

issue 11

streetcake



© trini decombe

Contents – issue 11



shane allison – he said he wanted to get naked with me

devreaux baker - a fortune cookie valentine for the chinese new year

ashley bovan – thames and benches

james burt – the dirty bits

sarah kelly – washed

sergio ortiz – transparency

bobby parker – bart simpson

daniel rooke - 57

shane allison

He Said He Wanted to Get Naked with Me

He pulls me like a gun, point blank to his lips.
His mustache is a cactus pricking skin.

He gropes my nipples.
"Show me those titties," he whispers.

He strokes me in the restroom mirror.
His ass angles over assuming the position.

A peeking red rectum gives me the eye
and I grimace in disgust.

He crouches to my crotch.
Saliva trickles to the base of sensitive skin.

Just when I'm about to explode like a Texas oil rig,
he zips up, washes hands and never looks back.

I thought he wanted to get naked with me.

devreaux baker

A Fortune Cookie Valentine For the Chinese New Year

Dear Dragon-Heart, I am steaming you forty bowls
of duck feet, pig feet, black rice sesame balls of love

drifting in plum blossom soup. Yesterday I swept
every room in my house to rid my corners and walls

of ghosts dressed in ill fortune.
This will be our water narcissus night,

filled with the long **O** of my petals opening their scent
beneath your fingers, one by one.

In five days you will hang red lanterns
in your bedroom to welcome all the Gods of Prosperity

down from the heavens and into your bed.
We are the children of dragons, we share red dreams,

firecracker prayers, memories of bound feet,
and silk knots in scarves we have learned how

to love. I give you this Fortune Cookie Valentine
in the Year Of The Tiger,

1,000 red duck wishes for longevity, 1,000 Sweet and Sour
wishes for good health, circling the range of your body

as the moon circles our world.

Thames and Benches

On bankside grasslawns
while lions sleep
the museum gates clank shut
in silence (of crowds, that is)
and no wind is heard in corridors
'cept the cries of lost children
and biscuits crushed into carpet
and wardens touching fossils and smoking
holidays soon
but sailing the lake, back and forth,
year on year, waiting for pension,
is nowhere.

Curtains of dust hang like walls
and doors open and get locked,
sandwiches hide in drawers next to coins and relics
and some wine, left over from Christmas, is still OK,
probably will stay OK forever.

The queues are long this morning.
A dirty suitcase, left by a tramp,
is kicked by a visitor from the Netherlands.

The Dirty Bits

His hair fell on her face. Smelling it, she felt the orgasm coming and called out to him to increase his thrusts so that they could come together. Then he cried out in a tiger's roar, a tremendous sound of joy, such as she had never heard.

She opened her eyes. Her face was covered with his black hair. She took it into her mouth. Their bodies were completely tangled. Her panties had been so hurriedly pulled down that they had fallen the length of her legs and lay around her ankles, and he had somehow inserted his foot into one half of the panties. They looked at their legs bound together by this bit of black chiffon, and they laughed.¹

Gone two a.m. I was tired, fucksweat cooling. I touched Serena but she didn't respond. Instead she was reading a dirty book.

Are you happy with how things are? I asked. With us?

I... Yes, of course I am, she said Sometimes I just feel like reading about it, you know?

It was always that way, wasn't it?

Serena shrugged. I'm not sure. She fumbled for her cigarettes. It's not your fault, it all feels fine, it's just... Look we're never going to do the holding hands and cuddling thing. This is just sex.

It had seemed so promising when we met. We found things to talk about before going to bed, and afterwards the conversation never completely died. Now we fucked to fill the silences. I wished I smoked so I could share a cigarette with her, if nothing else. The worst thing was, she was right - all we had was the bed. *I'm going to take a shower, I said. I'll be back in a bit.*

Fine. Don't wake me if I'm asleep.

I climbed into the bath, careful not to knock flying the bottles and potions lining the edge. I turned the shower up as hot as I could bear and scrubbed myself clean. The thing is, girls like Serena don't turn up every day. Not every woman was so adventurous, so willing to experiment. Even her harshness had its advantages. She wasn't the sort of person who'd say screwing was 'nice' - you don't spend your teenage years craving something as bland as 'nice'. If it was 'nice' something was wrong and she'd tell you so. Serena made certain we both got what we wanted. If only she'd been as great out of bed as in it.

I wanted to stay in the shower until I'd made a decision. I leaned against the wall holding the shower bracket, and closed my eyes.

¹ from 'Linda' by Anais Nin, collected in 'Delta of Venus'

I met Serena at the laundrette. I'd had to take some leave or lose it so, with nothing better to do, I was catching up on chores. I sat against the driers reading a book that had been left behind at a party, a copy of *The Story of the Eye*. It was like nothing I'd read before. By the start of the second chapter I wondered what sort of novel this was meant to be:

That was the period when Simone developed a mania for breaking eggs with her behind. She would do a headstand in an armchair in the parlour, her back against the chair's back, her legs bent towards me, while I jerked off in order to come in her face. I would put the egg right on the hole in her arse and she would skilfully amuse herself by shaking it in the deep crack of her buttocks. The moment my come shot out and trickled down her eyes, her buttocks would squeeze together and she would come while I smeared my face abundantly in her ass².

I resisted embarrassment as the book became worse, telling myself no-one would know unless they'd read it too. It turned out the other customer had:

You like that book?

I'd seen her enter the laundrette and done my best not to react, ignoring taut belly framed by low-slung trousers. I noticed her now, her black bob and the Celtic knots tattooed on her arms.

It's... 'interesting'.

I know that. She smiled. I read it when I was seventeen. How come you're reading it at the laundrette?

I explained how someone had left it behind but we ended up discussing bars not pornographic novels. We had a couple of distant mutual acquaintances so it was odd we'd not met before - we'd almost certainly been at the same parties. It was the first time I ever wished the laundrette's driers were slower, wanting more time to talk with her. Her drier rumbled to a halt before mine and we continued chatting as she folded her clothes into the rucksack, T-shirts, trousers and wisps of underwear. I was sorry to see her packing.

You got anywhere to be this afternoon? she asked.

Not really.

Come back to my house for tea then. She waved a pair of her panties at me. It's not as if we're total strangers - you've already seen my knickers. My name's Serena.

And that was how I met her.

She lived in a studio flat, a single room presenting itself as bedroom, kitchen and lounge. She made tea and we discussed books. She started reading a favourite out loud while

2 from 'The story of the Eye' by Georges Bataille p14

lying on the bed, hipbone razor-sharp, a small gap between trousers and skin.

Then, sitting against him, she took his penis and directed it between her legs. She rubbed it gently against her clitoris, over and over again. Louis watched the hand, thinking how beautiful it looked, holding the penis as if it were a flower. It stirred but did not harden sufficiently to enter her.

She said, 'Give me your tongue,' and leaned over.

Without interrupting the rubbing... she took his tongue in her mouth and touched the tip of it with her own tongue. Each time the penis touched her clitoris, her tongue touched the tip of his tongue. And Louis felt the warmth running between his tongue and his penis, running back and forth.

In a husky voice she said, 'Stick your tongue out, out.'

He obeyed her. She again cried, 'Out, Out, out, out . . . obsessively, and when he did so he felt such a stirring through his body, as if it were his penis extending towards her, to reach into her.'³

It was a long story, but I was entranced. I couldn't think of the last time someone read out loud to me. At the end Serena tossed the book on the floor.

Let's sleep together, she said, we might as well.

I've known women to sound more enthusiastic, but she walked over and sat on my lap and, since I certainly had no better plans for the afternoon, we ended up fucking.

*

The bathroom door opened. Serena had wrapped herself in a blanket without covering much. *Are you coming back to bed?* she said. *I'm bored.*

We fucked again, working through a series of positions. My body responded but my heart wasn't in it. I wanted to come so we could get some sleep; but whatever configurations and orientations we used it was all repetition, just like the books. I gripped Serena's left leg, held straight in the air, wondering what could make this fun again. I found myself wishing we were reading about this instead of being here. I wondered what Anais Nin might make from our rutting, her prose with its 'cross-currents of increasing pleasure', its 'overflows of joy'.

How the honey flowed from her. He dipped his fingers in it lingeringly, then his sex, then he moved her so that she lay on him, her legs thrown over his legs, and as he took her, he could

3 from 'Woman on the Dunes' by Anais Nin, collected in 'Little Birds'

see himself entering into her, and she could see him too. They saw their bodies undulate together, seeking their climax...

He changed her position, making her lie back then crouched over to take her with more force. She moved quicker to bring the climax, and when he saw this, he hastened his motions inside of her and incited her to come with him, with words, with his hands caressing her, and finally with his mouth soldered to hers, so that the tongues moved in the same rhythm as the womb and penis, and the climax was spreading between her mouth and her sex, in crosscurrents of increasing pleasure, until she cried out, half sob and half laughter, from the overflow of joy through her body.⁴

I think Serena only fucked other people because it brought the books alive. She'd grown up studious, the sort of child that was told off for reading too much. At seventeen she resolved to lose her virginity, and applied her usual method for learning things: she found books on the subject. After all, it had worked well enough when she'd wanted to learn calculus, or when she taught herself grammatical accurate but poorly accented Russian.

Initially Serena didn't have the courage to buy dirty books. She found the first one on her parent's bookshelves, a copy of Delta of Venus. Serena devoured it, even though the first story appalled her.

When she told me this I interrogated her: *Why not just buy some sex manuals? Or go down the pub? It's not hard to find men wanting to sleep with seventeen year old girls.*

You've missed the point, she said. Who wants a first time like that? If I'd just wanted to spread my legs I'd have asked a friend. I aspired to something more. She sat up. It's like when I took up chess. I wanted to understand it before I played a game.

At first she was nervous about the dirty books, as if they'd stain her hands so everyone knew she read them. In time she bought her own, keeping dog-eared volumes in the bottom of her wardrobe. Their smell was strong, musty from the damp flats she'd lived in before her parents bought her the studio. She said she found the smell of old books a turn-on. I wonder if Anais Nin, writing erotica for a dollar a page, imagined her work ending up in libraries like this?

*

After we'd fucked Serena smoked a cigarette while I lay beside her, tired but not sleepy.

Come on, she said. Talk to me. Tell me what's wrong.

I'm just thinking about us.

Serena sighed. *Look, I like sleeping with you. But while you make me wet you don't make my heart stop. No-one has. If it's all right with you that we won't fall in love, then we'll be fine.*

4 from 'Elena' by Anais Nin, collected in 'Delta of Venus'

Right then I wanted to be at home listening to the Beach Boys, or typing a book for her to read, something that could make her love me. I wished my life was a book, so I could skip whole chapters, simply reading the good bits and ignoring the rest. The day we were so excited we didn't stop to take our shoes off, trailing mud on the floor and the sheets. A summer afternoon when she lay naked on the sunny bed, knees bent and feet apart, and I stroked her thighs careful not to obscure my view. The disgraceful state of her sheets on the Sunday evening of our first weekend. A cold night, her skin covered in goosebumps that disappeared as we fucked. I loved the dirty bits but I needed a story to tie them together. I clambered out of bed.

Where are you going? she asked.

Home I said. Because I'd rather write about Serena than lie beside her.

sarah kelly

washed

lets scar your scars my
neither our navy's will blue in
compare it is glow

your door stands without frame
and its depth near darker
I know the say

closes tones to shades
but you stand
and with not pale nor

sway can stare
for freeze paints
crumble and scale away

you have my diagonal
lets nail out the texture
she stories she said

for today I would timber

Transparency

What are you made of,
mime with painted palms
and sweaty bare

feet? How much longer
can you take in the air

all that empty space, the caiman
leaves for you to breathe?

Frail frame, proceed
and tune the white organza
mesh for the screen-painting
your imagination seeks.

When the canvas dries
don't forget to wipe
the crowded cell
in which you've
always lived.

Bart Simpson

I'd like to explain my friend Jon. He is borderline autistic and doesn't seem to know right from wrong. His hair is long and dyed purple-black. His clothes smell like rotting fish. Sometimes he turns up with hundreds of pounds in his pocket and no idea where he got the money. When he laughs it is a small miracle, like fumbling a glass of wine and then catching it midair without missing a beat.

He let me see the inside of his house for the first time the other day. We have always wondered what it might be like in there. It is mostly empty – Jon sells almost anything of value so he can maintain a steady supply of sweets and energy drinks. The living room has a single bed facing an old television. His 30 stone mother sits propped against the pillows eating crisps all day. There is a picture of Bart Simpson (half coloured in) on the wall above the bed, stuck there, Jon said, since he drew it when he was four years old. The kitchen is full of comic books.

Jon has had girlfriends in the past, but when I've seen him with them he just hugs them tightly and stares into the distance, seldom speaking apart from expressing his desire to own whatever product is advertised on the TV. Girls sense a moody sensitivity in Jon at first, and then they realise something isn't right with him. He has the names of three different girls tattooed on his arms. He nearly killed himself over the last girl who broke up with him. I don't think he understands how final death is, that the Simpsons are not real.

Jon had nowhere to live for a while, so we put him up on our sofa. At night we barricaded our bedroom door with the junk we keep under the bed. He used to carry a huge knife tucked into his jeans until I confiscated it. I don't think he would hurt anybody, but I wouldn't like to put a bet on that; not that he's evil or anything, he is kind of holy, not knowing right from wrong makes him quite pure. The other day I asked him to bring me a bottle of beer and he came back with washing up liquid. I keep thinking of a photograph I saw beside his mother's bed, Jon as a baby; it makes me want to scream.

Anyway, Jon is good company if you don't mind long silences, if you want someone to agree with everything you say and if you need to compare yourself with someone who is truly lost – not lost in the way that we're all trying to be found by something we can't quite describe, but lost in the sense that sometimes angels lose their way, and wander the earth with confused eyes, like a dog spooked by something banging in the distance. That's all.

57, or take me to heaven

'the only thing to do is simply continue' Frank O'Hara

last night i got the

57

and a man threw up all over the top deck

my eyes followed a lump in the vomit

i felt just like that lone piece of gristle

floating in the sick

the empathy i felt

(as it swayed back & forth with the buses movement)

came close to love

maybe even more than i love myself

i got off the bus

and i walked home