

issue 39

streetcake



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dane cobain

Chester

The walls fall apart,
grass grows green
sprouting, shooting
in the meeting room,
Slipknot on Spotify
and this theory is fourteen
and still a slut,
ghosts gather
backed towards the boiler,
part of the place
like walls and doors
and floors,
elevated,
cracked
and on the rise.

Poisonous dustclouds
choking deoxygenized,
lead and tar and soot and sweat
asbestps fitires
cooling the dying fireball
exploding on to the scene
since 1989,
when my three favourite authors
lived under the same sun as me.

Baby steps
crying in the corner,
bulldozers closing in
and chained like a dog to the railings
he raised a hand
in Tiananmen's
second coming.

Destruction is deplorable,
but sometimes you have to
knock down a house
if you want to build
a home.

Building up to Distance

A series of stumbles

looks

like running

forever

tripping

up

delaying

the movement

the moment

tong

enough

to trip

again

awkward

gawky and bleeding

at the knees – moving

forwards

trying

to become

good at something new.

joan mcnerney

Falling

Down through blackness into dusty subterranean passages where trains raced.

Silver rods sped through dream stations transforming tunnels with bolts of blue white

sparks. On a steel car looking out the window... how many times have I seen my

train reeling off track? How many times have I ridden the dark horse called

nightmare? Now flying through space falling in air off track tumbling down falling.

Dangling on thick utility cables through trees into lights, crashing against buildings.

Careening through pitch black night, this silver train shattering glass.

christopher mulrooney

patois

mine at last to tell in my own twang to have done with telling

having told and told again here is my story

the perpendicular having once been outlaid so to speak

there rises the cavernous cavity by cavitation

and the bowman flits it is the never seesaw of the elements

w <j> p newnham

>Arse Up @ the Atomic<
>Nevada<
<'19-Ninty-Niner'>

'Spring Break Was Different This Year!'

I read that somewhere or maybe heard it said: it seemed alien to me! My life was a perpetual spring break of booze, bars and gambling and here I was; finally, Sin-City: Las-Vegas, not sleepin' and playing cards hard for money and losing [commensurate to my bar tab of free drinks: I was breakin' even] and living La-Vida-Large in the city that never sleeps:

“THE WHOLE YOU ARE IN?”

Fuck me
John O'Brien¹
I stayed there 2:
I think I saw U;
In a black suit
Silhouetted dark against
The white balustrade on the stair-wells and along the
Balconies: The motel u shaped round the courtyard
With a pool centre staged;
Vehicles Parked in Front of Occupied Rooms.

♠Aces and ♠8's²

I hit the floor at Caesars Where waitresses in mini togas Circulated alcohol thru my system on
the strength Of a ten dollar tip given once but not repeated:
Live in hope? As you do!

I stuck with the Blacked-Jack
Ignoring the blandishments of the slots or High-Stake-Hold-'Em
For the calm world of counting cards and OCD dependencies:
<I needed funding to feed the beast>

I had found a tableful of China-Men
Cautious and counting and had Played sure and steady
Till I drew the Dead Man: Aces and Eights in Spades

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leaving_Las_Vegas

²

<http://www.google.com.au/imgres?sa=X&biw=1440&bih=699&tbn=isch&tbnid=ANuBnZvTCUIS1M:&imgrefurl=http://jumpingpolarbear.com/2012/03/01/dead-mans-hand-worlds-most-famous-poker-hand/&docid=Rq8Cq7gIOQnEBM&imgurl=http://jumpingpolarbear.files.wordpress.com/2012>

The dealer showed fives and I heard the hiss from the china-men as I doubled and drew another [spade] ace: 20; I sit to baleful stares. The dealer draws an eight on a five and ten:

China-Men beam and say:
“You Lucky: You Lucky Man.”
I say: “Black Aces n’ 8’s baby:
Ever-Damn-Time!”

Staggeringly Drunk:

The Strip:

I Am Pachinko!

Cross-road at midnight where
Fremont Street bifurcates
Las Vegas Boulevard:
I had walked miles from the strip.
To the west of me glittered the
White-Hot Night-Time
Incandescence of Glitter Gulch and
Sweet-Sireens-By-The-Hour.
East, darkness and Robert Johnston and
The unknown: I can see a lone
Neon sign winking in the distance;
“Nothing Is True: Everything
Permitted” is echoing in my ears
And with a devil on each shoulder
I head east.

Wasted In The “Atomic” Wasteland

*“Copacetic” and “Whisky And A Beer Back” my answers
To the barman’s solicitous inquiries
He reads my accent and says
“God-Dammit You’re An Australian Aint’ Ya....”
“I had the pleasure of serving with Aus-Tra-Lian soldiers in Vi-Et-Nam!”
“They was some of the finest soldiers I ever served with!”
“On me son! On me!”..... “Welcome to the ‘Atomic’”*

“I Am All The Hanks”

*Snow, Williams, and Chinaski
All My Friends? Drinks! For All My Friends!
To See A Lonesome..... Cannonball-
Lesbian Hookers ask if kangaroos can be ridden as
A Crack head watches silent epps of the ‘Sopranos’*

³ <http://www.atomiclasvegas.com/>

*On the television above the bar
And mumbles an improvised dialogue
‘No..... Tony Soprano cannot die.....no’*

“You Will See Him Every-Where—Just Like Elvis!”

- 1. He tells me this*
- 2. as we smoke rocks like blood diamonds*
- 3. in the toilets with the lesbian hooker*
- 4. castigating his misogyny with*
- 5. “I don’t know what your problem is man!”*
- 6. “I just like eatin’ pussy same as you!”*
- 7. I stagger back to the Strip*
- 8. Devils sleeping.*

I did not go arse up at the atomic.

Join Hermes in a Sad Song

Like a busy street--
cars dash by
unaffected by you,
a blur,

walking shade
trapped in a moment
a captured malaise,
snapshot--a nose pressed to a window
Bill Haley and the Comets in the background

taking them to a non-place
and you to underworld palaces
where creeping darkness
lurks in shadows.

Like a busy riverway
where Hermes dons a captain's hat
readies for another midnight cruise
in a leaky boat,

you sit pressed to the window
of the wheelhouse
imagining the third ring
where Olympic heroes fell.

Like a wrecking ball
smashing the side of your building,
it crumbles into bits of dust;
the shadow of yourself sits

by the tenth-floor window
nose pressed to the leaden glass
gut-ready to plummet,
burrow beneath the earth.

Like Hermes who hums an ancient tune--
familiar,
you hum along
in Coldplay harmony,

your breath a foggy inscription on the window,
eyes stare back sadly
undone by the mysteries
hidden in the song.

Ablutions

Word scrub. Eyes down.

Scrub hard. Do not

tick tock the hours.

There's space within

this space of lines.

Word bleach. Mouth shut.

Ink clean. Do not

opaque with smear

or slant the truth

with oblique sign.

Word scrape. Part lips.

Scrawl quick. Do not

thread the maybes

between the dunes

of right and wrong.

Word sound. End now

the ablutions

and pitch the tent

and sleep and sleep....