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**The Next Person to Declare “Spring Is Sprung” Gets a Fat Knuckle  
Sandwich to The Face  
Arthur Graham**

Well gang, spring has FINALLY arrived, which means we're even hornier than usual down at HST headquarters, and that's PRETTY FRIGGIN' HORNY! I'm talkin' drunken jackrabbits and easter bunnies on poppers and cialis, chasing big, bushy tails and bouncing boners like the goddamn sun was about to explode!

Which of course brings us back to the other side of it – death. Even the horniest of little bunnies can still see the skull beneath the skin of its lover, after all. Perhaps this is what drives us at each other with such unbridled, genital-grinding fury at times, this subconscious instinct that winter comes again all too soon.

Sex and Death – the twin anxieties upon which all civilization is based...

But don't worry, we've got everything else covered in between as well! Plenty here to keep us occupied as we crawl from one hole and to the next.

This month we're proud to debut our new cover model, Miss Jada, so check out her photoshoot and follow her on Instagram (@horror.jada) as well. If ANYONE embodies the false dichotomy between sex and death, we'd say it has to be her!

Arthur Graham  
Salt Lake City, April 2019

**Narcissus  
Angelica Arsan**

Spreading its petals  
Your flower  
Blooms  
Wet chalice  
Pouring nectar  
On my fingers

Drenching me  
With your sweet  
Intoxicating  
Poisonous juice

Bodies  
Sprouting  
Hands like roots  
Sucking sap through the skin

Thirsty tongues  
Drinking spring  
from each other's  
lips

Breathing it  
Oozing it

Flowing out of us  
Our dirty  
Regeneration

Our filthy  
Blossoming

**At a Strip Club in the Middle of Pennsylvania**  
**Dave Newman**

She moves my beer bottle out of reach  
and says "I have a clumsy ass."

Spread across the bar she scissor-kicks  
and grabs her ankles then cradles her tit.

Some Japanese writing is tattooed  
a few inches to the left of her g-string.

I try to make out the design  
while she makes sexy stripper faces.

She points at the ink and says "Mother first."  
"As in?" I say.

She crawls back on to the dance floor.  
"As in" she says "I have kids at home."

I take a swig off my beer  
and stop to applaud the moment.

She leans in to me with a smile  
her tits pushed together like a basket.

I give her one dollar for the performance  
another dollar for the kid at home.

She thanks me with a kiss on the cheek  
then pets my head like a small poodle.

**Secret Diary of A Future Sex Crime Victim**  
**Meeah Williams**

I listen closely  
to the hair dryer;  
it tells me things.  
Things I can't repeat.  
I lie in bed, face blank  
as a slice of white bread  
in the dark.  
I try to visualize  
a sentence  
that cracks the ceiling.  
If I didn't know  
you could snap my neck  
like a sparrow's  
how would I ever get off?  
Sometimes I like to mouth  
a pacifier  
while being fucked  
in the ass.  
A certain light I love  
will fall through hemlocks  
into a bedroom  
at 3pm.  
Sometimes I imagine  
my throat cut  
at the moment of orgasm.  
I want to be dead, tied,  
wrapped in white,  
lying in a rowboat  
my lover rows to sea.

**I Never Knew That Church Could Be Rewarding**  
**Tohm Bakelas**

I'm sitting in church  
while women around me  
talk about birth  
their dilation  
and whether  
anything ripped  
they don't seem to  
care that  
I am here  
listening in

I'm sitting in church  
thinking about Oswald  
and the CIA  
while women talk about  
loneliness  
and how  
long it took  
their vaginas  
to heal  
after giving birth

I'm sitting in church  
with a pending divorce  
listening to women  
speak  
of neglectful husbands  
while I am fully erect  
looking at panty and thong lines  
on the seams  
of tight black  
yoga pants

I'm sitting in church  
not for holy reasons  
but with purpose of  
registering  
my daughter for school  
while nations are arming  
nuclear weapons  
banks are opening  
and vegetables are  
being stocked

I'm sitting in church  
watching a woman bend over  
exposing green panties  
and soon bare ass  
as her pants slide down  
while another adjusts  
her breasts in a concealed bra  
and on the US-Mexico border  
families are tear-gassed  
and the pyramids of Egypt stand tall

I'm sitting in church  
taking in all the action  
wondering how the luck arrived  
feeling much better  
about things  
feeling much better  
than I have  
in a long time

**For Mother**  
**A. Theist**

I think my mother is mad at me.  
I mean,  
I get it,  
I suppose.  
I am the biggest she ever had.  
She took all 9 pounds and  
18 inches of me.  
The room was full of men  
and women  
wearing masks  
and rubber gloves.  
They watched on  
as I assaulted  
her hole  
for 20 hours straight,  
no break.  
Afterwards,  
I sucked her tits,  
and she fingered.  
We continued  
with the tits and  
the fingering  
for a few years,  
but that was it.  
I never fucked her again.  
Just the one time.  
Nowadays,  
I don't even answer the phone  
when she calls.

**Gary D. Morton**  
**Untitled**

It whispers, burn the fucking house down,  
They don't really love you;  
No one ever will. You are entirely insufferable.  
Burn the fucking house down, you can. make it look like an accident,  
They will never know.  
He returns from plummeting depths,  
A deranged acolyte, skull filled with dead leaves and purgatory,  
Love is piercing agony, thoughts of being alone, but  
pleading to snip off their toes with wire cutters,  
Simultaneously begging for release, redemption and symbiosis,  
  
Just burn the fucking house down  
  
you are already  
trapped  
inside.

**I Submit To The Magazines**  
**Irvin Lee**

I submit to the magazines,  
and I do this with a smile  
and sugar in my heart.  
And I submit again  
and they reject me.  
Tell me that they're  
thankful for my time  
but it's just not what  
they're looking for right now.  
Tell me that my poems  
make their vaginas dry.  
I submitted to the New Yorker;  
I should be hearing back soon.  
I bet their vaginas are drying up  
too.  
I bet the whole world is eating  
their flax seeds and salmon now.

**Is John Travolta Really Gay and Other Existential Questions**  
**Nope, Just That One**  
**Casey Renee Kiser**

Random lyrics come to me  
in the bubble bath-  
'ah ah ah ah , Stayin' Alive'  
Maybe because I fancy drowning...  
I ride the wave of that irony for a while and  
count how many sharks I've killed  
in my life, Fuck,  
they can't just let a lady drown in peace  
I wonder how many times  
'Is John Travolta really gay'  
has been googled.... I wonder....  
More than shark attacks?  
I simply must know. NOW.  
I scream bloody murder till someone comes  
to check on me in the tub  
ARE YOUUU ALRIGHT!!!???  
ME: Yep. I just need you to check on  
some statistics for me and I need a drink.  
And could you call the pharmacy.  
Thank you. You're beautiful.

**the only thing that ever excited me**  
**J.J. Campbell**

a woman asked me  
the other day why  
i write poetry

i told her because  
it is the only thing  
that ever excited  
me

other than the  
possibility of  
murder for  
a living

she laughed like  
i was joking

when i informed  
her that at eighteen  
i realized it was  
either scribbling  
in a notebook  
or serial killer,

she started to  
realize this was  
a can of worms  
that never should  
have been opened

**The Best Sex You've Ever Had**  
**David Boski**

"what happened last night" she said  
as we lay hungover in my bed;  
"what do you mean what happened,  
you don't remember?" I asked;  
"no, I actually don't" she said laughing;  
"what the fuck? you don't remember  
us getting home, taking off our clothes  
and me fucking you on the couch?";  
she laughed again and said: "no, I don't,  
I was wasted, I'm sorry";  
"well, I fucked the shit out of you" I said,  
"it was the best sex you've ever had";  
"oh ok, that's good then" she replied.  
I rolled over, and tried going back to sleep.

**The Destruction of America Happens on a Saturday**  
**Megan Alyse**

All the washing machines, in America, explode  
on a Saturday at 12pm. Laundry day, ruined.  
The wives must buy their husbands new underwear  
and husbands must buy their wives new dresses.  
Children go sockless in their sneakers.  
You hoarded all the clean underwear in the house.  
You wore that skirt you'd never wear.  
Neighbors helped neighbors pull buttons from the walls.  
There were only two casualties: Old Whiskers  
who would lie on the Spencer's machine  
to feel the heat and Marjorie,  
who liked to stand atop her washing machine,  
on bulky-cycle, doing yoga. She said it was good  
for her thighs. Everyone is left  
with soapy holes in the walls  
and scraps of wet cotton, rayon, and jeans.  
On Monday, people wear bathing suits,  
sarongs, and their church slacks to work.  
With time, clothes become disposable,  
made of decomposable paper. Unfortunate  
when it rains. Dryers, drying nothing,  
are end tables. Now,  
there are no space capsules for young kids  
to stick their dogs into.  
Sears says it's feminism.  
Maytag blames the Russians.  
Christians say, the nudists. Entropy ensues.  
National Guardsmen carry metal carcasses  
from people's homes. Red Cross begins making shirts  
out of plastic bags and then, naturally, the fashion industry  
collapses. China cuts trade deals,  
textiles are now irrelevant and plastic is no longer a problem.  
Neither are nipples in public. The media melts down  
because there is nothing left to sell.

You begin to forget what it was like  
to have socks on your feet.  
You forget what soft cotton feels like on your skin.  
People put money in their mattresses.  
You're left with rusty water stains on the wall,  
left wondering what was holding it all together  
to begin with.



**bring out the fine china**  
**Omar Alexandre**

it felt nice seeing old  
friends happily  
disappearing into a beautifully  
constructed nightmare  
meanwhile back in your place  
for the fifth time this month  
i fell asleep  
laughing hysterically while  
the room was on fire  
it all happened so fast  
you slipped my hand  
under your dress  
and i gave you access  
to my netflix account  
you were fucking beautiful  
until you weren't  
you'd always say  
there's no love  
when we drink too much  
when we dream  
too little  
when all we seem to do is fuck  
in public  
bathrooms  
and text each other pink  
heart emojis

**music videos are fun to watch at night**  
**Omar Alexandre**

there's something filthy about me  
that makes you reluctant to dance  
and there's something pure about you  
that makes me want to corrupt  
i fucking despise everything about you  
and you probably don't like me too much either  
you wake up smiling at the possibilities  
knowing it's all been laid out for you  
i killed a man yesterday  
just for mentioning your name  
and mailed you an envelope  
with a small piece of his heart inside  
you thought it was pretentious  
and sent it back my way with a bloody tampon  
i knew then it was true love  
so i went to the graveyard  
and secured a spot overlooking the street  
in case we bore each other  
when our bodies are placed in the ground

**gypsies****Ingrid M. Calderon-Collins**

this is feral love  
this is sweet love  
the kind of love that bites  
leaves traces  
of deep  
this is honest love  
painful love  
innocent love  
whore love  
animal love  
black onyx eyes turned white kind of love  
rooftop love  
where you on your knees suck the breath  
where the ocean of my cunt comes tinged with sirens  
where your moans hit walls in hushed devils  
where you turn my slaver into wine  
drunk  
you drink  
and think  
of other ways to make sermons leave my mouth  
religious love,  
my Jesus Christ  
my Heavenly Father  
my silent prayer  
my rust in your mouth  
my love in your mouth  
carving tunnels  
to sleep inside  
warm nights  
warm torso,  
I drip  
your tip  
on lips  
laughter  
no illusions  
what life is this?

where we laugh  
at our baptism, our Holy union  
a purge  
ablution  
a world of us,  
them,  
invisible/  
hot July L.A. nights are ours  
myopic gaze  
make skyscrapers quiver  
sodden gravel  
leave hieroglyphs  
on skin

**romance****Mela Blust**

hard fingers where the pale meets the pink  
dirty mouth hunger dripping drink  
savor sweet sanguine soaking hole  
suck me honey i wont tell a soul  
hammer hard pavement meets the dirt  
tell me why the boys they always hurt

**A One Time Young Man's Blues**  
**John D. Robinson**

'You'll have to get rid of it' she said  
in a harsh whisper to her daughter  
and then looking at me with cold steel eyes  
of resentment and disappointment she said  
"And you'll have to pay for it'  
I walked out of the bar in silence  
leaving the two of them alone;  
we were teenagers and we  
were in love,  
she was seventeen and pregnant and  
several months away from a university  
dream  
I was eighteen and a dopey  
factory worker  
with no ambitions,  
we saw it through –  
I raised the money and  
visited the private clinic  
that was way out of town,

it was a sad place  
full of sad and ashamed  
faces of young women  
and we were in love  
and we held hands and  
I wanted to say things to her  
that would be of comfort  
but I didn't and I couldn't,  
I was sad and  
I didn't know what to say.  
After a short while at  
university she brought me  
A copy of Kerouac's  
Scattered Poems and she  
said goodbye forever;  
that was three and a half  
decades ago,  
I still have the book and  
the inscription she wrote  
has faded,  
Faded  
like a heartbeat  
never heard,  
even once.

**Dr. Seuss Wearing Black Eyeliner and a Corset**  
**Winter Zakalwe**

Remember in all of your raging and strife  
That hurting is often the main theme of life

Oh, we will cry fiercely against death and shout  
Spilling hot blood, tearing fingernails out

Because, we claim later, there's beauty and pleasure  
As though they each came in fair, equal measure

As though we shall not all one day release  
life, love, and promise to make agony cease

And this knowledge of ending can set our hearts free  
But, it's a gentle, wise thing, not so easy to see

I'm sorry if this makes you feel weak, sad, or small  
I speak just for myself, and for you, and us all

**bird call**  
**Ben Arzate**

the kaua'i 'o'o bird  
native to the islands of hawaii  
went extinct in 1987

the last known bird  
of its species  
was a male  
and its call was recorded  
in 1975

it sang for a mate  
that would never come

but its call remains recorded  
in the cornell lab of ornithology

**It's Only Art**  
**Robert Ragan**

Life gives us the rope  
The world gives us the rope  
These powers that be  
Wait for us to hang ourselves

We deface your murals  
Says the shady performance artist  
who burns himself with lit cigarettes

He inflicts this pain physically  
For all the pain he's endured emotionally

Before his tormentor  
This lost soul sticks the glowing cherry to his arm  
This is for the time you fucked a total stranger in your car

Lighting the cigarette again  
He raises his head and sticks it to his throat  
The woman starts to cry  
She begs him to stop

He laughs and says  
That was for the time I caught you in bed with those two masked men  
He calls her a promiscuous demon

The burning continues as well as the stories behind the pain  
He says we'll black out your eyes before the camera stops filming

Covered in oozing blisters afterward  
He asks the woman he paid to do this  
Would you like to go out and have a few drinks  
She says No  
Then walks out of the room

Alone he lights another cigarette  
Laughing he puts it out on his forehead

**jed and ethel**  
**John Grochalski**

jed and ethel  
sleep on a bench  
across the sidewalk from  
the big supermarket  
they sleep while people  
complain about cantaloupes  
and the cost of pineapple  
jed and ethel  
have been living on the streets  
in the neighborhood  
for about two or three years now  
right around the time  
we were told the economy  
was back and full swing  
jed and ethel obviously never got the memo  
they sleep on the bench  
while people walk by  
holding wine bags and gourmet vegan wraps  
jed wears a green hat  
from a nintendo game character  
and a free t-shirt from the new hipster coffee shop  
who gave it to him  
for their ironic idea of free advertising  
ethel wears her winter coat  
in all kinds of weather  
she's usually pretty quiet  
but sometimes she sits on the bench  
and screams at the people  
complaining about cantaloupes  
and the cost of pineapple  
sometimes she says to the people  
carrying wine bags and gourmet vegan wraps  
hey, but do you have a dollar for me?

jed's still able to sleep  
when ethel goes on like this  
he's put up with way more than shouting  
sometimes jed and ethel smoke pot  
with another guy, maximillian  
they sit at the bus stop a block away from the bench  
and get stoned  
as people walk by carrying lackluster cantaloupes  
and over-priced pineapples  
complaining about the smell of the marijuana  
and saying to themselves  
well, if they have money to do that  
then why are they living on the street?  
as if getting  
the occasional life-numbing high from a third party  
is the equivalent of them  
somehow shunning the rest of us  
here in boot strap america  
but people like to say dumb shit like that  
because they are afraid of homelessness  
they see themselves in jed and ethel's eyes  
deep down  
they know it isn't all cantaloupes and pineapples  
and wine bags and gourmet vegan wraps  
or maybe they are just judgmental assholes  
and jed and ethel  
are just props  
to boost up their own self-esteem  
their own sense of value and self-worth as citizens  
road signs to prove that we aren't all random cogs  
in an unforgiving capitalist mouse wheel

to be honest  
jed and ethel aren't even their real names  
i have no clue who they are  
where they came from  
why they chose this neighborhood  
if they're married or just shackled together this way  
jed and ethel are just names  
that i came up with  
about a year ago  
when i was walking down the street  
on some lazy summer sunday afternoon  
swinging my bag from the wine store  
passing them sleeping on that bench  
on my way to the supermarket  
for some fresh fruit  
a cold six pack of beer  
and one of their kick-ass  
gourmet vegan wraps.