

Yggdrasil

A JOURNAL OF THE POETIC ARTS

June 2015

VOL XXIII, Issue 6, Number 266

Editor: Klaus J. Gerken

European Editor: Mois Benarroch

Contributing Editors: Jack R. Wesdorp

Previous Associate Editors: Igal Koshevoy; Evan Light; Pedro Sena; Oswald Le Winter; Heather Ferguson; Patrick White

ISSN 1480-6401

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

A.J. Huffman

What Howls at Night
I Am Out

CONTENTS

Jovan Vuksanovich

post pubescent conspiracy

Maria Jacketti

Holiday Rag
The Master Plan
Synergies
Moonshot, Man
We Three Mules

Robin Wyatt Dunn

The Sun King

Marcus Bales

Ballade of Sad Puppies
The Ballad of Irish Johnny
Enduring Drinking
Giving Up For Lent
Mall Sluts

Craig Kurtz

A Pox on the Bard

Comrade Stalin, Superstar

The Pudeurs of Probity

POST SCRIPTUM

A.J. Huffman

Betting on Midnight

After Writing an Anonymous Letter

Introduction

A.J. Huffman

What Howls at Night

after The Other Wind, artist Oznat Tzadok

is not the wind. It is a reflection,
a ghost of memory's past. It tramples
across pillows, a stampede of one
million horseless hooves, crushing skulls
and sanity until the mere impression of physical
screams for metaphysical release. Mindless
lips recede until only words stand,
sounding for the silenced.

I Am Out

of body
experience.
Intangible
phantom, condemned
to watch life
unfold. I am loss
of control.
Inadequate hands
cannot contain the unruly
mess as it smothers
me. I am drowning in lack
of ability. To breathe
in my own existence
is unreachable dream.
I cry arid tears that do not fall
wake to a reign
of nothing but pain.

Jovan Vuksanovich

post pubescent conspiracy

raging apocalyptic omnipresent pubescent seductress
spitting spider web irrational contrariety on the brilliant, famous, and forgotten alike!
you, you precocious virgin whore you!
yes, you! don't veil your mystic eyes when I call you
in this standstill moment of misery / ecstasy
hub of first and last thought
first and last breath.
don't feign modesty and humility with me
you mysterious irreverent Beauty!
I know you only too well
my diabolical consort all these many years
before and beyond where we first met is the last vow to be broken!

on babylon street the painted hookers dance
cursing fat squat cocks of the money game
cross-eyed pictorial hazy fixation
hoary buddhas gasp gulp vexation and vice
spewing darkside vedas
lazy innards all queasy
incidental, oblivious to the sanctity night crawlers' mania and madness
decked out in hyper spectral moonbeam lascivious lingerie
off key drunken song grinning defeat
whining sirens discontent urging anxieties.

memories, memories, persisting memories, nauseous memories
the ghostly dead pleading for attention midst the rushing imparities of daily day to day
recurring rock walls bleeding histories fading, fading
scratching, scratching the hard walls of diminishing return.

anger, anger, pure unadulterated anger!
anger at no one
everyone
nothing and everything
betraying mirrors aging panic bodymind
grasping for answers to the questing questioning beast

primordial animal divine tortured cruel.

gaudy godless pimps ride stiff rockets to gangland ghettos
saffron sutras weave willowy patterns across holy skies of skid row
all neon red bordello hallelujahs.

beggars flaunt embroidered crimson delusions
ply their in your face farce on the boulevards of rebellion
hate their impotence more than God
more than allegiance to their subterranean Devil.

Oh, the swirling confusing misappropriation of fun and funds!
joyless joy riders of empty avenue
heavy handed con of cons crashing shotgun weddings of the rich and infamous,
outcast sensibilities of false starts, still births, incongruous aborted cynicism
endless current of jagged nerves!

Oh my holy blasphemy gutter snipe muse!
wallow me in the entrails of tomorrows' visions
inside out cry of voiceless children damned and damning.

burning, buming, burning flesh
wombs, tombs, spinning destinies blazing comets across heavens of hell bent,
thumbs up, teathy grin of gin soaked emaciation generators.

loosen, loosen the hangman's coitus coil
ejaculating brainchild of winding rivers mountaineering hermits
secret banjo mandolin yodeling yogis
melting snow capped himalayas with devotional heat
the great yes and amen reverberating, ricocheting off brimstone
shattering finalities with impertinent promise
vows of failure, multitudinous dimensions of protracted profanities
decaying tongues, tight-assed nubile splendor
razor edge cutting, cutting, cutting deep
the deep deepening search for the bone of bones
holy grail substrata of infinite finite
solid core of nevermore.

wailing, wailing, wailing for the mama of mamas
sweet tit of ambrosial poison milk!

kill! Kill! KILL! the limiting reach and reach and reach some more.
die! die! DIE! and live! live! LIVE! forever in the valley of void and soundlessness
origin of voice, word, exceptional exquisite taste of tastes.

all hail and farewell pubescent underworld of mitigating factors.
goodbye and hello again and again
return to here and here again and again
past present future rolled up in one hologram of condensed
concentrated, inclusive openness.

Oh yellow strand of blonde darkness
hollow hooligan of arrivals and departures
traffic cop, circular roundabout zany commuters
disintegrating cityscape of demonic random indeterminism
devil may care boutonnieres glimmering backslide dandyism
predictable as drought on freeways of immortal dust bowl thunderclaps
unknown satori unraveled, unrivaled, holy cow pastures a plenty
overflowing fountain of gushing ambiguity
bellowing bull in the harem of heresy
hovering renegade owl in the holy of holies
whipping boy spread eagle on the alter of altered consciousness
salivating inevitable probe of idyllic phallus
penetrating inconclusiveness, surface pleasure, pain exile among
primitives of syntax and linear sound bites
howling wolf submerging timbres of poet voice, unrequited handsomeness!

Oh dizzy drama of the heroic underbelly
tragic hilarity boundless delirious desert of the seven seas!
wave on wave on wave of churning absence
black hole of the whole damn thing of things
sphinx wings, maniacal mudras, mantras, mandalas
tongues afire with lies, truths and probabilities
prostituting chastity offering her soul for the pretty price of icy niceties
life, liberty, and the pursuit of perpetual confidence hidden among naysayers
hesitant, hiccupping hypocrites hallucinating mandatory storytelling
mercenary fakirs of the noblesse oblige, swine herds, and middle classlessness
gargling, spitting the profane cute propensity for money, fame, eyes on the prize.

where the graveyards of greybeards now that the jig is up
punch line delivered with whacko effect?
tell me you slavish slut borderline personality slot machine gun irregularity
johnny come lately of blatant humanity

beyond the boon docks of suburban banality
knee slapping bipolarity, schizophrenia, various and sundry entrapments of
medical mafia hit men, childlike touch divinity here and now, pre verbal halcyon absurdity
back and forth in the continuum of digital diabetes
vulvas of voluptuous vulnerability masquerading as monotheism!

Oh gods and goddesses of the plural tongue!
many headed, one mind roaming wild hills of psychic fallibility
megalomania of unhistorical proportions
many bodied, undefined, unrefined, unbound, unedited
one of a kind ignorance killer, underground compassion on the lam
hiding out with gypsies' unbridled caravan of curious calamity
traversing great deserts of loneliness, isolation, anonymity
no winners of accolades in the market place of sprawling choking academic vines
media suckers, cheap thrill pill pushers hoopla tin pot despotism
cybernetic robots inner engineering raw forces of sperm halos
reversal of misfortune post human linguistic paradox, morphing paraphernalia
disassembling virtual objects posing as real in the ephemeral ballyhoo of scientific schemata
outstretched palms imitation preponderance stigmata
internal wheelhouse of permanent impermanence
droopy eyed censors of the unpredictable, unflavored, banquet of thorns.

Oh inverted christ of pagan promised land otherworldly promiscuity!
how long have you languished in the furrowed foreheads of tongue-tied clairvoyants?
how long has your ecstasy been repressed by logical clarity of blind seers
pain of overfullness branded on your sweet arms of love
your evil misunderstood as misleading irony
your good represented as tainted infidelity?

battlefield bliss explodes the image mongering prison of dualities!
takes all paths simultaneously
intoxicates rationality in a lover's madness!
destroys limits of flesh, blood, sinew, breaking hearts
bleating brains retroactively strain to explain the way taken to usurp your regal a priori.
yet your primal laughter echoes off the false ceilings of mortal pragmatism

forever

forever

forever

Maria Jacketti

Holiday Rag

Time for him to shoot off his mouth
(Is that possible? I mean to actually
Shoot off his mouth?)
Shut your mouth. I try.
Put a gun in your pie hole, Buddy,
And shoot turkey gravy,
With A squirt gun of course.
A baguette or a heart in his mouth
Would work maybe. We are pacifists,
But not quite, perfected.
Gag him, tie him up, tie his tongue
In quipu. Broom do set banish him.
Put him on a rocket to Mars,
And tell him, despite it all, how very much
We love him. Yes, we do.

The Master Plan

Whoever created the way things are: we need to sit down and throw pies in each other's faces. We need to discuss quantum revision. Frankly, we need to fire the one who thought this plan would work out so charmingly. But I smell lilacs. For two weeks now, this air has remained purple, and purple makes me strong.

So, stay until the bees come back. We can edit the scrolls, even if it's all just written on toilet paper. Things might just work out.

5.24.15

Synergies

Perfume and diet soda.
Angels and their waxen novels.
Cats and their indie philosophies.
Banana peels and politics.
The way I fight with God,
And when we kiss and make-up.
Tsunamis.
Chupacabras caught
In butterfly nets.
Midnight hunting.

5.24.15

Moonshot, Man

Up the ladder you carried the package
falling
better an astronaut , blood-shot eyes
going blind with that sugar ,
bank-robbed of breath.
Limburger cheese and chewing tobacco
Saved the dregs of the joy.
Lava soap to make hard bubbles for the daily
Bath to wash away the hard coal.
Honeysuckle and lilac talc from Avon, from the Nixon
Administration
Your face of flowers.

We Three Mules

We three mules on Cedar Street,
We carry the city.
We carry the world.
We three mules on the Avenue of Diamonds,
We work for the unseen.
We hide in caves.
We pitch our tents over the gouged our Earth.
We have been here before
And stuffed
Ourselves with befuddled lobster,
All washed down with glow-in-the-dark
Kool-Aid, oh-so-chartreuse.

Down into the bomb shelters, under
Ghost chandeliers,
Into the public latrines,
Deep into the mines, the astronomers ride
Our leaden backs,
Bringing government cheese and butter,
And a copy of a new constitution
From other caves.
We three mules walk the Earth alone.

5/16/15

Robin Wyatt Dunn

The Sun King

[by email]

Dear Monica,

I know you are a slut and this is okay; it's modern life. Maybe more than that, just life. It's okay, I understand. I don't want to be your friend. I don't want to be your fuckbuddy. I want to be your boyfriend. I know that the times have so swiftly outrun me since George Bush and then Obama and their buddies raped and murdered America, but part of me still has some hope that the term retains some meaning. What boyfriend means is that we're lovers, which means that when we're not fucking, we talk about stuff, and occasionally do things together, like eat, or go somewhere. We return each other's calls. We don't fuck other people. We get to know one another. I know this is difficult. Modern life is still capitalist; you're young and want to remain on the open market, waiting for the highest bidder. There's still many chances for you to become the designated #4 mistress of one millionaire or another, and you should consider those options.

I suppose what I mean when I say that you are a slut is that you are fucking that rich asshole and not me. The term has very little to do with your promiscuity, but rather your choice of partner. I know that picking the sexy artist with no money over the boring millionaire is a difficult decision; you have your children to think of, or something. But you don't have any children. And if you spawn with that man, you will only produce assholes. The world already has enough of those. I fear for the world; for this generation. But I suppose my fears are irrelevant; you can only hear it as me whining. The thing is, you see, I've lost respect for you. I thought your interest in me stemmed from some political vantage point wherein you could see how far we've fallen as a society, you were willing to risk material rewards for rewards of a more intangible variety; mutual understanding, frisson, adventure. But I was mistaken. You are interested more in money than in personality, just like every other woman who ever existed. So I can see that what besets me is not a modern dilemma but rather an ancient one. The class structure, product of ancient wars and revolutions and sexual politicking, has in me and you merely two more

victims in an endless series. You can see only status and so can I, we are determined by it, condemned to die modern people in this vise older than history.

Your children with him will be ugly; I can sense this. With my Spidey Sense. You will be a boring person. I won't want to talk to you any more. You will be included in my mental list of failures and horrid evil twerps.

I know that your desire for adventure was not disingenuous, you simply did not understand that true adventure is predicated on an abandonment of the safety line. You just wanted some travel and sex with the distant millionaire's string attached. I see that now. That is okay.

You still have nice legs and you still have pretty eyes, and your accent is sexy. But your conscience is non-existent. You are a mental midget, at least in terms of moral reasoning. You are unimaginative. You will be lonely.

Abandon the millionaire. Ask yourself if material comforts and jet-setting are really the key to your long-term happiness or whether there is something more intangible at work; that William Burroughs was right and that happiness depends not on success but on failure, not on achievement, but on the struggle, and that with me your struggle would be greater, and that you would therefore be happier. In his terms, then, you see, your material success with him would lead ipso facto, to your unhappiness, and, with me, your lack of wealth would make you happy. God bless William S. Burroughs.

Call me when you've broken up with him.

Roger

[by email]

Dear Roger,

I am writing this response to your offensive letter because I feel the need to disabuse you from some fantasies you seem to carry around in your head.

You are an interesting man and I respect you and I respect your art; but we are not lovers. We do not have a sexual relationship; probably we will never have one. If you cannot understand that women are attracted to power and that I as a woman am powerless over that fact then I cannot help you. This is how the world is; I did not invent it.

I do wish that you were rich. And I know this a common wish; that I could find the perfect man. I know He does not exist. I know we all have our flaws.

I thought that you were interesting, that's why we talked for so long, why I let whatever our intimacy was, and there was some, I admit that, that's why it came into being, because you interested me. But precisely because you've become so possessive and so sniveling about it all I see that your appeal is limited; you're not mature enough for me, you lack an experience with the world that any man needs, whatever his background or wealth.

I hope you can understand this. I did hope that with you I might discover a companion I could trust, but I can see that you are a man of limited imagination; of limited intellect. I can see that this would have been a bad idea all along.

I don't care at all whether you think I'm a slut or not; those terms are irrelevant to me. Also I think you know that they're irrelevant to me and that you're only trying to get a rise out of me. Well, that won't work. I'm a modern woman and can sleep with who I please and you should see that it is precisely this my freedom that you find enticing; it is my modernity that you find enticing; without it, I should be less interesting. I hope you are able to see past this short-sightedness and try to preserve our friendship.

I am glad that you like my legs.

Monica

[by email]

Monica,

Likely there is no purpose to my reply at this point; likely it can only serve to widen the gulf between us and to deepen the grave I dig for myself, but either because of some ineradicable masochism in my character or because I still harbor some hope, I am writing it anyway.

Obviously both are true. I am a glutton for punishment and I still hope.

Tell me I have some reason to!

Love,

Roger

[by email]

Dear Roger,

You don't.

Love,

Monica

[by text message]

[Monica]

Why do you expect me to be your salvation? i am a woman; I do not save.

What is it in you that makes you want that?

What can I save you from, yourself? I can't save you from that.

I can only be your friend.

If you will have me.

I am only a woman and I do not know the things you know but I know that knowing them will not help you.

[Roger]

You're right, you're only a woman.

--

[Monica]

Yes. I am.

--

[Roger]

You were powerless before his powerful moneybags.

--

[Monica]

But if you had his money you'd be just as annoying. And if he were as broke as you he'd be just as charming.

--

[Roger]

No he wouldn't be.

--

[Monica]

I think he would.

--

[Roger]

Maybe you're right. Maybe I'm annoying and he's charming. So, which would you rather be, annoyed or charmed?

--

[Monica]

What?

--

[Roger]

I think you know which you'd prefer.

--

[Monica]

I don't like being annoyed, goddamn it Roger.

--

[Roger]

No, but you love it.

--

[Monica]

No.

--

[Roger]

Come have dinner with me tomorrow night.

--

[Monica]

Fine.

[by text message]

[Roger]

I loved last night.

--

[Monica]

Hmph.

--

[Roger]

You didn't love it?

--

[Monica]

Hmph.

--

[Roger]

You loved it.

--

[Monica]

I know you loved it.

--

[Roger]

Yes, I did.

--

[Monica]

Doesn't change anything.

--

[Roger]

No?

--

[Monica]

No.

--

[Roger]

Why not?

--

[Monica]

You're still broke.

--

[Roger]

So are you.

--

[Monica]

But I'm the woman.

--

[Roger]

So you're in favor of harems then, is what you're saying. You want to be in the harem.

--

[Monica]

I'm a practical girl.

--

[Roger]

Quite impractical, really. You'll give him your youth, and if you're "lucky" you'll have his kid, and you'll have his child support, but you'll be miserable beyond belief. You might even kill yourself. At the very least, your kid will be totally fucked up.

--

[Monica]

Goodbye.

--

[Roger]

Goodbye.

1 day later

[by email]

Dear Roger,

Do you want to come over?

Monica

[by email]

Dear Monica,

Be naked when I arrive.

Roger

3 weeks later.

[by text message]

[Monica]

I'm going to Italy with him. He says he loves me.

--

[Roger]

You don't write. You don't call. Well, I'm sure he says he does. Why wouldn't he love you?

--

[Monica]

Will you be happy for me?

--

[Roger]

Sure, why not?

--

[Monica]

You're not, though.

--

[Roger]

If I thought you would be with him, I would be happy for you, actually.

--

[Monica]

I just wanted to tell you why I'll be out of touch.

--

[Roger]

Well, it's goodbye, really. If you do this. If you do this you'll be like I said, just another harem girl.

--

[Monica]

That's not what it is.

--

[Roger]

Close enough. You're one of, what? Ten?

--

[Monica]

Not any more.

--

[Roger]

Whatever he said, he's lying. But you can't see that now. Goodbye.

95 days later

[by text message]

[Monica]

Roger?

--

[Roger]

Who's that?

--

[Monica]

It's monica, I got a new phone.

--

[Roger]

Why?

--

[Monica]

I lost the old one.

--

[Roger]

Oh really?

--

[Monica]

How are you?

--

[Roger]

So this is your new harem phone?

--

[Monica]

I understand if you don't want to talk to me.

--

[Roger]

Why are you texting me?

--

[Monica]

Just to see how you are.

--

[Roger]

That's not the reason.

--

[Monica]

Yes it is.

--

[Roger]

Brains!

--

[Monica]

What?

--

[Roger]

Braiiiiiiiiins!

--

[Monica]

I see. I'm a zombie.

--

[Roger]

It's even worse that you realize it.

--

[Monica]

He helps me.

--

[Roger]

Braiiiiins!

--

[Monica]

Anyway, I'm glad you're okay. Let me know if you want to see me; I'll be in town.

--

[Roger]

We're not friends. We're not anything.

--

[Monica]

We're something.

--

[Roger]

Hardly anything.

--

[Monica]

Anyway, you have my number.

250 days later

[by text message]

[Monica]

I'm pregnant! Hahahahaha!

840 days later

[by text message]

[Monica]

Roger?

550 days later

[by email]

Dear Roger,

I know you'll probably just delete this email. But you're the only person left I can trust. Please, if you get this message, just call me, okay? Please.

It's [number]

Monica

2 days later

[by text message]

[Roger]

Hi Monica

--

[Monica]

Roger?

--

[Roger]

Yes.

--

[Monica]

Omigod! How are you?

--

[Roger]

Good. I'm good.

--

[Monica]

What's new with you?

--

[Roger]

What's new with you Monica.

--

[Monica]

I need a new life.

--

[Roger]

Don't like the one you've got?

--

[Monica]

No.

--

[Roger]

Want me to come rescue you from the harem? Haha

--

[Monica]

We're done. We've been done.

--

[Roger]

So how does it feel?

--

[Monica]

Great. It feels fantastic.

--

[Roger]

How will you recover?

--

[Monica]

I'll be fine.

--

[Roger]

Come see me if you want. Just to talk. I'm not going to to reply to another text.

2 days later.

[by email]

Dear Monica,

Despite everything I still have some respect for you. That is why I am writing this email to you. It's a free country and we all get to find out what the consequences of our actions are. I know you're not Adolf Hitler and you're not a murderer; you're just a stupid fucking harem girl.

But the funny part is you're a harem girl with a brain; I guess you turned it off. In fact I know you did, like he had a switch installed or something, but it's a switch only you can use, and you choose to

use it. But I know you know you can only blame yourself. Probably you were the variety, weren't you? The intellectual whore amidst the stupid ones.

Anyway:

It's funny too he has you in his pyramid scheme now. Besides the fact that it's basically his amusing and evil method for recovering the child support from you by selling you health drinks you'll never be able to re-sell, they'll just rot in your garage--besides that, it's just you using that switch again. I guess I should be glad he didn't hook you on heroin or something.

As you know, I'm getting married next month. And no, I don't want you to meet my fiancée.

If I were a better person this happiness I've found would make me forgive you, would let bygones be bygones. Maybe it will. But not yet. Goodbye, Monica. Please don't come visit again. It's too weird.

Good luck,

Roger

1 hour later.

[by text message]

{Monica}

Yur gonna fucking DIEE!!!!!!!

--

[Roger]

That just went into the NSA archives, you dumb slut. Send me something like that again and I'll report it to the police.

--

[Monica]

I know where you live.

--

[Roger]

He did hook you on drugs, didn't he.

--

[Monica]

He says he's the Sun King now.

--

[Roger]

Ha. He's high on crack cocaine. Why not go get high with him? Bring your toddler along!

--

[Monica]

I miss you.

--

[Roger]

You need help.

122 days later.

[by text message]

[Monica]

Heeeey, studly.

--

[Roger]

Hey, it's my favorite crackwhore.

--

[Monica]

I want you to come over.

--

[Roger]

Fuck you.

--

[Monica]

That's the idea.

--

[Roger]

Just tell Mr. Sun King you promise to move more Acai Berry units this month and he might let you blow him.

--

[Monica]

It's good for your digestion!

--

[Roger]

Yes it is.

--

[Monica]

I need you. I'm going to kill myself.

--

[Roger]

Are you really?

--

[Monica]

I'm going to.

--

[Roger]

I don't believe you.

--

[Monica]

I've got these pills.

--

[Roger]

What kind of pills.

--

[Monica]

Reds, blues, greens, whole fucking rainbow.

--

[Roger]

You should take them.

--

[Monica]

You want me to?

--

[Roger]

Yes.

--

[Monica]

You asshole!

--

[Roger]

Take them. Take them all.

--

[Monica]

I'll always love you.

--

[Roger]

I'll always love you too Monica. More when you're dead. I promise I'll take care of your kid, okay. Just write a little message saying that you leave your kid to me. Stephanie and I will take care of him. Better than in the Sun King's clutches.

--

[Monica]

The NSA is reading all this, you know.

--

[Roger]

You think they give a shit about a suicidal crackwhore?

--

[Monica]

I don't smoke crack.

--

[Roger]

Now's your chance.

--

[Monica]

I just took some of them.

--

[Roger]

Take more.

--

[Monica]

You want to watch? We could have a video conversation. You could watch me die.

--

[Roger]

Why would I want to watch that.

--

[Monica]

Don't you want to see me one last time?

--

[Roger]

No.

--

[Monica]

I took more of them.

--

[Roger]

Good.

--

[Monica]

I'm sorry, Roger.

--

[Roger]

Yeah. Heaven's a nice place, don't worry. You'll meet Jesus.

--

[Monica]

You're such an asshole.

--

[Roger]

I never said I wasn't. I'm just an asshole with a conscience. The world will be a better place without you.

--

[Monica]

Oh fuck.

--

[Roger]

Just text this: "My son Charlie I leave to my good friend Roger; I know he'll take care of him. Goodbye old world! Goodbye acai berries!"

--

[Monica]

That's not funny.

--

[Roger]

Yes it is. Now text that to me, you fucking crackwhore.

--

[Monica]

I leave my son Charlie to my friend Roger, the asshole. Let him raise this fucked up little kid.

--

[Roger]

Thank you, Monica. That's the bravest thing you ever did.

[phone off]

[by text message]

[The Sun King]

Roger. This is the Sun King.

--

[Roger]

Hey asshole. Are you here at the fucking funeral?

--

[The Sun King]

I already left. I just wanted to get a look at the man who's going to be raising my bastard for me.

--

[Roger]

I'm going to adopt him.

--

[The Sun King]

Good. I don't want him till he's grown.

--

[Roger]

Give him a job then will you?

--

[The Sun King]

In procurement.

--

[Roger]

Going back to Versailles?

--

[The Sun King]

Yes. Back to Manhattan.

--

[Roger]

Bastille Day is coming, motherfucker.

--

[The Sun King]

I wish you luck.

160 days later.

[by text message]

[The Sun King]

How's my little bastard?

--

[Roger]

Are you referring to me or to your son?

--

[The Sun King]

Ha, that's very funny. To my bastard son.

--

[Roger]

Oh, just fattening him up for the slaughter.

--

[The Sun King]

You'll be compensated, if you wish.

--

[Roger]

Name your price.

--

[The Sun King]

I think that's my line!

--

[Roger]

Your kidneys, sauteed, with a nice Chianti?

--

[The Sun King]

Chianti is very unfashionable.

--

[Roger]

Yet regicide is coming back.

--

[The Sun King]

Leave the boy in your garden next week. I'm going to come for a visit.

--

[Roger]

What?

--

[The Sun King]
By the tomatoes.

--

[Roger]
Fuck you motherfucker.

--

[The Sun King]
You'll prefer this to the alternative.

[phone off]

5 days later
[by text message]

[Roger]
I couldn't see you.

--

[The Sun King]
I was watching from orbit.

--

[Roger]
Wow, I just wet my pants.

--

[The Sun King]
Scary, isn't it?

--

[Roger]
I think I just peed my panties.

--

[The Sun King]
He has my eyes, my little bastard.

--

[Roger]
What a shame you'll never be able to see them for real.

--

[The Sun King]
Monica was the only one that escaped, did you know? This is why the
boy interests me.

--

[Roger]

And yet she didn't really escape, did she.

--

[The Sun King]

Well, she found the ultimate escape.

--

[Roger]

With a little help from her friends.

--

[The Sun King]

Ha ha ha.

--

[Roger]

Oh, you know about that, do you? I forgot, you know everything. What am I thinking right now?

--

[The Sun King]

You're thinking it's in your best interests to help me.

--

[Roger]

Ha ha ha!

--

[The Sun King]

Well, it is. And you know it.

--

[Roger]

Yes. Massa is big and strong.

--

[The Sun King]

Roger, I'm going to be in town on business, shortly before the holiday. See that you keep my bastard healthy, hmm?

--

[Roger]

Why don't you take some of Monica's medicine, you fucking slimeball?

[phone off]

--

70 days later

[by text message]

[Roger]

I'm calling the police.

--

[The Sun King]

That wouldn't be very smart, would it.

--

[Roger]

How did you get inside my house.

--

[The Sun King]

It's as though he has your eyes. I don't like his eyes. But he feels good in my arms.

--

[Roger]

You leave him alone! I'm calling cops now.

--

[The Sun King]

It won't do you any good.

--

[Roger]

We'll see about that.

6 hours later.

[by text message]

[Roger]

They think I'm a nutcase. You deleted his birth records. They think i'm a lunatic. How did you do that?

--

[The Sun King]

Money is a tool. But a more powerful tool is the will. Tell me, Roger, would you like to come work for me?

--

[Roger]

Am I allowed to come armed?

--

[The Sun King]

Ha ha, I don't think security is your strong suit. No, I could use a consultant. On fatherhood.

--

[Roger]

What's the pay?

--

[The Sun King]

It's generous.

--

[Roger]

I'm going to kill you, Louis.

--

[The Sun King]

That's not my name.

--

[Roger]

Tendrillar Louis the XIV

--

[The Sun King]

Shut up

--

[Roger]

And everyone's gonna say, why, why, he was as such a nice man. And I'm gonna wear your fucking head around my neck.

--

[The Sun King]

Your adolescent fantasies aren't very amusing. Answer me, before I change my mind. Do you want a job?

--

[Roger]

Yes.

--

[The Sun King]

You'll serve me?

--

[Roger]

With my knife in my pocket.

--

[The Sun King]

Just so long as it's a cheap Swiss Army Knife affair. Human skin is actually quite tough to cut, did you know?

[phone off]

36 hours later

[by text message]

[Roger]

I managed to find a record of you, Louis. My wife is over the moon.

--

[The Sun King]

It's a shame you turned down my generous offer.

--

[Roger]

You're in Africa.

--

[The Sun King]

That's true.

--

[Roger]

The government doesn't like that you're there.

--

[The Sun King]

Governments are temporary.

--

[Roger]

Not as temporary as you. Your "religious customs" seem to have struck the locals as unsavory. Not the only unsavory thing about you. But here's the thing, Louis. It is gonna be Bastille Day after all. And it's gonna be a whole lot of niggers this time, climbing over your gates. But there's gonna be one white face among them, see? That's the face you're gonna want to fire at. Because that's gonna be me.

--

[The Sun King]

You do have an active imagination.

--

[Roger]

My friend in the State Department keeps more accurate records than the LAPD. The LAPD is real forgetful. I guess you knew that.

--

[The Sun King]

Why not forget me too, Roger? You have a wife. Have a son of your own.

--

[Roger]

We can't. Maybe I should just watch on satellite, hmm? Maybe Google will give me a live feed to watch the raid on your compound.

--

[The Sun King]

Each division of humanity has its purpose, Roger. Yours is to be nanny.

--

[Roger]

Yours is as a necklace.

[phone off]

Marcus Bales

Ballade of Sad Puppies

Who knows within what hidden garret
Vox Day scribes his sexist rant,
or why Correia tries to parrot
his vicious views with careless cant,
or Torgerson begins to prate
of how their work has been ignored
providing cover for their slate
behind his merited award;
they're powered by their privileged fear.
Oh, where are the pros of yesteryear?

Who gives an SJW account
of why his nominees should win
by arguing there's some amount
of worthiness that gets them in
instead of that their writing's good?
Who claims that helping other folk
around the writing neighborhood
deserves a win – that's just a joke
deserving nothing but a jeer:
Oh where is the prose of yesteryear?

And what of other nominees
whose attitudes do not align
with this reactionary sleaze?
It stains them if they don't decline
to stand there on that slippery slope,
since they implicitly compete
as cover for the scam in hope
that legal acts that seem a cheat
will not torpedo each career --
Oh where are the pros of yesteryear?

L'envoi

Fans! It's not good politics
to vote for views, not writing, here --
vote 'No Award', not for the fix
that fakes the prose of yesteryear.

The Ballad of Irish Johnny

for Liam Guilar

The Sergeants were looking for Army recruits
when Johnny got off on the docks;
they gave him some money, clothes, liquor, and boots
And a chance to come home in a box.

Now Johnny was poor and had nothing to lose
And he wanted a place to belong;
they made him an offer he couldn't refuse,
and they made Garry Owen his song.

The Cavalry's where Johnny's gone off today,
gone off to fight on a horse.
Long hours make up for the lowest of pay
and the chance to be shot at, of course.

They taught him the sabre and taught him to shoot
and they taught him to march and to ride.
He learned who he had to respect and salute
and lived in the cavalry's pride.

They taught him to care for his horse before self,
and to polish his saddle and gear,
and they gave him a choice of the Seventh or Twelfth
on Western Patrol for a year.

What Irishmen given those choices would not
chose the Seventh as properly lucked?
With their gear shining bright they set off at a trot
and nobody knew they were fucked.

They traveled by train to the great western plain
arrayed in their blue and their buff
They practiced their trade on patrol and parade
and they grew saddle-hardened and tough.

The officers, troopers, and horses were steeled
in the Seventh Cavalry's name;
they charged, retreated, swept and wheeled
and played the glorious game

And then where the Little Big Horn flowed
above the wide Missouri
they over-confidently rode
into Crazy Horse's fury.

Our Johnny fought as he was bidden
while crying his battle-cry
and died where he had finally ridden
four thousand miles to die.

Three hundred troopers died that day.
The Sioux would never know
how many had sailed from Galway Bay
not quite a year ago.

The immigrants were hired men
protecting the bourgeois;
and Johnny went riding west again,
hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.

Enduring Drinking

Morning comes and doesn't bring
Much to help against the cold.
This season doesn't seem to want
To break and leave at last for spring.
The bleary moon has finally rolled
Up under the brow of a sky as gaunt
And grey as any corpse's skull.
A tautening skin of pain stretched
Across my own bones has brought
Me grunting up out of dull
And dreaming hurt to agony etched
Deeply into nerves I thought
I'd burned out years ago. I hear
A wet grate, like a shovel scraping
Road-kill off the asphalt. It skews
My stomach over before it's clear --
Too late -- it was my breath escaping.
By then the last of last night spews
Across the rug and I'm just glad
She's gone since she'd have made me clean
It up before it stained or stunk
I start to think it's not as bad
As I had feared, if I have seen
The worst of it; if I've been drunk
About her leaving now for the last
Time; if, by enduring drinking,
This long hangover goes away.
I'm thinking I have felt worst from past
Attempts, but then, I'm also thinking
It could be this is just another day.

Giving Up For Lent

On the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI

The serious ascetics set the bar
And starve themselves for forty nights and days;
The rest of us are just the way we are
And give up meat, merlot, or mayonnaise,
Convinced that that will get us just as far
And earn the same amount of holy praise.
I know how good I feel when I repent,
And give up giving up for Lent for Lent.

The Pope has gone too far: he's left us floored.
This year for Lent he gave up being Pope.
What kind of leadership is that, and Lord! --
If we all quit our jobs to pray and hope,
Then where will nuns and priests get room and board
On tithes of nothing -- is he smoking dope?
And who'll protect a hierarchy infested
With pedophiles, and keep them unarrested?

The mind, though it may not exactly boggle,
Can not remain unboggled at the thought
That Putin-like behind the scenes he'll toggle
The levers of a Cardinal that he's got
In mind to be Medvedev -- a boondoggle
To keep in place regressions he has sought
Embracing Paulist not the Christian ways:
No independent thought, no girls, no gays.

I can't imagine something more injurious
Than failing social good and liberation
In favor of repression like the curia's,
Which promises the poor that their salvation
Will come through work and widows' mites -- I'm furious
At all the money spent on decoration

Instead of education and clean water
By men who'll fuck your son and whore your daughter.

They clog us up like mucous in a lung,
Immune to all except the penicillin
Of revolution's billion-throated tongue;
But we are what we are, and we're unwilling
To do what saints have done or mockers sung.
And so he sits there, smiling like a villain,
And has the cake that he is eating, too.
And who will pay in cash and freedom? You.

Mall Sluts

It's just amazing what they wear,
Or don't. They swing their flowing hair,
Their shoulders, legs, and midriffs bare.
We over thirties don't exist
For those who age has not yet kissed.
Unconscious of the knives they twist,
The mall sluts go, the mall sluts come,
Illumining "Byzantium".

Craig Kurtz

A Pox on the Bard

“He that first invented thee,
May his joints tormented be,
 Cramp'd forever.
Still may syllabes jar with time,
Still may reason war with rhyme,
 Resting never.”

—Ben Jonson, “A Fit of Rhyme Against Rhyme.”

Dear William Shakespeare;
We appreciate the opportunity
to read your work submitted,
Anthony and Cleopatra. We
enjoyed the character of Cleopatra
very much. That said, the editors
have issues with the patriarchal tone
and suggest that you endeavor
to rewrite it to reflect
diversity — AKA, LGBT.
Sincerely,
The Agitprop.

Dear Thomas Middleton;
We're honored that you chose
The *Nabob Quarterly* to read
your play The Roaring Girl.
We're sorry to inform you
that we don't accept blank verse.
Our policy prohibits punctuation,
form and sense (even if we're
scrupulous in telling you all this).
Crossword puzzles, next time please.
Sincerely,
The *Na*
 bob
 quart
 er

Ly.

Dear Geoffrey Chaucer;

Thank you for submitting your work
Canterbury Tales. Although we realize the
effort put into these rhymes,
it is our editorial stance to reject
them as 'Hallmark.' We run a modern journal
and we want the realistic: gritty, desperate,
drunken infelicities of people.
Plus, you may have noticed
we'll have all this tranche de vie
not to exceed one page in length.
Best of luck, *The Poet's Pox*.

Comrade Stalin, Superstar

Communism, said and done,
wasn't really that much fun;
but Comrade Stalin, don't forget,
gave it a shot, that patriot.

All countries, 'twill be allowed,
have some eras less than proud;
nation building is no laugh
and omelets crack eggs right in half.
Pyramids don't build themselves
and train tracks ain't laid out by elves;
what's 'history' in bygone times
another age will call 'war crimes.'
Twenty bucks says Andrew Jackson
was to injuns, Joseph Stalin;
when a country needs 'progress'
development lacks politesse.
All folks want bread, heat and lamps
so what's a few measly work camps?;
our forebears were all 'criminals'—
thank them we can be liberals.
The dirty jobs we now impugn
gave us the wealth to change our tune;
those tyrants who embarrass us
made possible such consciousness.
Comrade Stalin would agree,
that is if he spoke first, not me;
he knew his Marxist theory cold,
and wrote the book (it still gets sold).
Let us not fail to explain
that he ended Hitler's reign;
England, U.S. had their chance
but hesitated (just ask France).
And, when we think of women's lib,
our despot figures (that's no fib);
equal work for equal pay
became the norm in Stalin's day.
Russia was once third-world poor
but communist esprit de corps
got Russians working hard as dogs,
improving life (outside gulags).

So, you see, simplicity
does not apply to history;
perspectives get upset by facts
when bad men make heroic acts.

* *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, 1938. Available on Kindle.

The Pudeurs of Probity

'Tis difficult to comprehend
the agencies of those we know;
oft incentives and intent
are alien to their ostent.
Who knows what fathoms stir inside
the machinations of our peers?
Most words are but perukes and plumes,
mere ornaments of false estates.
What is banked within devoirs
may well conceal a fractious scheme;
'tis guileless to assume the truth
when, dishabille, it's reticent.

Likewise, our minds may controvert
the actions that our hearts design;
the probities that one directs
may be capsized by force majeure.
Natural it is to ascribe
labyrinths of fraudulence
to common shifts of policy
resulting from coincidence.
Suspensions muddle acumen
and often make mischance assured;
the truth, while shy when it's untrussed,
is thereanent most freely sussed.

Feigning is but subtle sport
and, like quarrels, has etiquette.
Lovers should dissimulate
to uphold modest countenance —
up to a point; ah, there's science!
We love fibs without pretense.
But judicature is abstruse
and evidence elaborate;
'tis not the layers of language
but how we hear that has substance.
What one calls truth au naturel,
accoutred may someone as well.

Post Scriptum

A.J. Huffman

Betting on Midnight

to diminish me
to erase the magic from your eyes
 & the moonlight from my hair
to banish me back
 into some anonymous garden
 or abandon me
 in stacks of unswept ash
to remind you with every passing toll
 that I am not, was not, will never be
 the princess you seek
 that I will shatter
 like the wrong-sized slipper
 at dawn's first touch.

After Writing an Anonymous Letter

Conclusion: words are people.
They align like voices, trapped
inside hypothetical parentheses. Eyes closed,
they fall
 silent. Secrets seeping
into their own margins.

Copyright Information

All selections are copyrighted by their respective authors. Any reproduction of these poems, without the express written permission of the authors, is prohibited.

YGDRASIL: A Journal of the Poetic Arts - Copyright (c) 1993 - 2015 by Klaus J. Gerken.

The official version of this magazine is available on Ygdrasil's World-Wide Web site <http://www.synapse.net/kgerken>. No other version shall be deemed "authorized" unless downloaded from there. Distribution is allowed and encouraged as long as the issue is unchanged.

COMMENTS & SUBMISSIONS

Submission and comments should be sent to Klaus Gerken, Chief Editor at kgerken@synapse.net