a girls bike.

**

Let the Chess Player know that the Joker went to the Midnight bridge with the muse while the mime kept his clown face behind a remiss row of bushes.

**

She was hunched over when we entered her Italian abode. In her mid-80's, she had no look of fright in her eyes. Giving off the glare that life has taken and given what it has and here she is. Talking with more than vigor and serving us a bigger table of afternoon food than our appetites could take down. As time went forth, she talked of old age, children, the pounds gained and lost in relatives and the sort. We later swiveled the conversation into the living room. Surrounded by the statues and picture frames, I noticed the organ and piano. She asked if I played any instruments. I told her I would give the piano a go. Hopped on and found that the keys were out of tune. No sweat. I took some notes to her ears while she turned on the organ to let the kinks and wires pop into the live position. I then took the bench for some organ. She was into the sound. Then, she stood up and came towards me recollecting some tunes she has memorized over the years. She leaned over my right and began to jaunt down some notes on the top row of keys. Then, she taught me how to bustle over the notes. As I was beginning to get the song down, she went out to grab some tan masking tape. Back into the room she stopped me briefly to mark the appropriate keys to hit. Going up the scale she placed large pieces of tape. Going down the scale she placed small pieces of tape. I still remember the tune of the little Italian woman in Grosse Point, Michigan.

**

The heat came more than expected this – another unemployed afternoon. Tonight should be cool.

**

Waiting for the calls of employer's – waiting for my unemployment claim status – waiting for a python to escape from a some rocker's home in the area and crawl with a smile up this strip of sidewalk before me now.

**

Having some time on my hands in the afternoon has afforded me some local community radio love. On the Monday and Wednesday afternoon Jazz shows an older black man slithers over the microphone like molasses with no flapjacks on the plate. Lopping over Coltrane and Monk albums – his favorite is the organ. I know about the fucking organ folks. He has verse and poetry to announce to the city. By now

known favorites of his are the “FRIENDS” poems. I have to wonder what he does with his friends. How he does his friends. AS the show progresses, he shouts the temperature. IT’S FUCKING 87 DEGREES IN THE CITY FOLKS. LOVE THE PEOPLE AND STICK AROUND FOR BLUE MONDAY. You got that right, pal.

**

Lights dim in some smooth aura across the way. The bald man asked me an illegal question the other day. A tall older fellow with glasses walks great distances across the city. Sometimes I catch him on patches on concrete and at other times I catch him going between the yellow lines of a crosswalk in an intersection. The whole time he’s in some pantomime maneuver. Opening his mouth, bending at the knees and looking forward the whole time hoping someone doesn’t roll over his tall body. Just trying to make it across the street.

**

Showing wars on film – selling pasty’s to the stripper women to stick on their breasts for the men – giving away lemonade slushies on cold days to quench the questions – tearing open a computer keyboard to look at the letters that give the answers in some technological fortnight – looking up the tall skyscraper while observing the architecture as an architect asks if you really try to put the structural sciences to work while looking at the erect concrete – figuring on a free bag of chips while you ask the man to hold the onions on the heavenly Whopper – The teenagers ride by on their backs listening to the chains of a bike rattle as the full moon shows tonight and the Jazz . . . we listen to the notes.

**

They hunched over to the side and spoke of joint pain.

**

The Christians ask the other Christian, “How do you feel about working in an establishment that serves liquor?”

The Christian answers, “Jesus came in today with several pals and ordered two bottles of Chianti.”

**

Voices raised to a pitch on the porch – Lights shown of some delight – ignorance has some way of being construed as intellect – The man in the red truck forgot to light up his brake lights – The jingle of another jangle as the patch of birds flock across the crisp summer night to another tree that won’t spit exhaust on their nest of the next.

**

His forest green SAAB comes to a stop in front of the Wine & Liquor store. He walks in and asks if he has to work the weekend. The supervisor responds, “Sure, you’re working the damn weekend.”

The man responds, “I have proof that weekends don’t exist. It’s all weekdays.”

The supervisor says, “Great your working the weekdays.”

“Alright. Just as long as we have it straight that I don’t work weekends,” the man confirms for himself and his supervisor.

**

His head turned into a slovenly slop of mashed potatoes. You could hear this crazy son-of-a-bitch yelling all day long, “WHY CAN’T MY FINGERS BECOME BROWN GRAVY?”

Over and over – he would plead for his fingers to become a companion with his mashed potatoe head.

**

Scientific institutions – As it shall come out at a later time – we’re the ones that burned down all those small churches in the south.

**

She called into the radio show and asked the disc diggin’ fuck rock guy to play some hippedy hop jump lump song for her. For some reason, the caller left her phone off the hook and the radio station played the background noise of her home for the city. The sounds of sex and boiling water could be heard. She didn’t have her radio on. If the city was wondering while driving their cars, “Is anyone having sex right now?” They got their answer. Obviously, the station never played her request. The station received their request.

**

Some laughy suckers are going to make a bid to buy the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Oh, how we’ll all have a lean laugh over that one.

**

The girl knew hardly anything more than to play the keys of that piano. At age eight and onward, she would spend her times in seclusion with occasional crowds to practice her ware and keep that heel of a smile upon her face. Times weren’t good nor bad, they were just the times when she was playing the piano and when she wasn’t. When she didn’t; she smoked many cigarettes. When she did play the black and white keys; you couldn’t spot any trace of cigarettes in her being. Playing, how she played for the entertainment of playing. If she was to be world renowned . . . great. If she would just play to play. . . how that would be nice as well. How some people just want to do what they want to do. For the love of doing it. Some say they do it because they will take what comes of doing it. Some do it because they do it while doing it.

**

The man with the sleeveless shirt stood next to the telephone waiting for the call or the absence of a call to come through. Small droplets of water would hit the puddle before him. Looking towards the traffic and away to the home of Detroit pizza making, the phone was doing nothing. Together on the Monday eve when the rains had entered and left – he and the phone were waiting for something to happen.

**

Occasionally you’ll read about the Messiah or a Messiah in a book, newspaper or magazine. Sometimes you’ll run into one that seems to be one. On other occasions, you may think about one. The miracle workers and those others that live in this land of both miracles and despair wait for not rain but for what will not be explained by human mouths or human understanding. Hold fast there little sheep, or lamb if you choose. . . it is better to have these chances happen upon you as you live. For to seek something too vigorously, such as for a \$50.00 bill on a ground, could kill it. You wouldn’t want that would you? Kids—

**

The blues man takes to the guitar on this Tuesday afternoon. My prospects for work are looking a little closer than the clouds at 2:11PM (78°) today. Several jobs look swell to go to as week nine of unemployment slips into yet another middle of the week. Sometimes the Mondays appeared to be Fridays. Yea, right not I wouldn’t mind seeing some damn rough and tumble nature show about African cats in the middle of the dry season prance around with no narrators voice and the plucking of a blues man guitar. This while closing this at 2:14PM. It’s still seventy-eight degrees.

**

Handing it out one way. Taking it from the other. One way or another you'll take it.

**

Manifestations in manifestations were in the creations. Those manifestations.

**

The small woman hunched with her shoal made it up to the floral section before the tuna melt was cooked.

**

Some smooth cat putting on the funky disc love in the jazz hour on community radio tells the audience, "Watch those cars out there in front of you and not the lights. The lights never killed anyone. Take care, people." Here in the afternoon and putting the Jazz to a rest I know the street lights to my left won't kill a soul. Keeping a look at the cars and the letters across the screen. No harm going down. Driving and sitting, speaking and listening – Fuck man, all the music, lights, cars and people. The cool cat is making his way down to the bus stop.

**

An older gal with dark hair pulls her late Model 1971 pick-up truck in front of the morning Berbiglia. At 9:03AM she starts her commitment to the front door. She opens that tan blinds facing the street with a click of those slender fingers that have gone up the back of many man over her life. I'm sure it's written in her eyes. Christ, how the sun poured over the isles and rows of wine jugs. She's now dusting those virgin bottles, jugs and containers. Yea, she was doing more than a deal with that damn yellow light hitting the wine harder than any human mouths could portend.

**

Many borrow so much because they lend out so much fucking more.

**

If you think too long about something profound it's not profound.

**

Liquefied toast in a blender – dry eggs in a carton.

**

Woman in the tan dress and green backpack walks in front of this complex. Head cocked to the side. Either pushing back or soaking in the afternoon weather that begs of California burritos and the end to racism in the south. She's gone from my view. Going up the street or down the street depending on her point-of-view. Moving with that pack of green cloth on her back she goes as the joggers move forward to beat her stride.

**

They placed your vice in a virtue & blanked out your name. Yes, in the name of random charity and blatant comedy.

**

4 cheers for the last jeer the corner group with their street instruments had to hear.

**

The young woman burned the Ouiji board and threw away her Battleship game. Going out later that day, she tore her car through a storefront pane of glass and how the car did explode. It was a novelty store that earlier sold its last Ouiji board and was expecting a shipment of Battleship games later in the day.

**

They beat the past so as to let the future sleep silent.

**

Fueling the end of the rocket ships – A hot comet came about through the skies for a little time in orbit. Gravity was socially unavailable for comment.

**

The cat licks the other cat's ears. I pick some whiteheads on my countenance in this minute of collective physical maintenance.

**

It is not as if it is you. It appears to be you – it seems to be you – as the crowd comes to an exact and instinctual hush. Though, it is not as if it is you.

**

I haven't heard or seen a lot my grandfather said throughout his life. I did recently stumble across something in my father's autograph book from high school. June, 1954. It said this:

To my son,
Do all the good you can,
To all the people you can,
In every way you can,
As long as you can.
Dad

**

A skeleton shell that started bare grew flesh slowly. It began to lose its shell. You'll be young again in this world that's old.

**

We may soon be able to collect our checks. The rent was paid; car insurance is next. They say it won't stop. English pronouns keep on goin'.

**

Seduction in magazines, seduction on video tape, pornography at a strip club, pornography in the Midtown shop, the flesh has whipped men harder in the history of human kind than any other genus or gender of species.

**

Circus pinwheel went around on the carriage night. A time when the horses were give a rest and the clown men on stilts took over the scene. These silly tall fuckers sure know how to get a laugh out of a kid.

**

Night watched their camp fires . . . the huts below burned like a winter hell.

**

They wrote their last check and booked themselves a room at the Raddison. One nigh on the time. Hey baby, it's all right. One last check . . . one last room. They stay and go, though it's all right.

**

The man entered the house in a dream he was within. Saw a beautiful woman was making her way down the stairway leading to the front door. Wearing a loose robe and nothing more, he tried to avert his eyes, but hers begged him for the attention she was going for. He come through the door and wanted to know if he could use her bathroom to take a bath. She doesn't say a word, yet gives a smile of approval. This house is rather large and the hostess gives the man no indication as to where the bathroom is located. So, he follows her as she continues her way off the mouth of the steps and around the corner towards the living room. Not looking behind to see where this stranger is going, she leads him into the bathroom. She keeps her robe on and asks him, with no words, to make himself at home. She turns on the water in the tub and leaves the room. The water is splashing in hot torrents. He watches her leave and begins taking off his clothes for the bath he has asked of this young woman. Hopping in the tub, he watches the faucet head as the tub begins to get as full as he desires. After turning off the water, he leans his head back and begins to slip into some melodic daydream. One where this strange woman of his fancy comes through the door with nothing but her naked flesh and jumps into the hot puddle for some love in the evening. As the images flash about his mind, his breathing starts to rise and he raises his left foot to get some leverage on the lip of the bathtub. He starts poking around on himself for a little masturbation. The water begins to splash some and he lets out a scream. There's a forming puddle of blood beneath his left foot. Coming back to reality, he lifts his foot and wipes away the blood from the wound that tore into the top of his foot. Dabbing the water about the wound, he finds a ladies razor next to the faucet head. The sure assailant in his time of cleaning and self-love. The woman now returns to the room in a speedy trot. Looking at the man with some bemusement and trying to figure why he screamed. He quickly asks her for some band-aids and a towel. From there, he would patch up his toe, thank her and quickly exit her home. He waited in the water that was slowly turning from a murky white to a creamy pink from the pouring blood on his foot. She didn't return to the bathroom for at least 15 minutes. At this point, his desperation for mending his foot and his pruned skin was getting unbearable. Hopping out of the tub, he jaunts in a wet, naked bloody mess to find this woman. Heading towards the entryway he entered, she was again coming down the steps with a new face next to her. A little girl was holding her hand. Still, the woman had nothing but a silk robe flowing open and saying not one word. The child didn't speak either. She just looked at the strange man in his nakedness and the trail of blood he had made to find the owner of the home. He said, "I apologize Ms., I just couldn't wait any longer. I would really like to patch this foot up all nice, dry off and get back out of this dream." She nodded her head and walked with her child hand-in-hand towards the bathroom. Neither mother nor child saying a word or looking back at the man. Like before, the man began to trot after the pace makers. While in the living room, he takes a notice of the various pictures that lean on tables and the mantle piece above the fireplace. He stops in his tracks to take a look at one picture in general. At the sight of this picture he gets dizzy, likely from the loss of blood that is dousing the carpeted floor, and wipes a tear from his eye. The picture is a young snapshot of him with this strange woman he knows he hasn't met before. Yet, the picture, one of teenage youth, has him and this woman on a cleft of rock with a mountain range behind them. Their sitting down on the rock with him positioned behind her and his arms around her. That was the last thing he would see. After fainting, he woke up in the familiar surroundings of his own home and life. He turns over and touches his wife in bed. She squirms a little as he folds his arms behind his head and thinks about this sordid dream that felt too damn real. He looks over at the nightstand to see

what time it is and notices a lady Bic with no guard over the razor next to the clock. He slaps his face hard and realizes he's awake. At this, his wife wakes up in a groggy lurch and asks, "You alright, baby?" "I don't know. I'll tell you in the morning," He responds.

**

An unexpected Moses came through the mirror before the couple fell asleep. Hanging out on the side of the room listening to talk of dream interpretation; he began to get the sleep cough himself. Moses, thinking about the dry weather in the area as of late, went out of the room to fetch a cup of water from the kitchen sink.

**

Stacks of Camel cash sit in the window sill. We're going to move out of the "creative abode" at the end of next month. Folks came down and talked with laughed on the littered porch. They cancelled their show as the last minute. We go into another day.

**

It is to the admission and proof that human being put forth to bring about complexity. To marvel and look about the ideas, inventions and reality of complexity has a way with the mind. On the other hand, there is no substitute for the truth in simplicity. The simplicity in walking down a crowded street or tying up dangling legs in the branches of a barren tree is thus the simplicity of a child. That baseness and initial instinct of pleasure is childlike. One instinct that grows into complexity in one way or another. Yet, most adults desire to have the simplicity and discovery of children to exist. The point being – In the adult state preserving that simplicity in viewing life is just another complexity that is not complex in the least.

**

United States president fucks and frolics with the White House intern. Nation scorns and runs around like scorpions that just discovered they have stingers on the ends of their tail. Savage acts of military aggression towards weaker countries. This to defend the strongest nation on the end on the earth. Doesn't seem to phase the scorpions that mull around with their mouths not know that they even had tails.
INTRODUCTION: The grand debate between the American psyche on sex and violence. In other words, on the whole it has been easier to avoid telling children about sex than to exhibit violence against a stranger or loved one.
CONCLUSION: Where is the sense?

**

The man approaches near me again. His face is straight and nearly stern. Full beard. Tonsure and thick glasses with a heavy rim. Looking straight ahead while he walks. Carrying his truly blue jeans, screen printed shirt and black shoes past the crowd of daytime workers putting in their token of smokes and food if the bank clock on the corner allows. Trying not to look out from the corner of his eyes, he moves assured forward thinking those thoughts. Not those of bomb detonations or the sunshine that makes the movers in the crowd hot, but other thoughts that we can't put our finger on. Giving Kansas City some sort of charm and more philosophy if the mind is given the time to ponder about his point. Yes, through the Barney park not named after Alice. He'll likely be a regular, I think to my head, with one arm propped over the silver railing and the other taking a cigarette from my mouth. He's probably one of the more peaceful souls in the area as the man with the yellow mouth horn yells about Christ close down the street. This man with the assured countenance knows what is being fisted down through the Afganistan and Sudan bullshit bomb murders. He's just walking in a pace to make sure his peace keeps up with his worn shoes. I barely finish my cigarette when I notice a shirtless man approach a bench up past some stone steps. His breasts are sagging and his body has seen more than several hundred drinks. Laying down his shirt, keys and other scant worldly possessions to take a dip in the fountains. The fountains that drizzle high

in the day that was nothing better than a good day for a hot dog at lunch. Finishing my cigarette, I lower my foot, with a tan shoe that is squeezing the shit out of my flesh, to put it out. As I get up to go back into the office of compartments, I see the shirtless man shake his head in a celebration the gods can smile on. He's getting in a good dip on the city's dollar. I smile his way as the spears of water shoot higher in the afternoon that had it's time with us three men and the other women and mobile technology that had a lunch to break.

**

Man in a suit comes down the alley breathing with graffiti and the only black in the sunshine of the afternoon delivery boys in downtown streets. Looking above his tie; my feet feel the love of sidewalks that are being surveyed by the downtown commission. Frivolous and on the eye ball of life. I feel like an astro-pop going around and around in a young lads mouth.

**

Gangster symbols on the old woman's Cadillac. She comes out in the morning tugging on her tights cursing the boys that live in other parts of town away from her reality. This as the food service worker kneads some dough hoping to hit the dollar and give his landlord a reason to have a nice stinkin weekend.

**

Tonic cubes in the vodka solution. Glowing with sweat as the heat brings internal condensation and the vintage jazz goes around and about the room like a lost record keeping pace with this blue ball out in the skies.

**

Bike woman goes across the 10:48PM parking lot. In the highest of easier gears to make certain her legs will move with taffy ease. The 10:49PM cars will only notice her off-pink shirt as they go into their next destination on their willful that has more than meaning to be defined.

**

I approach the exhausted man on the corner of 11th and Oak.

"What do you do for a living?" I ask.

"Say what," he responds. Looking tight at me with beads of sweat glowing above his brow and around his mouth.

"You preach here downtown?" I get to the point.

"Yes, my brother, I certainly do. Do you know about the Christ," he answers.

"Yea. How do you feel about what you do?" I respond.

"This is my calling. My life. I live for Christ. Period," he tells me with a wide smile.

"Do you get very far with your audience," I ask.

"Well, it depends day-to-day. But, it fits its purpose," he says.

"Tell me about a day," I ask.

"Well, you have those folks that, God love em, gawk and never feel impelled to even give me a good look. Other go by looking straight at the ground. Then, others crowd around and on the special occasions there are those that will stop me and asks some questions," he says.

"Yea. I have one question. Tell me the three most important things, in your opinion, about the bible or your religion," I propose to him.

"Hmm, well, yea, good questions son. I'd have to say Genesis, Romans and Revelations," he says.

"Is that your answer?" I ask.

"Yea, friend. That's it. No specific passage. I know how secular folks get about direct quotations," he says.

"Fair enough. I've got to get on getting' on. Be good, chief," I conclude.

That's my talk with the street preacher.

**

Green feather flipping about the headstrong winds that have their time with your tails and better debauchery with your intrigue.

**

Strip me down – turn me around – call me Janice – then burn that fucking bucket of water.

**

Ingenious was the genius that supposed the novice had the wrong questions with the right notion.

**

They stand on the corner and just watch the gray clouds roll in above the sky before them. Ready to speak of the reasons for the rain, a man with a portly beard came by and whispered to the group, “Your all full of shit. You know that, don’t you?”

**

I met a man the other day that told me he could fit 63 small kitchen magnets in his mouth and still smoke a cigarette. I told him if he got 7 more magnets that I would swallow 70 and lose his cigar.

**

Woman in long green dress comes up to me in the concourse and tells me she is “The Quintessential Female Philosopher.” Well. I ask where the gender line got thrown into the title of “Philosopher.” She said it was before I was born. So, how come you never hear that term, I asked. She grabbed my shoulder and looked deep into my soul and told me, “Because all you fucks know how to do is listen to listless bullshit. I’m the originator of the female philosophy species.” Then she walks off. As I watch her walk I notice a naked woman walking the opposite direction across the street. She high fives the “Quintessential” and winks to a passing dog.

**

In the history of grand schemes to counterfeit money, there was one person that stood above the heap of miser ingenuity. His name was Paul Copek. He developed and still carries his personal tradition of counterfeiting pennies. Because, according to Paul, “Pennies are the basis behind any form of American monies. Fuck the quarter, piss on the nickel, the dime should die and the dollar is dead. It’s the penny my friends. It will survive all American currency when the bombs hit the dirt and the economy revisits a black day of the week.”

Straight from Paul. Straight from his home he devised a system to create these pennies. Different molds were developed for this arduous, yet wondrous act, to stamp different dates on the coins. Whenever he went to purchase anything, there were no clerks or associate holding his coin to the light or examining the authentic nature of his Abraham pieces. They just take the change, smile and give Paul his receipt.

What you have to realize is that Paul isn’t into counterfeit pennies to become rich. It’s just his hobby to say he’s beat the system in a clever fashion. Also, he has a deep seeded knowledge that eases him. He’s duplicating the basis of our economy. He the father of his own constitution of sorts. He beams oh so much when he gets into that copper colored apron and begins work in his basement. Working the heat and copper in such a fashion before they get that inaugural stamp.

How he feels he’s not only doing himself a service, but the whole lot of sneaky bastards before him that have failed in the counterfeit game. Although, he hasn’t failed in the least. Still going strong for all these years. About 23 years to be exact. He’s 43-years old now. A goldsmith in his small township. One proud American that loves his estimated purchase total at a gas station to be \$1.01 or \$2.04. Because them he beams with the rancid pleasure of disposing his craft to the attendant.

Hell, on good days he'll leave these establishments or walk around the downtown streets just dropping pennies on the ground deliberately. Hoping, with the fond charity he sees fit for his counterfeit efforts, that people young and old alike will retrieve his pennies and stuff them in their shoes. Looking to make certain that people have lucky days with those lovely copper pieces he created in their shoes.

Oh yes, Paul Copek is a many of several trades. Namely, the penny business. Never to be rich, that is to say due to his penny practice, but proud of his establishment of a personal love.

Yes, Paul could easily be called the penny man. Just don't bring up the quarter, dime, nickel and never the damned dollar. His passion is the penny. You may have one on your person or in the residence you live in right now.

**

They selected the nightingales out of pure luck. Then, hopped on down the bungalow trail hoping to run into chance.

**

That's some pretty fun shit, they thought. Yea, fun shit in the fortnight in took to forget the crap.

**

Fan belts turning loose like rooster necks reaching around to see the sun and the ensuing cockle do do le co Cockl. Turning like mad for sweat droplets that would form around the lower brow of the upper man. Cranking like nuts to make the air colder and the kids rambunctious.

**

A dictionary loading into the machine hoping to Christ it won't have to go about skimming over your words. For your words are yours and no one else's; including the machine. So, keep your words on your side and make the machine work. You know, work in other ways for the way technology has been.

**

As all the picketers in the history of picketing think back or think now how they told the passer-by what they had to say. A union strike, school bond issue, tax legislation, government resolution and the like. All I would like to do is stand on one of the busiest corners in the city, which happens to be down the street from me with one message on my black-and-white sign. It would say, "I LOVE COTTAGE CHEESE". A simple message to let those that go by know. I LOVE COTTAGE CHEESE and the people will know. I have no beef about where my tax dollars go or another destination for a bond issue. They're going to make with that money no matter what should come down the works.

I just want the people to know – peppered or with Lowery's Seasoning Salt, or even plain, I LOVE

COTTAGE CHEESE. We may have a photographer on the scene to capture the proclamation.

I know there's more of you out there that LOVE COTTAGE CHEESE that may not come out like this to announce you edible adventure. I'm here to do it for you. But thank that cow's the next time you reach for a tub of that frothy white love. I'm just here to tell the rest about COTTAGE CHEESE.

**

A little girl sits at the bus stop next to her mom. Waiting for the next Metro to take her to another childhood question, the mother hovers near the girl who has an open book in her lap. The mother is reading along as the storm clouds in the sky form into figures and visions that keep the eyes up and wide. Next to them a little distance down the bench is an old white man waiting to go into his next adulthood feeding frenzy. Then, as the sun darts back out over the street after some time spoken with the clouds that are going to give the people more than wet tires and ingredients of loss, the mother and daughter combo look up at the man explaining the clouds. Speaking to himself, he has a distinct flavor of an orator speaking to a crowd. Yet, he doesn't speak directly to the mother and daughter.

“Yea, and that cloud looks like a morphed man making a contorted face after eating the right end of a mustard plant. Oh, and that woman to the east, she’s stripping for waterfall showers that are going to come down. See there, that’s her breast and a little lower are her curvy buttocks. Yea, and behind them is a child looking around for his folks. For he knows he’s not allowed to look at naked women. Oh yea, and there is cougar looking up into the eyes of an overweight ferret. Yea, look at them all. They know were going to get wet.”

At this conclusion, the man looks further into the sky for more meaning that the clouds could disperse to the people that take fleeting glances at the white puffs ready to make humidity another color. Just looking and careful not to move his neck muscles that much to strain at the sky above, the little girl next to him looks directly at the man.

“I think I see a silhouette of your face up there in the clouds this way,” she says pointing behind the bus stop.

He turns his neck around for several seconds. Then, turns his whole body and cocks his head in the direction of the girl’s observation. Peering for a long period of time, the mother and daughter go back into their book and begin reading again.

The bus is now making its way down the street to pick them up. The man turns around gets up, stands over the child and mother.

“It’s a nice thing that I didn’t see you in those clouds up there. You’re going to last longer than I.” He said. The bus then came to a stop and the man climbed on. Doors closed behind him while the mother and daughter waited for the next bus to come. Too much into the book they were reading and the time they didn’t want to end on the bench. Though, as the bus pulled away, they closed the book and looked up into the sky for more metaphors or images as the air began to fill with the smell of rain.

**

The question asked the question mark, “You done yet? Anything else?”

“No. Not now. We’ll let you know.” The question mark responded.

“I know. Christ, I know.” The question said.

The whole time part answers were given to the questions.

**

Armory in the middle of the village what century were you born of? How many nations of folks have you manufactured that lead to destruction of the people? They, paying for your rent when you leave the place. Giving the token to a pennyless man.

**

Starlets in the coffee. She held her breath. Death of a star. Porous juice woke-up the ghost speaking with the angel in the birth you’ll never know about & the death you just heard about.

**

It is but by motion of happenstance that the strangers become people and people become human.

**

She called me up tonight for some coffee before she heads off to Chicago. A girl that was once in the youth home I was a counselor at. Last week, she called telling me of tripping on Ecstasy, Shrooms and liquor with a new man from Chicago she was in love with. She’s an artist now. A photographer, sculptor and painter. Getting her portfolio together for an art school she wants to attend in the city. Also, she’s wanting to more in with her boyfriend and get a tasty apartment. She said she’s happy. I could tell from my end in that moment she was telling me that she was. Purely happy and ready for the willing future that’s going to race down her face and ask her mind for some time to put thought aside. And today she called to tell me that she’s pregnant. She found out yesterday. Almost three months pregnant. Scared to death of her father, she’s going to have to rush plans and make her chase to Chicago earlier that she thought. We had to

postpone coffee for now. She goes on to tell me about her job at Vanguard Airlines. Free flights and she works with a lot of her friends that dress in large pants and big shirts. She says that this is her way of hiding her pregnancy from her father who would go both insane and ball fucking monstrous if he knew the truth. She wants to have the kid and name him Jadeth Xavier if it's a boy. She says she really wants a boy. Girls, according to her, are a pain in the ass. She reminds me that she never jived with hanging out with gals. They were too bitchy and cocked on stupid bullshit. Told me also of a camel sculpture she sold at her senior art show for about \$500. Now, she has a photo in the Deli & Gallery off 19th and Baltimore. She's going to have this child and already has the theme picked out for the nursery. It's going to be Winnie the Pooh, because according to her, he's such a friendly little bear. Towards the end of the conversation I hear her dad yelling, "Get the fuck off my phone. You have your own, get the hell off." She tries to tell him that she'll be off in a minute and that I called this number. She said she wasn't calling out on this phone. He asks her who's on the phone. She says it's a guy she knows. He says get off. I tell her to tell him who it is. I figure he'll remember me from when he used to come to the state home to pick her up. Getting dropped off by the cabby with a black eye and three fists full of anger. He would talk and we would drive down the ride, fucking scrunched in my miniature Toyota pick-up listening to Bob Dylan. How that car would shake under the weight of his body at 61MPH on the highway as we traveled down to his place up North. She tells me he won't remember me. He doesn't remember much. Although, I'm sure he won't forget it when she tells him that she's had the baby or is going to have the baby. Yea, he'll remember that one. I tell her that it's cool. I'll get off the phone and we can talk another time. She says another closing words to her dad before I get off. She says take care and I say the same.

**

I left the keys in the ignition and we go into the liquor store to get a bottle of wine for the birthday gig out south. We go in, I pick out a cheaper bottle of 1996 French wine. The red head cat behind the counter wraps the bottle in silvery paper as the lights blare down and reflect off the silver in the store. We get back out to the car, I reach into my pocket for reassurance and a move on down the street. Find nothing, hoping that I had the keys in the ignition. Bingo. They're in there. We hop in the convertible with a night more splendid than the air tasted and proceeded to get lost on the way to this bar. About 45 min. later and 37 min. longer than it should have taken. It was too good of a night to have taken the keys out of the ignition or have the right way the first time to this destination.

**

The chalky hand reached across the table to touch mine and ask me, "When's the last time you had a real fine steak?"

"Last night my man. Last night." I say.

The hand retracts back and I wake up in a large bed with my lover's beautiful back facing me with the din of blue lights from the alarm clock reflecting off the wall. Only 13 more minutes till the alarm will go off and I get to feel hot, hot water and her lady Bic shave my chin.

**

Moving the pens, paper, paper clips, mugs, files, plastic bins, chairs, computers and phones. I'm in a corporate cubicle with Miles Davis' likeness before me, a map of Italy behind me and a world map of explorers to my right. The old country, miles and discovery – yes friends, that is all this mofo som bitch needs for some real wall art of sorts.

**

The Starr Report came out the other day about the President fucking around with an intern. You'll read about that somewhere else but here.

**

Rounding chance, jamming another tortilla chip into their mouth – they look up and wonder why they like cleanliness, wealth and prestige so much.

**

Feeling like you can't follow it? Then don't. Another one will.

**

I tell the hot dog vendor on the corner, "Nice dog." He smiles and nods as his day comes to him.

**

They sit in the yellowed room while the black birds circle outside knowing there is no movie to define their ways. They turn out the yellow and stare steep into the black images opening & closing about outside.

**

She pulled her stool up close next to him in the hamburger/hot dog shop. Strangers as a mother is to her child before conception, yet she was to swipe away the blank between them and speak. She could feel his pain and he could feel her truth. They just looked into each other and down knowing the smile they both had was wisdom.

**

Kansas City food man making it up from street where his steakhouse lies. Riding and relieved, the black man stops in to greet him before his next heart attack over chili that should have come out earlier.

**

Remember easy is hard. Give me the hard, people.

**

He writes down your words. You feel as if she's bartering your soul. Letting words become a myth. The fantasy held of being straight fucking dirty, baby.

**

The room of folks came to a hush to listen to a faint heart beat of the passed out woman. They heard a person start playing piano up above in the apartment and knew somehow it would make it nice.

**

Fresh lemon whore rising from snake skin oil to give the apostle a flower before getting a lift to the jail that was condemned.

**

Ramshackle clovers stomped by bare feet. Feet that are wet. Escape where the greens are the last reason to walk.

**

Dust around the stained wood trim as the stinkin' cold air rushes in.

**

The death of the fruit fly. Peaches and plums their now saving. Damnation to the flies until every fruit at once is saved. Even the new one. Our giant red tomato.

**

Time to write down the written as the day becomes warm and crossed legs were tossed out of the case called a "tired ritual". No air conditioning for the heat has been.

**

Percival tried at being merciful, yet the plentiful made beautiful turned him a tinge miserable.

**

It seems to have been a good ride though nothing that speaks to his senses has any familiarity.

**

"What the fuck is the matter with you?"

"Are you insane?"

"Why did you do that?"

"Were you born in a barn?"

"Sure, sure, sure. Keep asking you pork daddy spinster with no other reason to buy a mirror. I understand that we're all insane as the matter is the fuck. Yes, all our asses were born in the same barn or other."

**

I had a vodka & 7 the other niche in KC's historic or what 18th and Vine jazz district. Five dollars a glass with a two drink minimum. How they relished in the applause after we saw the face of Allah in the surface of our drinks. How the man hole I capered from the man hole looked nice in the corner of my living quarters.

**

He fell asleep as the rock show and I knew I was going to write about it later that night. How the smell of her peck hit my cheek and I thought I shouldn't write about it. But now – both are told as the rest.

**

Rain for all the day's your around. Rain for all the day's your not around. The clouds bought the sunshine and you were given as a better offering.

**

The dark began the come down the highway. We met the dark going down the highway. In our twilight love, we began to pass the trucks leaving the town festivals. Clowns painted on the side of amusement rides, hell fire cold lemonade, the twists of corn dogs on sticks and the death of the carnival. All traveling across the highway looking for the next town and the liquor sale at the newsstand. Giving the kids the thrill and making the adult beings cringing with envy to hop into the convoy and ride into the dark looking for liquor and the new faces. Seeing the same faces and listening to the same conversations. Yes, the parents need some parental advice their not ready to give themselves.

Yes, the smell of corn dogs. I should have pulled up next to the semi and yelled for some mustard. Some mustard for the companionship coming with the corn dog and the mix of the night that gave jellies and jams reason to wait for another festive morning.

**

Waving the banter of the lost ape ship. The humanoids were getting ready to empty composte into the twirling space of galactic stories the young man thought up in his long string of science fiction novels. Successful -- yes. Well read by a fan base -- yes. He would loom afternoons and early morning shots of being awake into these stories the Star Trek readers would swoon about. Yes the young man that read modern fiction and wrote science fiction would lean his head back and decide both the best way out and the best way in. The order of either didn't matter much.

**

Words of hip hop going out on the street like a lopped off spring loose from a bad crap toss. Countries not getting enough of the modern pop icon that sits in his suede love seat laughing about the intelligence level of his fan base as he jaunts to his P.O. Box to collect another erroneously lucrative check. Putting out the discs and shows to keep his fans high on the image and the attitude -- he laughs at the muddled malarky of his life and the ID's of his fans. While throngs buy the new CD that made it into store on the second Tuesday of the month, he laughs maniacally into a green room mirror before going out for the taping of another variety show to promote his morphed cock and ass on the high ratings game of fame. His laughs lead him down each gangplank to the cameras and the tapes that record him.

**

Moving all the possession from one end of town to the other. Dust covered the coffee table, desks, computer wires, power cords and wooden floors like all other spots on the continent closed up and gave free reign to land on our floor. Tossing towels, sweet relish, Japanese hot dogs, hotel pens and unbundled razors as the rain clouds began to form overhead. Time enough to clean off the stove, wash the walls and laugh at the dried candle wax on the walls. The piano will remain along with the eternal scents of loose gas from the stove in the kitchen's air.

When the time came to the conclusion and throwing out the final pieces of 2-years passed, we both put on underarm deodorant and threw away the stick laughing as the cap popped off the top and landed on the porch while the rains began to come down hard and steady in an early fall rain.

**

Met them under the canopy of the Kansas City Italian restaurant. Readyng ourselves for a walk down the stretch of art vendors displaying their wares for the tights and looses in the crowd ready to pull out the pocket book and some extra ventricles in the mind. Found only one exhibit featuring a gal from Georgia that caught my fancy. Some African folks and other American black playing instruments or displaying their face. The only exhibit that wasn't swamped with people and their questions. Look man, you have to dip that fucking Oreo in that glass of milk. END.

**

Catching the bus as I look with one eye down the street with a coffee shop in front and a cigarette close at hand.

**

This is a notice to whoever is concerned about Jay Dunn. His dog rambo flew off the porch to grab an errant crab apple that looked like an left over steak Jay ate at the Twin City bar. As the dog leaped, Jay's heart did the same. He daunted over to the railing catch his glory and instead had a mild heart attack and flipped over the railing with gravity as his witness.

Please excuse him for the days he missed. He sure loves that dog.

Again, he'll be back when he mends that "old broken heart".

Sergil Vladamasko (*The On-Call Physician*)

**

Can they suck your soul & leave your heart?

Or

Would they suck your heart & leave your soul?

**

Who could have lost their mind?

**

They stole the ribbons, told the robins, gave away their allotment and told no one of their ramshackles.

**

The needle on the puncture. They lost the show in the dark.

**

How has your pleasure been ridden out for miles? Who bought you that golden fornication which severed your pinkie toe and made the world an ant farm? Why did they come and detain you in detention when you were arrested for arson? How the reaper beamed when all the other reasons turned to chance in the air light of reckoning on lies.

**

So what does the air smell like when there is no particular scent or stench in the air? When you first encounter a room or city, maybe a suburb or whatnot, there's a scent. Then you get used to it. What does it smell like after that? Is there any strong scent to the regular scent of air? I believe there is. Though, I won't elongate on it. Though, if you don't have an answer . . . it most likely smells like you.

**

Kindergarten crush on a prom pond swing wishing against the gambler – Listening to the confessor in the rosary booth.

**

Wilting cactus leaves leaving for more water, the banjo plucked its string on its own as the silk robe slinked down the banister in the home that grew much too old. Noisy need.

**

Man enters the home of old fashions.

"You have any life size skeletons on sale?"

he asks.

"Yea, you interested?"

the person responds.

“Sure. Running low young chap. Looking to catch up with some of the fucks down the way.”

**

Small rectangular woman comes up to me on empty street in my dream –

“Interested in buying some shoes?”

she asks.

“No honey. Not in this dream. Maybe the next one.”

**

Between the black choir and 4 Chinese women, they hummed & lost their previous hope.

**

The lost conversation was their last form of communication. Tossed one way and picked-up another, the voices dwindled to a hush as the knock on the door came like a presence left of the plot in their ending theme.

**

Clowning crowd of 29 faces. Listening to the orator; chewing their nails at intermission. They had no idea how they got there and thoughts of how they were to leave never came to mind.

**

In order to meet the needs they broke some vases and cursed in Portuguese.

**

Been out of the old place for about a week now. In the new and grander avenue for a week. Woke up with her looking at me as I stumbled out of the closet just past midnight last night. My lover had some people over for a wedding show with some drinks and food. As the laughter, conversations, electric guitar and microphones started making their way out with more vigor, so did I.

I made my way to the back bedroom and layed down on the floor. Felt the tinge of sleep. Wanted to surely get up to see my lady and the folks out of the door. Instead, I looked up to the closet door and wondered if my body could fit in there for a little late night sleep and slumber. My body did. Then, to take it a step forward I closed the door. From there, the pitch black and taste of liquor in my mouth put me right to sleep. I didn't come out of that damn closet until she opened the door and I had to explain my curiosity for being in that predicament.

**

Seeing more and more of the movies over the television I realize some things. Every mystery, murder flic or suspense sequence has the same sequence of events in a more or less altered and categorical sense. There's always the same theme, it's how the film is presented. It seems rather obvious. Yet, when you catch the moving pictures on the screen that can make something out of life's apparent nothings, that is real film making my friends.

**

He woke up in the morning with scratches on his wrists that weren't there before we went to sleep. The cuts were fresh, yet glazed over with a smooth coat of a scab. He looks around to make sure that his surroundings are still familiar and hops off his bed for the bathroom's way. Maybe, he thinks, some warm water in the face would clear things up a smidge. After the visit to the bathroom, he still feels as dazed and convoluted as he did when he woke up. In addition to his scrapes, his body has a distinct tinge of being

beaten. He's fatigued and aching about the inches of skin that cover his body. He knows not what has happened to his body.

The only clues around his bed are: painting knife, picture of girlfriend, a replica of a Mary Cassatt painting, two old 80's compilation tapes and a clean gray rag. He does notice that his mirror is missing above his bookshelf and several books have been stolen. With this, he goes to the bathroom closet and gets down a first aid kit. Then, into the kitchen for a little early morning wine.

He thinks, we all know that some things are better left uninvestigated.

**