



Worship Dog

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Cover photo by the author

for David Bromige

GLITTER

s,e,q,u,e,n,t,i,a,l,e,v,e,n,t,s

MY DENTIST'S NIGHTMARE

Cover the bottom of an angel-food cake pan
with gumdrops.

Melt butter & marshmallows.

Mix this into popcorn and pour on the gumdrops.

Let sit until firm enough to eat.

Popcorn cake.

AT THE EDGE OF BEYOND

I tried to murder the rose creeping

into the tower, but it returned
with a vengeance

from my heart to
yours
of you, part
to part, of me

the hurt heals the hurt

top

bottom

the been there

and gone

visited the Big Island

got homesick and phoned you

no answer

a gecko jumped out of the coin return

I can still feel the adrenaline rush

DR. JENKEL & MR. BROWN

Lately, I've become accustomed to the way

The ground opens up and envelopes me

Each time I go out to walk the dog.

AMIRI BARAKA

One man saw another man whisper into the ear
of the president as he was leaving his hotel
on his way to Air Force One.

Later, another man asked the president
if he knew what was going on in New York City, and he
replied,

"Yes, I plan to do something about it."

From these reports, another man assumed
the president knew something

about the events of 9/11

before the attack occurred, believes now that the attacks
were organized crimes underwritten by *Enron* and
Mayor Willie Brown,

and that every official from *Enron* president Ken Lay

down to San Francisco's dog catcher
has been covering up the trail.

I slept while this man cringed in his tattered mocs amid the clutter
of his mind.

I looked the other way
when the investigators came to ask for an explanation.

I showed them my identification,
but the cards were blank.

I wrapped myself in the flag
while angels had electrodes attached to their wings,
were disemboweled,
had their throats cut.

No wonder no one sings any more.

**Review of Roberta Soltea's novel, *The Flesh of Fire*
by Bouvard Pécuchet**

In 1824, Shelly hazarded the opinion that all poems were parts of one immense poem written by all the poets, past, present and future. One hundred twenty years later, Jorge Luis Borges extended this idea, feeling that the almost infinite world of literature was in one person— he was Walt Whitman, he was Thomas De Quincey, David Bromige, Roberta Soltea.

In her plagiarist novel, *The Flesh of Fire*, Soltea's heroine, Annabelle Rose, travels through time to have conversations with famous authors, giving them plots and dropping metaphors. Annabelle has dinner with Emily Dickinson, and they discuss how "nerves sit ceremonius like tombs." She visits Shih Huang Ti, the first Emperor of China, and encourages him to burn all the books that had been written so far. Although the works of Confucius and Lao Tzu have since resurfaced, those of Kuc Xing and Laun Dri are lost to the world. She visits Adam and interviews him as the greatest author of his day, seeing monotheism as a stimulus to art and proclaiming *Genesis* morphological to all future literature. It is her idea that, in the beginning, the earth was without form and void.

Midway through the novel, Annabelle Rose transports Thuragania, a pre-Socratic philosopher, into the near past and introduces her incognito to Jack Kerouac. Their conversation is witty and intimate, full of wisdom and insight, and the gullible Jack, in a fit of infatuation, decides to follow her

asthoughlwereadogasthoughlwereadogasthoughlwereadog
asthoughlwereadogasthoughlwereadogasthoughlwereadog

WORSHIP DOG

some serious fucking parts of my brain, missing
spastic

"streams of world sleepy mowing in harvest-time, sowing and
reaping for growing field green watch the dreams of dreams in
doubtful riot waves spent and wind dead— seems trouble where
here quiet is the world"

worship Dog

I think I know what I'll do
I think I will decide
to be happy

sitting in my porcelain garden
hollyhocks sculpting my sight
while I try to poeticize reality
and win this war waged in my brain
to stop the war waged in my name

I'm a speck on the earth
the earth
 in turn, a speck in space—
objects in my hundred-mile gaze
pulling away from what I designate
a gazebo, where two teenage girls
 eat sandwiches on the steps

a pleasing visage of afternoon calm
 also, a slap in the face

war begins with a slap in the face
a slap that has the precision of a jet plane

that can fire missiles into my front room
without disturbing the curtains

the slap begins with a broken promise
followed by harsh words, then a curse, then a blow
breaking my nose, blackening an eye
burning the car

as though I was a car

a car which would follow you anywhere
taking I 280 to 92 East
getting off on 1st
going down a long hill
past the high school
I hear

"Republicans are good—
for nothing."

two men debate in anger
the new candidates
frustrating business, smells
of winter, sound of cars
a muffler blown, laughter of three girls

as though I was a girl

talking with two other girls
about taking a picture of themselves
pink, baby blue, white tank tops
heads together, deciding to go
for ice cream

a boy, fashion conscious
pants halfway down his ass
keeps tugging them up— ass and mid-drifts adrift

splayed on the side of a passing truck
Cookies, Brownies, Coffee

followed by a CFL tanker and a USF Bestway
freight express

as though I was a train

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Cotton Belt

Cushion Ride

For Fragile Freight

Great Northern

Great Northern

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Cotton Belt

Auto Pak

Cotton Belt

Auto Pak

Cotton Belt

Auto Pak

Cotton Belt

Auto Pak

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

Milwaukee

more cars, more pedestrians
a dog chasing a ball—"Odie,
bring the ball! No, that's
not right. Get the ball!"

as though I was a dog

contour of wind making earth designs

at my feet, this activity in clear sky
haze around Mt. Saint Helens
visible between the trees over the stop sign
by the police station, lawn mowing going on
a convict in orange shirt, Odie still not
getting the ball, the hollyhocks
in the face of what I see

as though I was a Stalinist

as though I was a Stalinist
now, there's a jump

but not really—
we're all Stalinists
when it comes to what we want

dictating our desires
as though I was true to form

it is this that
one means

it is this
that one
does

it is
this nose, dazzling in profile
that one
knows

Muriel Short was not short.
She was not tall, and she was not short.
She was about average height. A bit
overweight, but not overweight
in an unattractive sense.
She was a mistress of Zeus.
Hera sent a demented plastic surgeon
to mess with her looks.

Homer called her swine-snouted.
A moon goddess, she wore
the three sacred colors, white, red and black virgin, mother,
crone.

so, cremate me and spread my ashes
in four places
Berkeley Rose Garden
under a cedar in Deep Bay
in Peoples' Pond in Ellensburg
at the charnel grounds at Tara Mandala

if I'm drug off by a mountain lion
while I'm in retreat, leave me out there, if
my bones are found, use my thigh bones for trumpets and my
skull for a cup, tell them I was drugged off

a poetry junky
who likes Billy Collins, his sad humor
and his seriousness, his wish to instill
appreciation of this art

poetry goes right to the point, he says to
read a poem each day in school
read it aloud without any obligation
to study it, just listen to it and wonder

"All it takes is one poem to get you hooked."

*I see the best minds of my generation
destroyed by madness, starving hysterical
naked, looking for an angry poem*

old, beggared poets reading poems in bathrooms
Anslinger's prophesy come true
poets selling their nickle poems on street corners

///THIS IS A POEM FREE ZONE///

junk, that poem is junk

"Mommie, I read a poem today.
Do you think I'm hooked?"

The Salvation Army condemns the vice of poetry
Poetry Anonymous meetings in church basements

My name is...
I'm a poet

I have always wanted to write the perfect poem
Today I will write it

It begins with the sun rising, the morning
Light creating the world

The morning light that I create
By raising the sun with my perfect poem

as though I was a god